



HMP/YOI EAST SUTTON PARK

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD

1ST NOVEMBER 2009 TO 31ST OCTOBER 2010

Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 requires every prison and Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Home Secretary from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

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

To enable the board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also the prison's records, with the exception of prisoners' medical records unless the individual's permission has been given.

Section 2

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Section 3

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRISON

East Sutton Park is an open prison for 94 women and 6 young offenders, located six miles from Maidstone, the County Town of Kent. In 1954 the first and only open female borstal was established at East Sutton Park which is today the only female open prison in the south of England. The main house is an imposing Jacobean mansion set in 84 acres of grounds with magnificent views over the Weald of Kent. The original building dates back to the 11th century and was on a moated site which can still be seen in the lower fields.

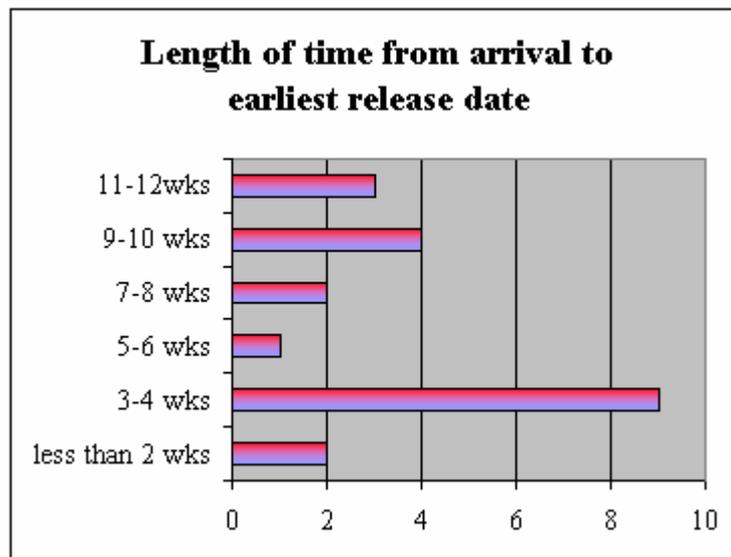
East Sutton Park is now jointly managed with HMP Blantyre House, a male open resettlement prison, as the Weald of Kent Resettlement Estate. This arrangement has proved increasingly successful over the past year.

ESP is a working prison with a farm, extensive gardens and an increasingly profitable farm shop. Accommodation is mainly in dormitories but there are a number of double rooms and priority for these is given to women who go out to paid work. All the women are transferred from other establishments where they will have been risk assessed as suitable for open resettlement conditions. ESP residents are encouraged to prepare for release and return to the community by gaining qualifications, skills and confidence through work and study. Towards the end of this reporting period about 50 ESP residents were going out to college, community placements or paid work. Links with the local community are good and towards the end of their sentence and after a period of voluntary work, most women will be eligible to go out to paid work but they must save at least 50% of their earnings for when they are released.

Section 4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(a) Particular issues requiring a response.

- Women transferred to ESP have on several occasions been led to expect that HDC will be automatically granted because of the open prison category. This is not a right and many of the ladies are being given false hopes of an early release, leaving staff at ESP to deal with the ensuing problems.
- Women being transferred to ESP are often only told hours before they are transferred. If they do not have credit on their phone they are not able to let relatives know until after they have arrived. Relatives who travel long distances for a visit could already be on their way to the sending prison and by the time they have arrived to find their relative has moved they have missed a visit and are unable to afford another.
- Women are frequently sent to ESP for very short periods before they are released. During the 12 week period (illustrated below) there were 2 people with less than 2 weeks left to serve until their earliest release date –one with 10 days and the other with 5 day) Is this a sensible use of resources?



- Can the Minister have any influence over sentencing policies that put mothers in prison when a properly run community scheme may be more appropriate to the offence? An effective community sentence is more likely to encourage a change of lifestyle and a family to stay together.

(b) Other issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response.

