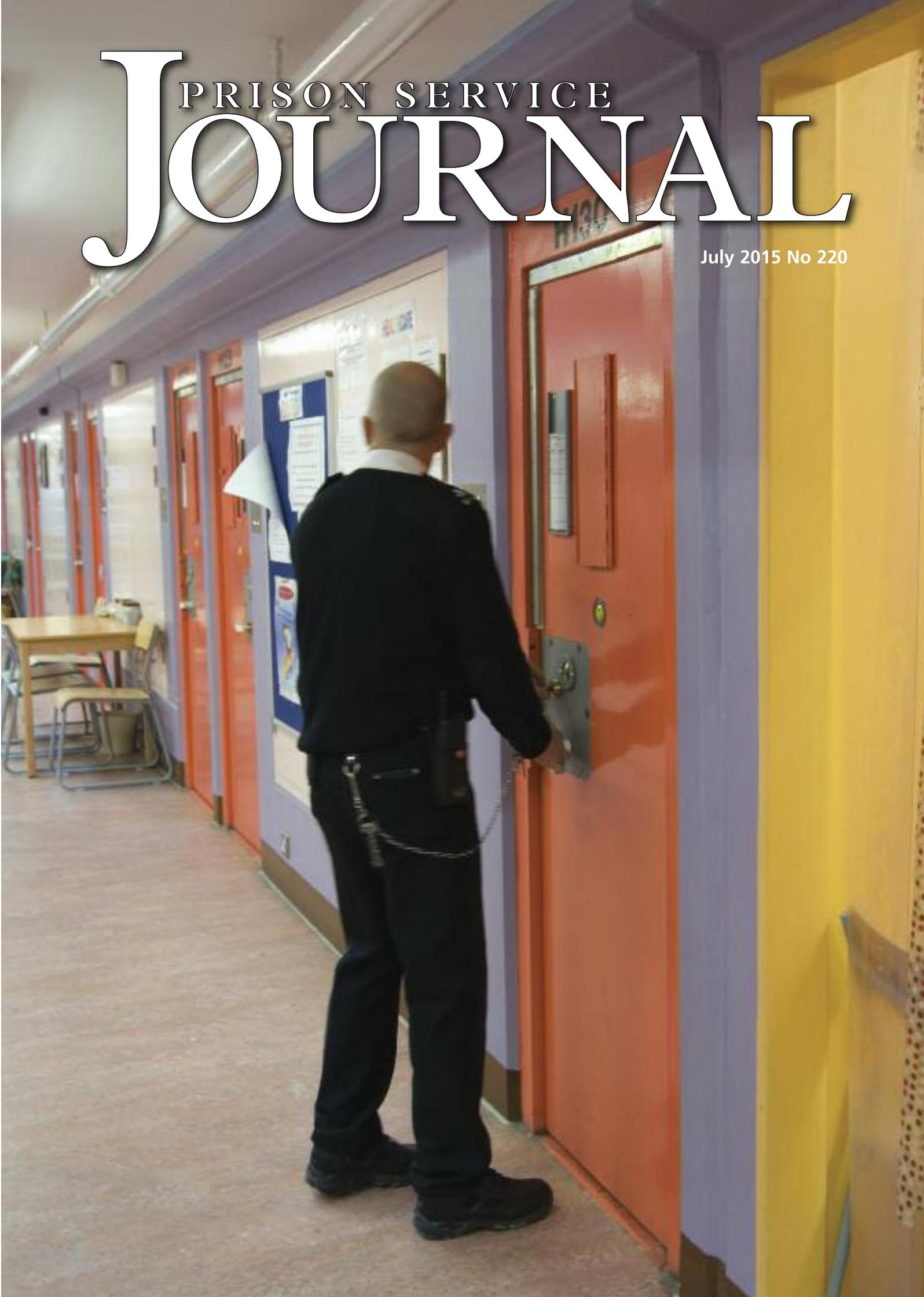


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Editorial Comment

This edition of *Prison Service Journal* offers an eclectic mix of articles revealing something of the penal spectrum as it touches upon prisons, youth imprisonment, the experience of state care, immigration detention and community punishment.

The opening article by Dr. Victoria Knight from De Montfort University, Leicester, offers an overview of technology in prisons. In the words of Yvonne Jewkes and Helen Johnston, prisoners have been represented as 'Cavemen in an era of speed-of-light technology', but Knight reveals how technology such as television, email, internet, e-learning, and digital kiosks have started to seep into prisons, altering them in sometimes significant ways. Knight draws upon international and domestic examples to illustrate the potential of technology to empower prisoners and enrich the prison experience as an opportunity to facilitate desistance from crime. In suggesting that this is an opportunity rather than a threat, Knight makes an important contribution to professional discourse.

Dr Esther van Ginneken of Liverpool Hope University contributes an article drawn from her research into the role of hope in desistance. Her work was based upon interviews with thirty prisoners. She describes 'hope' consists of three elements: *goal-oriented thoughts* (the positive things someone would like to achieve); *pathways to achievements* (plans about how these goals can be achieved); and *agency thoughts* (a motivation to achieve these goals as well as a belief in one's ability to reach them). Based upon her work, she argues that fostering and sustaining hope is part of the ways in which positive progress is sustained.

Two articles focus on the experience of young people. Dr Tricia Skuse and Jonny Matthew offer a paper based upon their work in a secure children's home. They propose a model for understanding

individual behaviour and sequencing interventions. Nina Vaswani from the University of Strathclyde draws upon data collected in 23 interviews, focussing upon the experience of loss amongst young people in prison. This has implications for understanding the pains of imprisonment and how to ameliorate them, but also in thinking about the transition from prison to the community.

The other articles in this edition look more widely than the prison. Martin Ferguson of the mental health charity MIND offers a discussion of the public identification of offenders in the community, for example through high visibility clothing. He situates this discussion with the wider values and political economy of punishment. In particular, he argues that such an approach focusses on the retributive aspects of punishment to the detriment of more reintegrative and rehabilitative aims. Dr Hilary Pickles, a medical professional explores Rule 35 (1) of the immigration detention legislation, which states that a medical practitioner must report to the Centre Manager any detainee whose health is likely to be injuriously affected by continued detention or conditions of detention. Pickles makes a close examination of the rule and its application in practice before offering recommendations for development and improvement. Subsequent to this article being drafted the Home Office have asked Sir Stephen Shaw to review the welfare in detention of vulnerable persons.

Together these articles explore a wide range of areas, including different forms of detention and punishment and different groups of people subject to incarceration. What they share is a concern with the exploring and examining the relationship between theory and practice, and they all have a concern with the values of criminal justice.