

**INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD  
HMP/YOI Eastwood Park**



**ANNUAL REPORT  
to the Secretary of State for Justice**

**1 November 2009 – 31 October 2010**

## **Preface**

### **Statutory Role of the IMB**

The Prisons Act and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Secretary of State for Justice 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 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 to the prison's records.

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*\* these reports are mandatory*

## **1 Description of HMP/YOI Eastwood Park**

- 1.1 HMP/YOI Eastwood Park is a female closed local prison situated mid-way between Gloucester and Bristol by the village of Falfield, South Gloucestershire. It can hold approximately 360 prisoners - adult and young women - on remand or serving mainly short sentences. Eastwood Park also includes a unit – the Mary Carpenter Unit – for young women aged up to 18, a Mother and Baby Unit and an Integrated Drugs Treatment System (IDTS) unit which holds 85 prisoners.
- 1.2 The site was opened as a male Junior Detention Centre in 1964. From 1989 to 1993 it served as a male Young Offender Institution. It was finally converted into a closed women’s prison in March 1996. Since that date the women’s prison population in England and Wales has more than doubled and HMP/YOI Eastwood Park’s capacity has expanded as a result.
- 1.3 A local prison, Eastwood Park nevertheless receives prisoners from a wide catchment area extending over South Wales, the South and Southwest, and the Midlands. It is the ‘local’ prison to 74 courts. Only around 20% of prisoners reside within 50 miles of the prison, 26% between 50 and 100 miles away, 32% live between 100 and 150 miles away and a further 20% or more live over 150 miles away. This can make visiting difficult for prisoners’ families. It sometimes means long and delayed journeys to Eastwood Park for prisoners coming from the courts.
- 1.4 The regime at Eastwood Park is diverse and offers a variety of activities. These include housing, gym, education and interventions orderlies, purposeful activity on the wings and a comprehensive PE programme. The Education Department offers basic skills, wider key skills, IT, cookery, diversity, salon services, preparation for work, drug and alcohol awareness and industrial cleaning. There is an Information, Advice and Guidance service. An Interventions Team works with key stakeholders to reduce re-offending: these include education, offender management, health (including mental health) services, and children and family support. Voluntary and community sector organisations work in the prison to meet the complex and individual needs of the prisoners and to offer them a comprehensive range of resettlement provision. There are also Resettlement Fayres every eight weeks. These enable women to access services available to them both inside and outside of the prison.
- 1.5 There is no Segregation/Separation & Care Unit. Those on Good Order or Discipline (GOOD) are located in their cells on the wings.

- 1.6 One third of women are in Eastwood Park for just two weeks. Over the course of 2009/10 the average length of stay of around 93% of the population has dropped from 49 to 29 days.
- 1.7 There are approximately 400 prisoner movements through Reception each month.
- 1.8 According to the needs analysis carried out in November 2009 approximately 50% of the prisoners have been imprisoned previously.
- 1.9 Around half of the prisoners are on remand and thus do not have sentence plans.
- 1.10 Prisoner numbers have been around a weekly average of 300 at Eastwood Park during the year. However, towards the end of the reporting year numbers have risen sharply.
- 1.11 The Prison Service has introduced a large number of changes to prisons this year. There have also been local changes. These have had an impact on staff morale and at a time of low numbers of uniformed staff.

Changes include the opening of the new Kinnon Unit; the closure of A and C wings; a change in status of D wing from a Young Offenders wing to an Adult Enhanced wing; new health care contracts; the introduction of P-NOMIS; the introduction of staff rostering software; the change from Principal Officers to trainee Governors; and some change in the role of Senior Officers.

- 1.12 The Board would like to commend the staff of Eastwood Park for their hard work this year dealing with the many changes that have taken place. The Board also notes the good relationship between prisoners and staff.
- 1.13 There have been more bed watches and prisoner escorts during the latter part of the year. Combined with the shortage of discipline staff, this has had an impact on the core regime and resulted in reduced prisoner association time. During the latter part of the reporting year the prison was short of approximately 12 prison officers compared to a shortage of six a year ago. The prison has suffered staff shortages all year. Recruitment is ongoing and the shortfall in staff should be reduced by Christmas 2010.
- 1.14 April saw the introduction of the new Prison Service software – Prisoner National Offender Management Information System (P-NOMIS). There were initial problems, in particular over prisoners’ pay. Prisoners are now receiving a weekly statement of their monies with their canteen sheet.

- 1.15 Eastwood Park changed from a level 4 to a level 3 performing prison in the year. This is mainly because of a change in Prison Service criteria rather than because of changes at Eastwood Park itself.
- 1.16 A smoking ban on site for staff is, at the time of writing, likely to be introduced.
- 1.17 The Chaplaincy serves many faiths. It has a number of chaplains including a Muslim and a Buddhist.

