



Independent Monitoring Board
Annual Report 2012-13
HMP MAGHABERRY

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.

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 for HMP Maghaberry covering the period April 2012 – March 2013.

This is my first year as Chair and I would like to thank my predecessor, Dennis Constable for all his help and support over the past year and indeed since I joined the Board. I would also like to thank all the Board members for the time, effort and commitment they bring to a voluntary role and for their support to me in the role of Chair. They come from a wide and varied background and as such contribute a great range of skills, knowledge and experience to the Board. The year started with ten members but finished with seven with three experienced members coming to the end of their appointments after having served for just less than twelve years. The Board is also supported throughout the year by the IMB Executive Council.

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 / weekly basis. The Board also appreciates the fact that we are invited to attend meetings, case conferences and reviews and any event held within the prison.

Tragically this year saw the murder on 1 November 2012 of Prison Officer David Black on his way to work in Maghaberry and this was a stark reminder to all of the dangers the staff still face in the course of their work. On behalf of the Board I would like to extend sympathy to his wife, son and daughter and his extended family, friends and colleagues.

The current reporting year also saw six deaths in Maghaberry – two from natural causes and four to suicide. To each of these families we also extend our sympathy on the loss of a loved one.

There have been some positive changes in Maghaberry during the current reporting year. The opening of Quoile House has improved conditions for the prisoners located there and the Family Focus Landing has been a great step forward in helping to build and maintain good relationships between fathers and their children. This can only enhance their chance of settling into a stable family relationship on release from prison. Unescorted movement continues without any serious incident and gives prisoners some freedom and sense of responsibility. With the witness protection unit moving to the new Shimna house this has

allowed the Vulnerable Prisoners Unit (VPU) to move to Martin House which enables them to have a much enhanced regime.

On the negative side Healthcare continues to have ongoing problems and issues especially since it was taken over fully by the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (SEHSCT) last year. Lack of cooperation with both prison staff and Board members is very obvious and is often to the detriment of the prisoner / patient. Drugs, both prescribed and illegal continue to cause problems as is highlighted in detail in our report.

Over the past 12 months a large number of staff have left on a severance package and new staff are now in place. To those who have left we wish a long and well deserved retirement.

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.

Margaret McCauley
Chairperson

OVERVIEW OF ESTABLISHMENT

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.

The majority of the prisoners are accommodated in six residential houses on the main site. Bann 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. Erne and Lagan are the other two original houses within the complex. Foyle is not in use at the time of reporting. A new house – Quoile – was opened during the reporting year. This modern purpose-built house accommodates key workers, a drugs-free landing, a family focus landing and Donard landing. There is also the new Shimna House which is the witness protection unit. There is a separate Care and Supervision Unit (CSU) and a Healthcare Centre. Martin, Wilson and Braid are located in the Mourne complex across the road from the main site. Braid houses mainly life sentenced prisoners and Wilson is used to house prisoners who are nearing the end of life sentences and have participated in and completed all relevant programmes. This was previously used as a stepping stone to Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) located at Crumlin Road in Belfast which has been closed since 2011. Martin House was formerly the witness protection unit but now houses the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) which was previously situated in the currently unoccupied Glen House.

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 ad;ept (alcohol and drugs; empowering people through therapy) in partnership with the Trust and NIPS. Education and training is provided by local services.

Various charitable and voluntary organisations maintain a presence on site - NIACRO provide guidance through the Jobtrack scheme for prisoners trying to obtain a job on release; CRUSE provides support in dealing with bereavement issues; Barnardo's support prisoners over family issues; and Housing Rights staff support prisoners in obtaining housing, benefits and grants when they leave prison. The Quaker Service manage 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.

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) square houses should be replaced with more modern accommodation (paragraph 1.1)
- b) a rolling programme of maintenance and redecoration of square houses is put in place until such times as they are replaced (paragraph 1.1)
- c) a risk assessment is carried out to ensure that prisoners are physically competent to climb to the top bunks in Quoile (paragraph 1.3)

2 ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- a) issuing of extended period medication needs to be reassessed as a matter of urgency (paragraph 2.3)
- b) Drug Strategy meetings be reinstated immediately and are held on a regular basis with input from all relevant areas (paragraph 2.4)

3 CATERING AND KITCHEN

- a) serving of the evening meal be delayed to a later and more realistic time (paragraph 3.4)
- b) the practice of prisoners eating in cells is reviewed (paragraph 3.5)
- c) a Food Policy is implemented (paragraph 3.6)