The professional and caring attitude of staff towards each of the women in their care has been a key factor in helping to turn lives around and reduce the likelihood of re offending. It is widely discussed and agreed that small prisons are infinitely more effective than large establishments and East Sutton Park is an excellent example of what can be achieved.

Overall judgement

We had previously highlighted the disruptive effect of frequent staff changes but we are pleased to say that the period covered in this report has been one of stability and progress. The Board attributes this to the fact that most governor grades and staff have stayed in post during this time, allowing the development of a strong staff team.

Section 5

AREAS THAT MUST BE REPORTED ON

DIVERSITY

During the course of the year D&REAT monthly meetings alternated between HMP/YOI ESP and HMP Blantyre House. The reason for doing this was to reduce the disproportionate time spent by the Senior Staff and the Diversity Manager at meetings. The change has been successful but the emphasis of the meeting has tended to be on the establishment at which the meeting is being held. I can only repeat the comment that was made in the last report that the Diversity Manager has too large a workload and more assistance is required.

Issues raised by the residents during the course of the year have included:-

- job allocation – a new protocol was drafted,
- cost of phone calls – investigated and findings reported back to the residents,
- handrails on stairs – H&S risk assessed but minutes of D&REAT meeting state that it could not be implemented as ESP is a listed building.

Communications within the prison and between officers and residents can still pose difficulties with residents sometimes receiving conflicting messages. This difficulty is appreciated and is being addressed.

A number of successful events have been held during the course of the year including Black History month and in June a very successful Cultural Day. The residents were encouraged to and did undertake a majority of the organisation of these events.

Residents have been invited to and have attended D&REAT meetings. In addition, when time has permitted, the Diversity Manager has held open forums for the women to be able to voice any concerns and appropriate action taken. They have been very well attended and are invaluable in giving the women a voice. Given more staff time, more forums could be held.

A member of the IMB has checked through the Racial Incident Report Forms to ensure correct procedures and outcomes have been followed and to make comments.

CATERING

Meal cost per prisoner per day averaged £1.90 which was an achievement in keeping prices down without sacrificing quality. Budget cuts were addressed by a cost saving policy that included serving cheaper cuts of meat and fish. Braising steak, lamb chops and smoked haddock were removed from the menu. The high quality of the meals was appreciated by the women and comments in the Food book were correspondingly complimentary. Special diets were catered for and women wishing to lose weight were given a wide range of healthy options. Several women had achieved NVQ Catering qualifications.

LEARNING & SKILLS

Ofsted inspectors praised the work of educational staff in raising standards in education department over the last 18 months. New accreditation targets had been met and good relationships maintained between staff and learners.

The new education provider, Manchester College, replaced A4E across Kent. The college's financial cutbacks led to some staff hours being cut and salaries dropped but with the expectation that the employees would maintain their work levels; providing 'more for less.' The education manager had been expected to attend college training and more offsite meetings which made her role a challenge, being thinly spread over both sites. All of this uncertainty caused much anxiety to individuals. However staff remain committed to seeing lives changed through the process of resettlement and work to this end daily.

Literacy and numeracy - this year more students achieved levels 1 and 2 qualifications. Key skills communication level 3 was introduced, earning a 'glowing report' following an external moderators visit in summer of 2010. The moderators recognised the hard work staff had put in to making this higher progressive level work so well.

The Magazine *The Trumpeter*, had gone from strength to strength with the Literacy tutor leading evening creative writing classes where a team of learners now produced a quarterly edition which was subsequently printed at HMP Stanford Hill. The magazine won a major prize at the Koestler exhibition and is currently on display in London.

Information & Communication Technology training has proved very popular with all course places taken on a regular basis. The ICT suite is very well used at evenings and weekends as well as during the day.

Close links with the library have played an important part in the learning process with the facilities frequently used as an important area of resources.

Vocational skills such as hairdressing and beauty therapy have been taught through accredited courses allowing learners to progress to higher education in the community in preparation for employment. Short employability courses including health and safety in the workplace, first aid, preparation for work, customer care, food safety, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) level 2 have given learners a desirable qualification.