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## **2 Summary**

- 2.1 The Board is satisfied that prisoners at HMP Eastwood Park are treated humanely and fairly. However, we do have concerns regarding health care provision. We would also like to see one overall manager in charge of all health care in Eastwood Park.
- 2.2 The Board welcomed a new Governor, Mrs Andrea Albutt (née Whitfield) to HMP Eastwood Park.
- 2.3 The Board received 210 applications from prisoners over the past reporting year, which was slightly more than last year.
- 2.4 ***The following are the Board's chief concerns:***
- 2.5 The biggest concern is the shortage of health care staff on the IDTS unit. The length of time required for security clearance for both agency and permanent nursing staff is hampering delivery. There are too many – five – health care providers in Eastwood Park. No one is in overall charge and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) appear to have under funded the contracts.
- 2.6 Group-work sessions on the Kinnon Unit have not been facilitated by nursing staff because of staff shortages.
- 2.7 There is *ad hoc* nursing cover and there are problems over the availability of doctors, in Reception as well as elsewhere in the prison.

- 2.8 The Duty Governor is not always alerted when there has been a clinical incident concerning medication. This should be done in order to enable the prison to plan for possible escorts or bed watches.
- 2.9 A number of prisoners have mental health issues. On occasions, it seems as though the prison is being used as a convenient waiting room for psychiatric hospitals. Better help and intervention in the community or more hospital places would be more appropriate.
- 2.10 The prison is not succeeding and cannot succeed with women in short-term and often repeated short-term custody. Many of the women's issues could be better addressed with targeted support in the community.
- 2.11 Prison Service contracts with outside providers of services need to improve. Cases of both good and bad practice need to be identified and shared among the commissioning bodies in order to improve contracts. As already mentioned, at Eastwood Park there are too many medical providers which causes problems of communication and integration.
- 2.12 There is no provision for a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in the adult education contract.
- 2.13 The booked visits system is inefficient and causes distress and inconvenience to prisoners and their families. This was mentioned in last year's report.
- 2.14 There is a need for an additional part-time Housing Officer.
- 2.15 A doctor for the young women on the Mary Carpenter Unit is needed. The Youth Justice Board funds eight hours a week for a doctor but there has been no doctor since April 2009.
- 2.16 At times the Population Management Unit (PMU) expects Eastwood Park to take prisoners for which there are no appropriate places. Although Eastwood Park may have several spare prisoner places, they do not always match prisoners' risk assessment or treatment profiles.
- 2.16 Some prisoners still arrive late at the prison from court, because of the Prison Escort Services (mentioned in last year's Report).
- 2.17 Future cuts in the prison's budget are awaited with apprehension. Eastwood Park is already an under funded prison.

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### **3 Diversity**

- Diversity is managed by the Race Equality Action Team (REAT), chaired by the Deputy Governor. There is a full time Equalities Officer and a part-time assistant.
- The number of Racist Incident Reports is down this year and is the lowest for three years.
- Staffing hours available for Diversity have been reduced because of staffing shortages.
- A new local Diversity Policy, encompassing the various strands of equality, was approved in August 2010.
- The national training package *Challenge It, Change It* has been well received with 92% of the staff having been on the course over the last two years.
- There are approximately 35 Foreign Nationals (FNPs) at any one time, some of whom do not speak English and some have mental health problems.
- Ethnic monitoring indicates that about 20% of prisoners come from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. Data indicate that no ethnic group is unfairly treated or denied access to facilities. Close to half of all BME prisoners are Foreign Nationals.
- Eastern Europeans and Africans make up the majority of FNPs. There are language barriers despite greater use of the telephone translation service, *Big Word*, and the translation of forms and information on procedures. An E-SOL course is available for FNPs.
- There have been a number of sentenced-expired FNPs in the past year, between 15 to 20. There is none at the time of writing.
- Diversity at Eastwood Park is well managed.

#### **3.1 Concerns**

- Many of these concerns are carried forward from last year's report.
- There is a shortage of accommodation for prisoners with disabilities on Res 2. There has, however, been an increase in accommodation for those with disabilities since the opening of the new Kinnon unit.

- Prisoners with dark complexions have had difficulty obtaining suitable cosmetics. The Board believes that this issue needs to be addressed at a national level, although we believe that this problem will be solved locally.
- FNPs cannot watch foreign language television channels.
- The reduced staffing time available to monitor equality issues, particularly disability, is of concern.