4 CHAPLAINCY

- a) the Chaplaincy service is not cut as a result of the ongoing review (paragraph 4.4)

5 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- a) ensure that more prisoners are encouraged to participate in workshops (paragraph 5.2)
- b) a review of the education and workshops available in the Mourne complex (paragraph 5.3)
- c) consideration is given to selling art etc produced by prisoners (paragraph 5.4)

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – no recommendations

7 HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

- a) the Trust produce and publish a comprehensive plan for healthcare service provision to prisons (paragraph 7.6)
- b) a review of the addiction services is carried out (paragraph 7.11)
- c) a purpose built safe and secure facility is set up for prisoners with severe personality disorder (paragraph 7.13)
- d) resolution is found to the problem of prisoners' hospital appointments being missed (paragraph 7.15)

8 LIBRARY – no recommendations

9 LIFE SENTENCED PRISONERS

- a) another external prisoner assessment unit is set up and opened as soon as possible (paragraph 9.1)
- b) more work is made available specifically for life sentence prisoners (paragraph 9.4)

10 RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

- a) Bann House should always be staffed to full complement (paragraph 10.2)
- b) first time prisoners should not share a cell with an “experienced” prisoner (paragraph 10.3)
- c) new staff get specific training to work in induction (paragraph 10.5)
- d) each new officer should be paired with an experienced staff member for an initial learning period (paragraph 10.5)
- e) all induction staff are trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).

11 RESETTLEMENT – no recommendations

12 SAFER CUSTODY – no recommendations

13 SEGREGATION – CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

- a) regular and dedicated staffing of CSU (paragraph 13.2)

- b) all prisoners entering CSU are given an exit plan (paragraph 13.3)
- c) prisoners on dirty protest are moved to another area of the prison (paragraph 13.4)
- d) more time is spent with explaining the adjudication process to prisoners facing charges for the first time (paragraph 13.6)
- e) the number of governors hearing adjudications is reduced and regular reviews are conducted to address inconsistency in both awards and procedure (paragraph 13.8)
- f) introduction of an interim appeal process against disputed charges (paragraph 13.10)

14 SEPARATED PRISONERS – no recommendations

15 SPORT AND RECREATION -

16 TUCKSHOP

- a) prisoners who work in the Tuckshop should get accredited NVQ training (paragraph 16.2)
- b) all products are competitively priced (paragraph 16.3)

17 VISITS

- a) that the process of transferring items left at visits reception is looked at to lessen the delay in reaching the prisoner (paragraph 17.3)

Section 1 – ACCOMODATION

1.1 Last year's report recommended that the square houses of Bann, Erne, Foyle and Lagan be replaced but unfortunately this has not happened. Three are still in use and, at the time of writing, Foyle is being modified to act as accommodation for individuals arrested during the anticipated G8 protests. The increase in the prison population has led to overcrowding in these houses which impacts negatively on prisoners as there is little privacy - particularly when there are lengthy periods of lock down. While the Board continues to see these houses as unfit for purpose and **recommends** they be replaced but in the meantime it also **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' earlier in the reporting year major refurbishment of the damaged cells is under way. The Board is aware that this will be a lengthy and costly exercise but commends the NIPS for the efficiency with which this is being done.

1.3 The Board welcomed the opening of two new houses during the reporting year – 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. The Board had a tour round the new block prior to prisoners moving in and we were most impressed with the high standard of accommodation and high-tech systems that are in place. The only negative it found was with access to the top bunks as the ladders are vertical rather than angled. Board members had difficulty climbing these ladders so would be concerned that this may be the case with some prisoners who are less mobile than others. The Board understands that the bunks meet Home Office standards and that no prisoner has made any complaint in this regard but **recommends** that a risk assessment is carried out to ensure that prisoners are physically competent to climb to the top bunks.

1.4 During the year, Martin House in the Mourne complex was refurbished 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. Those prisoners to whom members have spoken have expressed their satisfaction at the move so the Board commends this initiative.

1.5 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 In common with prisons everywhere, the use and misuse of drugs – both prescription and illegal – continues to be a significant problem within Maghaberry.

2.2 The ad:ept team have several programmes in place to address alcohol and substance abuse but at the moment the waiting lists for these programmes are quite long. The Prisoners -Addressing Substance Related Offending (P-ASRO) programme is to start again in late summer with the Core Reduction Programme being changed to improve attendance records. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) also runs programme within the prison for those with alcohol addictions.