Personal and social skills training in Assertiveness and Decision Making and Budgeting and Money Management have played a key part in equipping prisoners for release.

The education department has been represented at weekly sentence planning meetings when suitable courses have been identified as being of particular benefit to the individual learner.

The Family Learning Programme has encouraged closer relationships and good communication between mums, grandmothers and their families with classes such as *Cooking with the Kids*. The classes which have also focussed on what is being taught in schools have been particularly well attended.

The *First Aid Appointed Persons* certificate was delivered six times over the year. The four hour course covers *Resuscitation, First on Scene and General First Aid*. The certificates are valid for 3 years.

Support for distance learning includes Open University.

The Board recognises that the high quality of education provision and individual attention to students has played a key part in equipping the women for life after their release.

The Pathways Course was provided to all prisoners who were taken through the areas of Accommodation, Skills & Employment, Drugs & Alcohol etc to assess the areas of offending behaviour that should be worked on for the remainder of their time in custody. The programmes that were run by Probation and Education set out to help each participant to understand the consequences of their actions and how they could take more control of their lives. To this end everyone on a course such as Anger Management, or Budgeting & Finance had worked in small groups that made it easier to open up, question the leader of the course and speak about their experiences, perhaps using roleplay.

The Drug Importers course had helped prisoners to face up to why they committed the offence and to realise the damage that had been done to their own families as well as the wider community.

The Freedom Course encouraged women who had been affected by domestic violence to understand this complex issue and to find the confidence to take charge of their lives again.

The Personal Officer scheme continued to play a major part in supporting each woman during her time at ESP. The essence of the success of the scheme was the fact that each woman was treated as an individual with her own special needs, leading to her increased confidence and self esteem.

The welfare of the woman's family was also taken into account with family days and visits supported by staff who were very aware that one of the most important aspects of rehabilitation is to maintain contact with children and other family members.

Healthcare & Mental Health

HMP East Sutton Park does not have a 24 hour Health Care department but all prisoners received at the prison are seen within 24 hours of arrival by a member of the health department and an appointment is made to see a doctor at the next clinic. The Health Care clinic is held in a separate building adjoining the prison and is well equipped and clean. The waiting area ensures that privacy and confidentiality are maintained for the women during their consultations.

Appointments to see a dentist for routine check ups take up to 6 weeks but women can be seen within a week if necessary and 24 hours in an emergency.

There are very few serious untoward incidents at East Sutton Park.

Various aspects of health promotion have been addressed throughout the year including smoking cessation and breast awareness. However the number of women using the gym is low and varies as over the year the gym has been inadequately staffed.

Six ACCT's (Assessment Care Custody Team) were opened and these were appropriately managed within the time frame set out by the prison. (10 were opened during the previous reporting period)

There are concerns regarding the relationship the PCT has with the prison health care. It appears that the PCT does not fully appreciate that Health Care is answerable to both the Prison Service and the NHS and has to work to the agendas of both parties. At the present time the contract to deliver Health Care has been put out to tender to a third party and we are awaiting the outcome. With regard to Mental Health provision the company that was awarded the contract to provide this service has not delivered. As the Health Care manager no longer holds the budget she is unable to buy in psychological services and consequently the waiting time for these therapies has increased.

SEPARATION & CARE UNITS

This is not applicable to East Sutton Park

Section 6

OTHER AREAS OF THE PRISON REGIME ON WHICH THE BOARD HAS ISSUES TO REPORT

VISION

This peer led project continues to run smoothly and is working to the benefit of residents. A team of three ladies plus two part time staff members (to enable internet access to look at job vacancies) has been able again this year to find accommodation for all residents who were released. Having accommodation is essential to reduce re offending. Another aspect is having a job. This has been particularly difficult at this time of recession, both finding voluntary work for the ladies whilst still in prison and on release for full time work. As spending cuts take effect, charities are finding that they do not have the resources to pay the travel expenses for volunteers and the Prison Service is similarly affected.