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## **4 Learning and Skills**

- Monthly attendance levels for adults dropped slightly in 2010 compared to last year – from 85-88% in 2008/9 to about 85% in 2009/10. This is due in part to the shorter stay of prisoners and the length of the courses.
- The average number of hours of education per adult per week, which increased from 4.27 in 2007/8 to 5.12 in 2008/9, declined to 4.65 in 2009/10.
- The number of qualifications gained in 2009/10 was 2036, which is broadly in line with 2008/09.
- Students continued to register high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the service on offer. Student feedback forms indicated that the education they have received has boosted their self-esteem and self-confidence; they felt safe in education. Prisoners are addressed by their first names and there is a good relationship between prisoners and staff. There are no student representatives or class representatives but regular student forums are held.
- Just over 70% of arrivals receive education induction as 32% of prisoners are now at Eastwood Park for less than two weeks. They can spend those two weeks on the IDTS unit, which has priority over education. Induction involves assessment of literacy and numeracy skills. It also identifies prisoners' plans and aspirations on release in order to find the best course for them to attend.
- The recent discovery of some old documents shows the extent to which the Education Department has changed in the past ten years. In 2000 there were 13 members of staff: now there are over 60. The number of classes running in any one session was between 3 and 7: earlier this year it was between 15 and 17. A decade ago adults and juveniles combined had

around a dozen courses from which to choose: until recently there were 38 different courses for adults and 14 for juveniles. However, the number of courses is set to decline considerably, partly as a result of financial cuts, but also partly as a result of the introduction of different evaluation criteria.

- The Learning and Skills Council was reluctant to fund very short courses and its successor, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), has adopted the same approach. The SFA's criteria for courses raise particular problems for Eastwood Park. These are mainly because most prisoners do not spend enough time in the prison to complete an accredited course. For example, for a course to continue, the SFA stipulates that 62% of those starting a course must complete it and achieve accreditation. Most of the courses previously available are too short or at too low a level to satisfy the SFA. Also, prisoners transferred to other prisons often find it impossible to resume courses they started at Eastwood Park
- Because of the short length of time prisoners are in Eastwood Park, course lengths are being reduced and there is a reduction in the number of courses available.
- Prisoners tend not to take courses that could increase their employability
- The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has issued a new specification for the delivery of offender library services which, if implemented, will result in a 45% increase in the number of hours the library must be open. Apparently, there is no funding for this and that there is no demand from prisoners for this extra time.

#### **4.1 concerns**

- There is now only one Education Manager in situ at the time of writing (there have been two) and she has less administrative support.
- The prisoners' toilets next to the Education corridor need refurbishing.
- There is no provision for a SENCO in the adult education contract.
- Prisoners are transferred by PMU with no account taken of their individual learning plans and educational needs.
- Information and Guidance staff provision has decreased by nearly a third.
- Providers have delivered over 90% of their classroom contracted hours during the past year. A target 95% or above is preferable.

- A shortage of officers has reduced the availability of evening courses and access to the library.

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## **5 Healthcare and Mental Health**

### **5.1 Healthcare**

- New health care contracts were awarded during the year. There are five health care providers in Eastwood Park, which does not facilitate an integrated service.
- There have been problems with communication between the various providers.

### **5.2 concerns**

- There is no overall manager in charge of the health care providers in Eastwood Park. We would urge the Secretary of State to impress upon those responsible for drawing up contracts that so many health care providers or subcontractors in one prison is not good practice.
- At the time of writing, the number of medical staff is low. One reason for this is the length of time it takes to obtain security clearance for new staff. We would ask the Secretary of State to look at ways of speeding up the process.
- There is insufficient room in *Pathways*, the outpatient clinic: space for treatment is very limited as is storage.
- There have been concerns over the availability of doctors and *ad hoc* nursing cover for Reception.

### **5.3 Mental Health**

- Avon Wiltshire Partnership (AWP) provide the mental health cover in Eastwood Park and provide a good service.
- Mental Health received 450 referrals between April and September 2010.

- An occupational therapist has recently been appointed.

#### **5.4 Res 4.**

- Res. 4 accommodates prisoners with acute mental or emotional needs, who require a high level of staff support.
- Officers have had some very demanding and high profile prisoners during the past year and have dealt with them in a most professional and caring manner.

#### **5.5 concerns**

- There is no psychology support for prisoners on Res 4.

#### **5.6 Counselling, Assessment, Referral, Advice and Through care Scheme (CARATS)**

- The CARATS team is now responsible for engaging with prisoners who are solely alcohol dependent. These average about 20 per month.

#### **5.7 Integrated Drug Treatment System (IDTS)**

- The new IDTS Kinnon Unit opened in March 2010. It is an 85 bed unit accommodating all new receptions with a substance misuse issue.