2.3 Figures indicate that approximately 90% of prisoners are on medication in one form or another and this can lead to many problems. The Trust aspires to making prisoners take responsibility for their own medication as if they were in the community so issues them with anything up to one month's supply of medication at a time. While this may be admirable in principle it is a system that is very open to abuse within the prison system. Medication is a 'currency' with prisoners trading and swapping tablets. Some 'owe' so many tablets to other prisoners that by the time they receive their supplies they have to use most - if not all - to settle their 'debts' leaving them again in the 'borrow and repay' cycle. More vulnerable or less capable prisoners are bullied for their medication and there have been instances of prisoners overdosing on their own medication. It is disappointing to note that despite this having been raised in previous reports nothing has changed and the Board strongly **recommends** that the whole area of issuing of medication needs to be reassessed as a matter of urgency.

2.4 Illegal substances continue to find their way into the prison with frequent finds coming through visits, cell searches and prisoners returning from home leave some of whom may

have been forced or threatened to bring in drugs. It is disappointing to note that the Drugs Strategy meetings have not taken place for some time. They are often arranged and then cancelled at the last minute. The Board **recommends** that these should be held on a regular basis with input from all relevant areas - especially security who can give detail around the type and amounts of 'finds'.

Section 3 – CATERING AND KITCHENS

3.1 The catering facility at the prison is a recent build of approximately three years old. Approximately 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 16 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 are now being carried out by selected inmates who are given permission to work unaccompanied and this seems to be working well.

3.3 The Board is pleased to note that, as recommended in last year's report, a training programme is now in operation where prisoners can avail of accredited training to achieve NVQ qualifications and Food Hygiene Certificates. This can provide them with skills to help them secure employment upon release which is an essential part of their rehabilitation into society. 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.

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 it has not so the Board again **recommends** that serving of the evening meal be delayed to a later and more realistic time.

3.5 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 so again **recommends** that the practice of prisoners eating in cramped shared cells is reviewed.

3.6 Also as reported over the last number of years the Board has recommended that a Food Policy for prisons be devised and implemented. To date this has still not happened so the Board **recommends** it once again.

3.7 The Board is interested to note that the recommendations from the NIPS Catering Review have now been published. These recommendations include all of the above recommendations highlighted by the Board in previous Annual Reports so hopefully this time some of them will actually be implemented.

Section 4 – CHAPLAINCY

4.1 The Chaplaincy team in comprises all the main faiths in the community - Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Free Presbyterian and Muslim - and is ably led and co-ordinated by the lead chaplain. With the increasing number of foreign prisoners the team also has the assistance of a Polish Priest, a Lithuanian Priest and a Chinese Pastor.

4.2 Due to the complex nature and layout of Maghaberry religious services are held not only in the prison chapel but also in Bush and Roe Houses, in Healthcare and in the Mourne Complex.

4.3 Not surprisingly, as the prisoner population continues to increase, so to do the demands on the chaplains. Prisoners can request to see their minister at any time and the duty chaplain also visits the induction landings each day to see newly-committed prisoners because it is these prisoners who are often at their most vulnerable and at risk of self-harm.

4.4 The value of the chaplaincy in Maghaberry cannot be over estimated so the Board was disappointed to hear that the service has been under review as part of a cost-cutting exercise. The work the chaplains do is essential to the wellbeing of the prisoners in offering not only pastoral care but helping them to cope with their imprisonment and maintaining their self-worth and dignity. They also offer support to staff and provide a listening ear for all within the prison. The Board recognises and commends the Chaplaincy for the essential role they play and **recommends** that the service remains intact and does not suffer as result of the review.

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. It is disappointing to note the poor attendance at some of the classes given the excellent facilities that are available in the new centre.

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 so the Board **recommends** that steps are taken to ensure that prisoners participate in workshops with a view to achieving NVQs.

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 at so the Board **recommends** a review of the education and workshops available in the complex.

5.4 The Board has suggested on many occasions that there should be an outlet where the goods 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 so the Board again **recommends** that this idea 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 9% of the total population and consisted of 26 different nationalities with Polish, Chinese and Lithuanian highest in terms of numbers. Irish Travellers also continue to represent a significant minority group within the population. The Board also notes that 15 prisoners are recorded as having disabilities.