There were community placements in 31 organisations including, St Giles Trust, Tab Centre, Heart of Kent Hospice, Sue Ryder shops, Clean Break Theatre company, Women at the Well, Chinese Information and Translation Centre.

Paid placements included, Timpsons, KCC, Maidstone Borough Council, West Kent College, Sutton Valence Stables & Hadlow Stables. Some of the ladies who were employed by multi national companies were able to transfer to a branch near to their homes in order to secure a paid position there on release. Vision project workers continued to encourage companies like M&S and Sainsburys to realise this potential for their company to be pro active in reducing re offending.

The maintenance of family ties was encouraged with regular weekend visits and child support resettlement leave available to those who were eligible. As a further incentive, the library facilitated the popular talking books programme, *Story Book Mums*. The process is simple, with the prisoner reading and recording a story for a special child. If a woman finds reading difficult she can repeat the sentences that are spoken by a helper and these extra lines will be edited out so that the story reads smoothly. The CDs are sent to HMP Dartmoor where the story is edited and special effects are added before the disk is specially labelled by a designer and despatched.

CHAPLAINCY

Spiritual support for women of all religions has been provided. Since the resignation, for personal reasons, of the C E chaplain the post has not been filled and this has put extra pressure on the RC, United reformed and Salvation Army chaplains, all of whom work only part time at ESP and have duties at other prisons. An advert has been drawn up for a chaplain to work both at ESP and Blantyre House.

FARMS & GARDENS

These areas have been continued to be of particular benefit as a therapeutic project and also in providing women with new skills. The farm has rare breed pigs, sheep, 5 beef cattle and 17 livery horses with a waiting list for places. Many of the women have suffered abuse in their lives and consequently have very low self esteem; knowing that they are responsible for the welfare of the farm's animals has been a

factor in building their own trust and confidence. NVQ courses are available in horticulture and agriculture, providing skill bases for future employment. The successful Farm Shop provides employment for the women and a chance for them to interact with customers from surrounding areas thereby restoring confidence and building self esteem.

SECURITY

Number of SIRs 377 (329 over last reporting period)

November 2009

Indication of mobile phone use in workers corridor,
Information received that two residents had used cocaine on home leave
Serious incident with abscond of a high profile prisoner. Two member of IMB attended all day monitoring the searching of the prison, the grounds and the women's rooms as well as being involved in police briefings. Staff kept the women appropriately informed and carried out the searches with particular attention to respecting the women's property,

December 2009

Two requests from outside probation to have resident placed on frequent MDT (Mandatory drug testing)
Allegations of resident drinking on home leave
Resident returning to establishment with more money than she went out with

January 2010

Resident arrested for shoplifting on ROR (Resettlement overnight release)
Interference on televisions in house might be caused by mobile phone use

February 2010

Items going missing from the rooms
Resident apparently connect to vice trade while on RDR (Resettlement day release)

March 2010

Resident using others PIN phone account
Resident using Spice on home leave
Drug dog search indicated presence of drugs in four prison areas
Mobile phone indications by the dog team

April 2010

Residents returning with additional items from ROTL
Residents not being at ROTL addresses when on home leave
Two office doors found unlocked

May 2010

Mobile phone indications in workers corridor
Early morning mobile phone search using dog team
Drug dog indication in poly tunnels

June 2010

Toilets being blocked on purpose
Numerous items of correspondence about a residents housing business
Man seen walking around the prison grounds

July 2010

Allegations that resident had been smoking cannabis
Petty arguments in the house
Concerns raised over a member of the chaplaincy and their competency to draw keys

August 2010

Prison driver made aware vehicles being tracked

Resident heard on PIN phone trying to pervert the cause of justice

September 2010

Resident corresponding with officer in Foston Hall

Mobile phone indications recorded

Strange car seen near quarters at 06 20hrs.

Grounded resident requesting money from other residents for her children

October 2010

Inappropriate items being printed on education printers

Concerns raised over one residents attitude to male staff

Resident making threats to walk out of establishment

Legal visitor arrived smelling of alcohol

PIN monitoring indicated numerous external crimes by one resident's partner.