#### **5.8 concerns**

- Full and immediate disclosure of clinical incidents does not always happen, for example, in cases when a prisoner is given the wrong, or no, medication. The Duty Governor should be notified in order to make appropriate arrangements for possible prisoner escorts to hospital.
- Naxolone should be available for prisoners on their release.

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## **6 Safer Prisons**

- There was one death in custody, in April 2010. At the time of writing the cause of death has not been established.
- There are approximately 40 open Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork files (ACCTs) a week for 10-15% of the prison's population. Listeners attend the first part of the monthly Safer Prisons meeting.
- The *Carousel* self-harm reduction course continues although it is expected to be replaced next year by another similar course.
- As at September 2010 there have been 1027 self-harm incidents (for an average population of 330). For the year ending September 2009 there were 921 incidents (for an average population of 250).

### **6.1 concerns**

- On occasions too few staff attend multi-disciplinary ACCT case reviews or submit written reports. However, the Mental Health team do attend on a regular basis.
- A number of case reviews particularly over the summer break period, were late as well as a small number of the initial 24 hour assessments. This was because of a recruitment freeze resulting in 15 staff vacancies and also because of the number of escorts and bed watches needed during the summer.
- We appreciate that the Safer Custody team has done its best to rectify our concerns but problems remain.

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## **7 Other Areas of the Prison**

### **7.1 Booked Visits**

#### **concerns**

- There have been problems with booked visits for several years but this year they were worse. On too many occasions Booked Visits has not been staffed. The IMB has tested the system, by phoning the Booked Visits line, and have had no reply.
- Part of the problem is because of the freeze on the recruitment of administrative staff. The Board consider it vitally important that prisoners' families can book visits. Family ties are a key factor in reducing re-offending.

### **7.2 Resettlement**

- The Welsh Assembly has earmarked funding for the resettlement of Welsh prisoners to be targeted more effectively.

#### **concerns**

- Eastwood Park has one Housing Officer at present, which is insufficient to deal with the workload even with support. An additional part-time Housing Officer (18 hours per week) is needed.
- There is very little, if any behavioural work done at Eastwood Park to reduce re-offending. Given the length of time most prisoners are at Eastwood Park, its provision is often not practical. The Board is concerned that without such work the justice system is just recycling the same prisoners. If their underlying behavioural problems are not addressed, the women will continue to fail.

### **7.3 Security**

- The department achieved 90% overall when audited in May 2010.
- Cell searches and mandatory drug tests, intelligence monitoring, etc., suggest that few illegal drugs are being taken into Eastwood Park. The drug dogs have proved useful.

**concerns**

- Parts of E wing association area are out of sight of patrolling officers.

**7.4 Mother and Baby Unit**

- This is an excellent unit where mothers and babies thrive. The nursery is well managed but is too often closed because of staff shortages, due in part to staff leave or sickness. However, the number of women with babies on the unit has been low.
- There have been only 3-4 women and their babies at any one time on a twelve bed unit for much of the year, although numbers have risen sharply in October 2010.

**7.5 Reception**

- An extremely busy area, well organised with dedicated staff.

**concerns**

- Eastwood Park continues to receive late arrivals from court. It seems that this is chiefly because of the way the prison transport (Reliance) manages the transport of women prisoners.

**7.6 Mary Carpenter Unit (for up to 18 year olds)**

- A well-run unit.

**concerns**

- There is no doctor for the unit; funding a doctor has been problematic.

## 7.7 Adjudications (Nov 09 – Oct 10)

	08/09	09/10
November	62	69
December	85	62
January	93	54
February	67	86
March	78	47
April	76	51
May	55	35
June	52	47
July	100	30
August	66	74
September	86	57
October	83	*
<b>Total</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>612</b>

\* figure unavailable at the time of writing.

## 8 The Work of the Independent Monitoring Board

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	13
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	2
Number of members leaving within reporting period	0
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	9
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	51
Total number of visits to the prison (including all meetings)	643
Total number of applications received	210
Total number of segregation reviews held	n/a
Total number of segregation reviews attended	n/a

### Applications to the Board (Nov 09 - Oct 10)

<b>Code</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>
A	Accommodation	15	19
B	Adjudications	1	6
C	Diversity related	4	5
D	Education/employment/training	8	9
E	Family/visits	16	34
F	Food/kitchen related	9	12
G	Health related	25	32
H	Property	35	23
I	Sentence related	17	13
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	23	18
K	Transfers	8	4
L	Miscellaneous	41	35
<b>Total number of applications</b>		<b>202</b>	<b>210</b>