6.2 The religious composition of the prison staff in Maghaberry continues to be at variance with the religious composition of prisoner population in that there is a marked under-representation of Catholics. Clearly the existing prison workforce does not reflect the Northern Ireland community that it serves but realistically, this imbalance will continue for the foreseeable future. Any scope for remedial measures will be limited by the downsizing of the workforce which has been implemented with effect from April 2012 onwards and continues. The gender breakdown of prison staff also shows an imbalance between male and female.

To achieve gender parity would require the recruitment of a significant number of additional women and a similar reduction in the male workforce.

6.3 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. As a result of issues raised in previous year's reports, the Equality and Diversity committee is now being chaired by the Deputy Governor. Membership of the committee also includes a wide spectrum from all the various departments and supporting agencies who attend the monthly meetings. Equality and diversity is still overseen by the now established department of Prisoner Safety and Support Team (PSST). All of this is welcomed by the Board.

6.4 In previous reports the Board has continually raised with the appropriate authorities the fact that a noticeable majority of adjudication charges were laid against Roman Catholics as compared to the total of charges laid against other religions. Subsequently the NIPS commissioned an independent research project into this issue nearly three years ago and while it has been in possession of its findings for over two years, but it still appears that no action has actually been taken to address the findings of this contentious issue.

Section 7 - HEALTHCARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

7.1 Last year's report highlighted the fact that the lead responsibility for healthcare would fully transfer to the Trust on 1 April 2012. The Board gave its full support to this transfer, seeing it as a positive move but this has not been the case. It would be failing in its duty if the Board did not highlight its concerns about continued short staffing and low staff morale, lack of preventative clinics and diminution in the service provided to patients.

7.2 The constant staff shortages and decline in staff morale were highlighted last year and the Board hoped that the recruitment process, which was underway at that time, would alleviate both these problems. Again, this has not been the case. Virtually all of the new staff recruited at that time have since left and at the time of writing, the nursing staff at Maghaberry is only 25% of complement. Short staffing impacts on the service provided to patients - health promotion / preventative clinics are not running on a regular basis and the existing nursing and healthcare staff are doing their best but struggling to provide even a minimum service. The Board understands that a further recruitment process is under way. Hopefully this time the staff will stay.

7.3 Members have expressed concern at the apparent lack of therapeutic intervention within the healthcare unit. Prisoners resident there appear to sit around the day room with

little staff interaction and they cite boredom as a recurrent theme - the amount of time they spent locked and the lack of communication with staff. During a rota visit one member observed that in a period of around 45 minutes the only staff member seen in the day room was a prison officer. However, in the main the prisoners are appreciative of the fact that staffing levels are low and try to avoid complaining.

7.4 Over the year the number of prisoners / patients in the healthcare unit reduced significantly -which is unexpected and in direct contrast to the prison population which has continued to rise. It is of concern that healthcare staff (nursing and others) have told the Board that the in-patient facility is to be discontinued and that medical services will be provided by the nurses based in the houses. However at a meeting with the Director of Prison Healthcare (the Director) and the Assistant Director in January there was no indication of any intention to either close the in-patient provision or reduce it in size. Uncertainty is not good in any organisation so the Trust must give clarification. In the meantime the Board will keep the matter under close scrutiny.

7.5 The increasing number of older prisoners in the system brings its own problems so the Board recommends that the NIPS and the Trust work together to develop a strategy for managing older people in prison. Examples of good practice in this area already exist in England and Wales.

7.6 For all of the above reasons, the Board **recommends** that the Trust produce and publish their plan for healthcare service provision to prisons which should include details of all of these issues.

7.7 The Board recommended last year that a system should be devised to speed up the provision of prisoners' prescribed medication following committal. It is pleased to now report that a new system of computerised patient records will come into operation soon which will mean that the medication needs of those coming into committals can be checked very quickly.

7.8 The Board also acknowledges the fact that the Trust intend to introduce a more streamlined healthcare assessment system at committal. While this is still at the planning stage and it is not known when it will become operational anything that speeds up and enhances the process is to be applauded.

7.9 Another recommendation made last year was that the medication reduction model used in the prison should be revised to mirror that used in the community. Prisoners continue to complain about this but as the Board has been advised that the current model is Trust policy this is unlikely to change.

7.10 The Board acknowledges the effort that has gone into the pilot scheme for 'in possession' medication. It would appear that the pilot has been very successful and has decreased the time spent in issuing medications. It is hoped that this can be rolled out to all houses in Maghaberry when suitable areas within the houses are available.

