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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**THE NATIONAL PREVENTIVE MECHANISM REVEALS FOR THE FIRST
HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE DETAINED IN THE UK**

The UK's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) can reveal that in excess of 124,000 people in the UK are detained on any given day in secure hospitals, prisons, immigration facilities, secure children's homes, police cells and military prison. The actual number of people detained on any given day is likely to be much higher as it has not been possible to include data for a number of settings.

While a range of population data is available for specific detention settings, there is no collated data that provides an overview of detention across every setting in the four jurisdictions of the UK. This report brings together those figures for the first time and reveals some surprising gaps in the data.

It found that:

- the throughput of individuals into police custody from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 was at least 1,220,391. It is not known how many of these were children;
- an estimated 88,611 adults over the age of 21 were detained on 31 March 2016 or 1 April 2016 across the UK in adult prisons;

- on 31 March or 1 April 2016 in England, Wales and Scotland there were 6,345 people aged 20 or under detained in youth custody. There were a further 155 under-21s detained in Northern Ireland;
- there were 3,426 people held in both residential and non-residential immigration detention at the end of March 2016;
- between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016, there were 63,622 detention events under mental health legislation in England; and
- between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016, 76,530 applications for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were granted in England.

Researchers for the NPM could not obtain from the authorities the total numbers of people in military detention, detention in customs facilities or detention during transfers and escorts between places of detention or courts. Collecting up the numbers of people detained has been more difficult than expected, Some of the data is limited and there are significant variations between types of data across each setting and jurisdiction.

These figures are published alongside the UK NPM's seventh annual report, which also gives an overview of its work monitoring detention across the whole of the UK.

The NPM is made up of 20 independent organisations that monitor all prisons, police custody, immigration detention, secure mental hospitals, secure children's homes and other forms of detention in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. NPM members work together to deliver the UK's UN treaty obligations to prevent detainees being mistreated in custody.

This year the NPM appointed its first independent Chair. On behalf of the 20 members of the UK NPM, the new Chair of the NPM, John Wadham said:

“For the first time, we have some real idea of the numbers of people detained across all four parts of the UK. The numbers are not yet as precise as we would like, and collating them was not straightforward.

They do show the sheer volume of people deprived of their liberty and the scale of the task for members of the NPM. There is still a lot we don't know about precisely how many people are detained, where they are held and who they are, and we intend to work with the authorities to improve the accuracy of these figures for next year. The UK's NPM has a unique tradition of professional inspectors and members of the community visiting places of detention and their role is an important check on what goes on behind bars and closed doors.

“Unfortunately too many of the people we lock up are ill-treated or have to deal with poor conditions in detention. The figures we have published show just how important it is to maintain the focus on improving the treatment of those in detention – whether they are children; people with dementia or other mental health issues locked up for their own good; asylum seekers; migrants or prisoners.”

The NPM's 20 independent bodies have powers to inspect or monitor regularly all places of detention and all share the aim of preventing ill-treatment of anyone deprived of their liberty. The NPM was established in 2009 by the UK government to meet its UN treaty obligations. Through regular, independent monitoring of places of detention – conducted through thousands of visits every year – the NPM plays a key role in preventing ill-treatment in detention.

Throughout 2015-16, NPM further developed their work on the use of isolation and solitary confinement in the UK by producing comprehensive guidance for the monitoring of isolation in detention. This guidance will be finalised and published in 2016-17. In the coming year, the NPM will also study the issue of transitions and pathways between different forms of custodial settings to understand the issues and to ensure effective scrutiny across different organisational boundaries.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. A copy of the annual report can be found on NPM website from 13 January 2017 at <http://www.nationalpreventivemechanism.org.uk>
2. The UK's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) was established in March 2009 under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). A United Nations (UN) treaty, OPCAT was ratified by the UK in 2003. OPCAT requires the UK to have in place a 'national preventive mechanism' to visit all places of detention and monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees.
3. The 124,000 figure does not include people held in: secure hospitals in Wales or Northern Ireland, people detained under deprivation of liberty safeguards in England and Wales, detainees in North Yorkshire, West Midlands or Cumbria police cells, people held in customs custody or court custody, or in military service custody facilities.
4. The NPM consists of 20 existing bodies throughout the UK, which are independent and have the right regularly to monitor places of detention. It is coordinated by HM Inspectorate of Prisons.
5. The 20 bodies who make up the NPM are:
 - England and Wales*
 - Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)
 - Care Quality Commission (CQC)
 - Children's Commissioner for England (CCE)
 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP)
 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)
 - Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW)
 - Independent Monitoring Boards (IMB)
 - Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA)
 - Lay Observers (LO)
 - Office for Standards in Education, Children's Service and Skills (Ofsted)
 - Northern Ireland*
 - Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI)
 - Independent Monitoring Boards (Northern Ireland) (IMBNI)
 - Northern Ireland Policing Board Independent Custody Visiting Scheme (NIPBICVS)
 - Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)
 - Scotland*
 - Care Inspectorate (CI)
 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary for Scotland (HMICS)
 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS)
 - Independent Custody Visitors Scotland (ICVS)
 - Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland (MWCS)
 - Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC)
6. Please contact Jane Parsons in HMI Prisons press office on 020 3681 2775 or 07880 787452 if you would like more information or to request an interview with John Wadham. You may also contact Emma Mackintosh, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales' press office on 0300 062 8713. You may also contact Malachy Finnegan, Northern Ireland's RQIA press office on 02890 517485. You may also contact Emma Hutton, Scottish Human Rights Commission, on 0131 244 4244.