OVERVIEW

- Very little information on drugs and alcohol, although drug dogs indicating areas of the prison, no additional information or positive drug tests to qualify results.
- There are regular mobile phone indications from one, possibly two mobile phones. The monitoring equipment supplied by HMPS is too vague to identify a specific area, working on power levels not direction.
- Numerous problems resulting from ROTL (Release on Temporary Licence) releases, residents not being at their cleared address, not answering their phones during random checks, and allegations of drinking and drug use while on their four days out.
- Residents frequently trying to bring unrequested items in from ROTL.

Section 7**THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD**

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended complement of Board members	9
Number of Board members at start of the period	9
Number of Board members at end of reporting period	9
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	1
Number of members leaving within reporting period	1
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendance at Board meetings during reporting period	9
Number of attendances at other meetings	175
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	256
Total number of written applications received	24
Total number of verbal applications recorded	12

Subject of applications

Code	Subject	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
A	Accommodation	1	1	0	1
B	Adjudications	0	0	0	2
C	Diversity Related	1	0	2	1
D	Education/training/employment	5	0	2	4
E	Family/Visits	7	0	0	2
F	Food/kitchen	3	0	5	2
G	Health related	2	0	0	4
H	Property	5	4	5	8
I	Sentence related	0	0	0	3
J	Staff/prisoner related	2	4	4	4
K	Transfers	1	0	1	1
L	Miscellaneous	7	9	10	4
	Total number of applications	33	18	29	36

Members have covered a range of meetings and boards held at ESP in addition to those in his/her area of special interest. This has enabled the whole Board to be aware of issues that may impact on prisoners.

Three members attended the IMB Annual Conference at Leicester

Members have attended training courses on: Challenge it Change it and WASP (Women Awareness Staff Programme)

The Board hosted a visit from Ukrainian lawyers from the Kharkiv Institute for Social Researches, who are researching UK monitoring provision to assist in setting up of NPMs (National Preventative Mechanisms) in their own countries.

Members held an away day to discuss the Board's Performance Review. In order to cut costs this was held at a neighbouring establishment.

It was with great sadness that we announced the death of our Chair Pat Lisle earlier this year. The Board was thankful for her dedication to improving the lives of women in custody and after their release.

Graham Maple
IMB Chair
HMP/YOI East Sutton Park

Abbreviated list

ACCT	Assessment Care Custody Team
ADAs	Added days awarded
ADM	Assertiveness and decision making
ARD	Automatic release date
ART	Aggression replacement training
B	Bail
BMM	Budgeting and money management
CARAT's	Counselling assessment referral advice throughcare
CCR	Child care resettlement
CJA03	Criminal Justice Act 2003
COACD	Court of Appeal Criminal Division
CRD	Conditional release date
DIG	Drug importers group
DIP	Drug interventions programme
DTO	Detention and training order
DYOI	Detention in a young offender institution
ERRS	Early release and recall section
ESPP	Extended sentence for Public Protection
HDC	Home detention curfew
HDCED	Home detention curfew eligibility date
IAG	Information advice/guidance
IMB	Independent monitoring board
IRB	Initial review board
ISPP	Indeterminate sentence public protection
LED	Licence expiry date
MAPPA	Multi agency public protection arrangements
NPD	Non parole date
OASys	Offender assessment system
OMU	Offender Management Unit/Probation
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
PADA	Prospective added days awarded
PCT	Primary care trust
PED	Parole eligibility date
PPO	Prolific priority offender
PRRD	Post recall release date
PSI	Prison service instruction
PSO	Prison Service Order
PSR	Prison service report
RDR	Resettlement day release
ROR	Resettlement overnight release
ROTL	Release on temporary licence
RRB	Risk review board
Rx	Remand
S	Sentenced
SED	Sentence expiry date
SIR	Security information report
SLED	Sentence and licence expiry date
SWICC	Sex workers in custody and community