7.11 A new pharmacy has been built on the Maghaberry site and should be operational soon. When this pharmacy is operational, the main 'tradeable' drugs will be identifiable as having been dispensed from it. This will be of great benefit in tracing the source of medication which is being misused. This is a very positive move and again the Board recognise the amount of work that has gone into this initiative.

7.12 Although drug and alcohol issues are dealt with separately in this report, the Board is concerned that prisoners can wait for lengthy periods before being assessed. This can impact on those who are struggling with their addictions, both physically and psychologically so the Board **recommends** that a review of the whole area of addiction services is carried out to elicit whether or not the current complement of staff devoted to this area requires enhancement

7.13 As it has done for many years, the Board last year recommended that a purpose-built safe and secure facility should be set up for prisoners with severe personality disorder. There has been no movement on this recommendation but as it remains an aspiration the Board once again **recommends** such a facility this year. In the absence of such a facility, these very complex and challenging individuals with very obvious mental health difficulties inevitably find themselves going down the 'disciplinary route' and end up long term in the Care and supervision Unit (CSU). The Board is aware that there is an intention, at some point in the future, to utilise Glen House as a unit for those individuals with complex problems who cannot be managed within the general population. The Board would support this initiative as it has long said that CSU is not an appropriate place for these prisoners.

7.14 The Donard Centre is proving to be a valuable resource and all credit should be given to the staff there who work so well with the prisoners. The Board is aware that the centre caters in the main for the more compliant prisoner, meaning those with the most complex needs miss out on the support and interaction that is available there. The Board brought this to a meeting with the Director, but while he accepted its argument on behalf of these hard-to-engage individuals, he maintained the stance of 'the greater good for the greatest number'.

7.15 Last year the Board recommended better communication between Healthcare and PECCS to ensure prisoners' hospital appointments are not missed. Unfortunately this issue is still causing concern. It remains unacceptable that prisoners may miss out on urgent appointments through no fault of their own. The Board is aware that the Prison Healthcare

Operational Forum is looking at the whole process of managing hospital appointments but it is imperative that a resolution is found to the cancellation of scheduled appointments as a matter of urgency. IMB colleagues in England and Wales advise that the local Health Trusts transport the prisoners to hospital so perhaps that could be considered here. Whatever is decided on, the Board **recommends** that a resolution to this long standing problem is found as a matter of urgency.

7.16 Although agreed a while ago, prisoners have only recently been advised in advance of their forthcoming hospital appointments. The Board is pleased that at last this system has been put into operation.

7.17 While there is no system for regular dental check ups the Board has been told that those in urgent need of dental treatment will be seen very quickly, but members are aware of prisoners who have had to wait six months for an appointment. On the other hand the Board has been advised that prisoners arrive late or do not turn up for appointments which puts the clinics back and is an expensive waste of resources. This issue has been ongoing for several years and it is disappointing that even with the large number of prisoners who can move throughout the main areas of the prison unaccompanied, there are still difficulties with dental clinic attendance.

7.18 Over the past year, the Board have found it difficult to obtain information from healthcare staff in Maghaberry. Previously the Board were part of the local Clinical Governance Group where relevant information was shared on issues such as serious incidents; missed hospital appointments and reasons for same etc. This group appear to no longer operate so in order to obtain information, the Board must now request it through the IMB Executive Council representative on the Prison Healthcare Operational Forum. This is unduly cumbersome and marginalises the Board on site so would hope this is relaxed in future and that information requested is once again made available at local level if possible.

7.19 The Board feels that this year its relationship with staff in the healthcare unit has not been as good as it has been in the past. With the constant changes in healthcare staff it has been difficult to build up good strong relationships which in turn impacts on its ability to deal with prisoner issues. Members have reported staff in healthcare adopting a defensive, or on some occasions, a dismissive attitude towards them. Hopefully this will improve if staffing levels are maintained in future. However on a positive note, representatives from the three Boards now hold quarterly meetings with the Director and the Assistant Director and at the inaugural meeting we found both to be very open and willing to take on board the issues which the Boards brought to them. The Board is appreciative of this.

Section 8 - LIBRARY

8.1 The library is a well-stocked facility where prisoners are made to feel at ease and to 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. 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 link for young children. The Board remains impressed with the library and commends the people who staff it.

