



HMP Usk & Prescoed

Annual Report

2011 - 2012

Section 1

STATUTORY ROLE OF THE IMB

The Prisons Act of 1952 and Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board, appointed by the Home Secretary / Minister 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 concerns 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 prison records.

Section 2

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Section 3 Description of Prison:

3 HMP Usk & Prescoed are located on three sites. A Cat C Prison in the town of Usk, a Cat D prison in the area of Prescoed and Cilwrgi Farm located a few miles from Prescoed. Prisoners are supported by Personal Officers, Case workers, a Psychology Department, a Substance Misuse Team, the Chaplaincy, a Healthcare Department and a Resettlement Team. Healthcare offers a daycare facility but has no Healthcare beds to support ongoing treatment needs.

3.1 HMP Usk opened in 1844. Throughout its existence, it has provided a variety of regimes and is currently a male Category C prison holding vulnerable prisoners. In April 2011 the CNA (certified notional accommodation) was 153 with an operational capacity of 261, in November 2011 this capacity was increased to 266. The Prison is overcrowded, but complaints to the Board do not indicate this as a problem for prisoners, the only comments we have received are related to who a prisoner is sharing with rather than the fact that they are sharing a cell.

The objectives of the prison are to hold prisoners securely and safely, to provide a well ordered establishment where prisoners are treated humanely and with decency and respect. The structured regime is intended to prepare the prisoners for a safe release, reduce the risk of re-offending and positively contribute to society.

3.2 HMP Prescoed is situated in open countryside approximately 3 miles from the town of USK. It is a Cat D Resettlement prison and was opened in 1939. In April 2011 the CNA was 199 with an operating capacity of 210, in September 2011 this rose to 230.

The regime at Prescoed is designed to rehabilitate and educate, through a structured sentence plan and resettlement plan, to promote the reduction in risk of prisoners re-offending when they return to their communities. Opportunities exist for education and work placements with resources being allocated to the resettlement of prisoners. Training in a range of industries and activities has long been an established regime at Prescoed and continues to be consistent in its acquisition of suitable work placements.

The Board can report that during the reporting period there was one abscond and three ROTL failures. This reflects a 99.98% success rate, of which the prison is naturally proud. All prisoners who abscond are returned to closed conditions, other unauthorised absences are adjudicated and robust punishments applied. (e.g. Loss of earnings and canteen)

3.3 HMP Cilwrgi Farm consists of 460 acres, 160 acres of which are woodlands, plus a variety of outbuildings. The farm has a thriving milking herd and a herd of pedigree Welsh Black beef cattle. Cilwrgi has a number of training opportunities for prisoners, e.g. milking parlour / herd management, animal husbandry, arable farming techniques, sawmill activities, farm machinery basic skills etc. The average number of prisoners working and training on the farm each day is 17. Unfortunately, the farm's productivity and operation has been affected by the restrictions placed on the farm by a number of beasts testing positive for TB. This is an ongoing issue and all efforts are made to move cattle on when there are periods when the herd is clear and restrictions are lifted. The Farm is designated an area of Special Scientific Interest (SSI)

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 HMP Usk & Prescoed, like every other establishment, is undergoing considerable change to maximise efficiencies within reduced budgets. During this difficult time, the IMB Board has been impressed that such major change (with the proposal of further developments) has been achieved with the minimum disruption to the prison populations. The reduction of staff has influenced the prison regimes whilst maintaining standards of prisoner care and their preparation for release.. The Board congratulates the Senior Management Team, particularly the Governor, for their vision and enthusiasm in embracing a redefined prison environment.

This report identifies only two significant areas of concern. Prisoners at Usk have to eat their meals in their cells, which due to the age and layout of the prison is unavoidable. Secondly, the visitor facilities, at Usk, are not ideal but solutions are being considered for when budgetary constraints allow for change. I am pleased to report that we have identified six areas of good practice.

In these difficult times, the Board recognises the need to be particularly diligent in monitoring the three sites to ensure that all requirements are maintained at a high standard.

Section 5

EQUALITY & INCLUSION

Usk & Prescoed have been diligent in appointing a Decency Officer and setting up a Decency Committee to monitor and manage all issues relating to the equal treatment of prisoners. The Committee is made up of a Governor and another senior member of staff, the Decency Officer, an IMB member, prisoners representing minority groups in the prisons and admin support. It meets once a quarter, when all incidents that have occurred since the last meeting are tabled. A full account of incidents is given, how they were managed, what follow-up action was taken, what improvements could be made and the results of any actions that were taken. The Decency Committee is fully functioning and fit for purpose Group. The Decency Officer has introduced, implemented and maintained an accurate recording and monitoring system for which he should be congratulated.

EDUCATION, LEARNING & SKILLS

Both Prisons offer a range of education and learning skills, which include: - ICT, Welsh, Literacy & Numeracy, Bricklaying, Carpentry, Plastering, Art, Barbering & Cooking. At Prescoed there is a full time Learning & Skills option.

For Prescoed prisoners, there are a number of opportunities for working out in charitable organisations, e.g. Charity retail outlets, Local Authority Voluntary work. There are a limited number of opportunities to pursue training at local colleges.