Section 9 - LIFE SENTENCED PRISONERS

9.1 There are currently nearly 200 life sentenced prisoners in Maghaberry with a further 12 on various pre-release schemes. The largest number is located in Braid and Wilson houses and the majority of Category A prisoners are housed in Erne house but most if not all the other houses have at least one life sentenced prisoner. Following closure of the PAU in Belfast in April 2011 all the prisoners who were located there were returned to Maghaberry where they continue with their pre-release programmes. The Board **recommends** that another PAU is opened as soon as possible at a site divorced from the prison.

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

9.3 A large number of lifers have quite low levels of numeracy and literacy and all are encouraged to avail of the education facilities available. The Essential Skills Curriculum covers 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.

9.4 Given the large numbers of life sentence prisoners it would be beneficial if there were 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 sentence in a constructive manner. The Board **recommends** yet again that more work is made available specifically for life sentenced prisoners.

Section 10 – RECEPTION AND INDUCTION

10.1 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.

10.2 When prisoners leave reception area they are taken to Bann House for induction. For those in prison for the first time this can be a very vulnerable time so 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 they also need to have time to talk to new prisoners but Board members have seen that staff 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 staffed to its full complement so the Board again **recommends** that induction staff should not be used to cover staff shortages elsewhere in the prison.

10.3 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 inside before know the system and this can lead to a new prisoners getting into trouble by being bullied into doing things.

10.4 The Board has concerns about the number of prisoners that are on SPAR (Supporting Prisoners At Risk) in Bann House. This takes up a considerable amount of staff time with paperwork which again means less time spent with prisoners. In spite of this, most staff know the prisoners well enough to be able to raise any concerns with members.

10.5 Experience is desirable in this environment but with all the new staff it is inevitable that some will be sent Bann. For this reason the Board **recommends** that new staff get specific training to work in Bann. To further shorten the learning curve it also **recommends** that each new start should be paired with an experienced staff member for an initial learning period.

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

10.7 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 11 – RESETTLEMENT

11.1 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 works with the various groups within the prison but also relies 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.

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

11.3 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 12 - SAFER CUSTODY

12.1 Safer Custody meetings are held on a regular basis and are usually well attended. In some cases the families of prisoners are involved and that is definitely beneficial as those who are visited by family are less likely to reoffend than those who receive no visits. It has long been established that one of the main risk factors for self-harming and suicide is isolation and lack of visits. The "Quaker Connections" volunteer continues to benefit the many prisoners who fall into this category and the Board acknowledges this.

12.2 The SPAR process is a means whereby staff can work together to provide individual care to prisoners in order to help defuse a potentially suicidal crisis and help them to better manage and reduce their distress. SPAR documentation is now checked on a daily basis and regular audits are held. Following criticism in last year's report the Board is pleased to note that this has improved the quality of the documentation and good practice. The Board has recently become aware of a worrying trend of prisoners self-harming by inflicting cuts to their throats. This presents a real potential for very serious harm so the Board will monitor the trend closely through the incident reports, SPARs and meetings with the Prisoner Safety and Support Team.

12.3 The treatment of vulnerable prisoners is one of the biggest challenges facing the prison service. Prisoners can be vulnerable for many reasons including mental health issues or because the nature of their crime makes them open to attack by other prisoners and are kept apart for their own safety. This year saw the Vulnerable Prisoner Unit (VPU) moved from Glen to Martin House. This enabled the prisoners to have a greatly enhanced regime with access to gardens and greater freedom within the unit. The Board commends this improvement. The main disadvantage of the closed environment is lack of education and work opportunities. Staff generally engage well with these prisoners. They are familiar with their family circumstances and backgrounds and can quickly identify any difficulties or issues before they escalate.

12.4 The Donard Landing (formerly known as REACH) now based in Quoile House is aimed at prisoners described as 'poor copers' or those with symptoms commonly associated with personality disorders or other mental illness. Many prisoners on this landing have fluctuating levels of distress and have poor communication or inter-personal skills. During the day, prisoners from this landing go to the new Donard Centre which, as previously mentioned, is a well-equipped valuable resource where the staff engage well with the prisoners and again have a good knowledge of their backgrounds. The Board also commends this facility but is disappointed to note that it is not as well used as it could be and is often closed because of staff shortages.

Section 13 – SEGREGATION – CARE AND SUPERVISION UNIT (CSU)

13.1 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" and safer cells for prisoners at risk of self harming and suicide are held. The CSU is always at full capacity.

13.2 The regular officers working in the unit continue to exercise extreme professionalism. 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. Because it is a unit with particular needs the prison management must not allow the culture of casual staffing to become the norm. 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. It will continue to carefully monitor the staffing of the unit because of difficulties in the past.

13.3 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 an easy option to finding alternative accommodation elsewhere in the prison estate. 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.

13.4 An additional difficulty within the CSU in this reporting year is the ongoing dirty protest by a number of prisoners. The staff continue to act in a most professional manner under these difficult circumstances and the Board commends them for it but the situation is difficult for the staff and other prisoners. There is also a concern about the damage being caused to the cells in an already crowded facility so the Board **recommends** that prisoners on dirty protest are located in another area of the prison.

13.5 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. Members do not attend at the request of or to represent a prisoner.

13.6 Following a charge, the prisoner is “read over” within 48 hours when the charge is put to him. This normally takes place at the CSU and is carried out just inside the doors. For many prisoners it is a formality with which they are well versed however for prisoners who are being charged for the first time this process may be too fast and confusing. The Board **recommends** that cognisance is taken of this and more time is spent with prisoners facing the process for the first time.

13.7 Over the past year the number of adjudications has escalated dramatically which means CSU is very busy every day. In year 1853 adjudications were opened and 1464 completed. Of the completed adjudications there were 1180 guilty and 97 not guilty verdicts. The figure of open adjudications was high because of a number of ongoing protests in the prison. This high number greatly increases the pressure on CSU staff and limits the time available to members for visiting CSU. As new staff settle in it is hoped that prisoner/staff

interaction may allow situations to be resolved before the need for charges arises so the Board would hope to see a reduction in the number of charges and consequent adjudications in future.

13.8 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. This creates a backlog which may delay an adjudication hearing for weeks or even months.

13.9 Throughout the year the Board has raised concerns about the consistency of the awards given and the review of the evidence presented. Up to eight governors hear adjudications and the scrutiny of evidence and decisions / awards given vary widely across similar charges. It is important that the prison service is fair and is seen to be fair so 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.

13.10 At present appeal against adjudication decisions / awards must be made through the internal prison complaints procedure or to the Minister of Justice through legal representation. Both of these processes can be slow and there is a likelihood that a prisoner will have served his punishment long before that process is complete. This could be prevented by an interim appeal process. An independent governor could be called upon to review the adjudication within a short period of time and if there is doubt then the award could be suspended pending an appeal through the regular channels. The Board **recommends** the introduction of such a process as soon as possible.

Section 14 – SEPARATED PRISONERS

14.1 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.

14.2 The Board note that the 'dirty protest' by separated republican prisoners in Roe House that had been ongoing for many months ended in November 2012. The Dedicated Search Team (DST) has been withdrawn from the landings and they are now being manned by normal prison staff. The damage caused to fabric of the building by this protest requires an extensive and costly programme of refurbishment which is currently in progress.

14.3 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.

Section 15 - SPORT AND RECREATION

15.1 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.

15.2 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 16 - TUCK SHOP

16.1 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.

16.2 Staffing in the facility includes six prisoners who assemble orders. Prisoners employed in the shop enjoy the work and usually stay for a long time. The Board said last year that these prisoners would benefit from NVQ accredited training which could help them secure retail employment upon release so **recommends** this again.

16.3 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 and again **recommends** that that all goods are priced competitively.

Section 17 – VISITS

17.1 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.

17.2 For many coming to visit Maghaberry, transport can be a problem. NIACRO (supported by PBNi) runs 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. Leaflets are provided in a number of languages to facilitate foreign national visitors.

17.3 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 reception area but there are times when it take a considerable time to reach the prisoner they are visiting. The Board **recommends** that this process is looked at to lessen the delay.

17.4 Visits in Maghaberry take place in the main visits area and also in Braid House within the Mourne complex. The visits 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 visits area in the future.

17.5 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.

17.6 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.

17.7 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.

APPENDIX 1

MAGHABERRY BOARD MEMBERS 2012-2013

Mrs Margaret McCauley	Chair
Mr Dennis Constable	Vice Chair
Ms Vicky Boland	Appointment ended Feb 2013
Mrs Sally Cunningham	
Mrs Myrtle Elliott	Appointment ended March 2013
Mr Phillip Lees	
Dr Ahmed Khamassi	Appointment terminated April 2012
Mr James McAllister	
Mr Jimmy McClean	Appointment ended March 2013
Mrs Valerie McConnell	
Mr Gordon Ramsey	