HEALTHCARE & MENTAL HEALTH

Healthcare is available to prisoners at both Usk & Prescoed. Each site has nursing staff and is serviced by a visiting GP on a regular surgery basis. Usk has a new, well equipped medical centre that can accommodate all visiting professionals (GP, dentist, podiatrist etc) on a sessional basis. The medical facilities on both sites offer privacy and dignity. There are no in-patient facilities but, escorts and bed watches are provided for prisoner treatments in local hospitals. Prisoners with mental health needs have regular and appropriate support. The prisons have a forensic health nurse lead and a part time mental health nurse. A range of health initiatives are in place to promote physical and mental health needs and exercise is encouraged, within the prisoner's capability. There is a chronic disease management service e.g., asthma / diabetes / Chronic heart disease etc. Also bowel screening, flu vaccinations and other preventative diagnostic procedures are available. Prisoners report that they are satisfied with the standards of healthcare.

PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

There are a range of indoor labour allocations such as cleaning, catering, painting & decorating, stores and other orderly roles within the establishments. Outside activities include gardening and re-cycling. (Usk prison has the highest standard of garden maintenance you could imagine. The grounds, particularly the flower beds are magnificent) For Prescoed prisoners, they have the addition of Estates work, a range of Farm work and Animal Husbandry including the Milking Parties. Activity allocation, at Prescoed, is managed by the Induction Team.

At Prescoed, there are approximately. 110 – 120 prisoners engaged in outside activities, both stage 1 and stage 2. (Approx 25% working on stage 2). There is rarely anyone unemployed, on some activity or another, at Prescoed.

RESETTLEMENT

External work placements (Prescoed) are managed by the Resettlement Team who hold a vacancy list and a prisoner waiting list. A number of Resettlement placements may result in employment on release, particularly for prisoners on Stage 2 paid work placements.

The Resettlement/Community Placement Team work on three pathways. ETE, Housing and Debt. Resettlement assist with advice regarding Housing and Debt, whilst Learning & Skills offer assistance with education, training and career matters.

At Usk, Offender Management focuses on reducing re-offending by using sentence planning to identify needs and appropriate interventions. At Prescoed, most interventions are closely connected to the use of ROTL. The pathways used are the backbone of the OASys system which is used throughout the prisoners stay at Prescoed. The pathway helps identify risk and need in order to focus interventions on reducing re-offending. The Offender Management Unit attend MAPPA Boards.

The use of ROTL is an integral part of the regime at Prescoed. Approximately 1700 ROTL licences are granted each year (this includes overnight family re-integration opportunities). Each ROTL release is subject to a risk assessment. Prescoed operates at 0.01% ROTL failure, which the Board feels is a commendable statistic.

SAFER CUSTODY

During the reporting period, there has been no deaths in custody and consequently, no inquests.

A total of 6 ACCTS were opened and closed at Prescoed. There were none for Usk. The Board has no concerns regarding Self Harm, Violence or Suicide Awareness. Incidents of bullying are rare and when they do occur, they are treated seriously and investigated thoroughly. All ACCTS are reported at monthly meetings and action plans and observations are discussed. The IMB attend all Safer Custody meetings, in addition, Listeners and the Samaritans attend quarterly meetings.

SEGREGATION

Usk & Prescoed does not support a Segregation Unit

Section 6

INDUCTION / RECEPTION

All prisoners arriving at Usk and Prescoed have been transferred from another prison, none are admitted straight from the courts. The reception of new prisoners takes place at various times of the day and is administered by dedicated staff.

Induction tends to be about the regimes in either of the two prisons, as opposed to entering the prison system for the first time. At Prescoed, induction takes place over the first week of admission and is primarily given by other selected prisoners, with officer oversight. Board members often observe these sessions and report that they are undertaken with due regard to prison rules and a willingness by prisoners to give a fair and accurate account of the required information.

PROGRAMMES

Usk

- SOTP (Sex Offenders Treatment Programme) Core and Adapted
- Healthy Relationships
- Healthy Sexual Treatment
- Drug Programme
- A-Z Prisoners in Denial

Prescoed

- * Access to probation
- * TSP Thinking Skills
- * CALM Anger Management
- * iDAP Domestic Violence

TIME OUT OF CELL

USK

07.45 - 12.15

13.30 - 17.30

18.00 - 19.30

PRESCOED

Free movement from 06.00hrs Roll Check

Return to own Unit by 22.00hrs

PRESCOED

Free movement from 06:00hrs Roll check

Return to own Unit by 22:00hrs

EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

- 1 Engaging with new Employees. Management and staff at Prescoed are always looking for new employers who can offer work opportunities to prisoners. Wherever possible, employment is sought that will assist in the eventual rehabilitation of prisoners by developing a current skill or in a location that is appropriate. E.g. rural, urban, industrial or commercial opportunities. The range of work contacts / opportunities continues to be impressive.
- 2 Life Prisoners Family Days. This provides opportunities for families to visit the prison and engage in a more meaningful visit with the prisoner and staff. A family member is encouraged to understand the prison regime and the efforts made to ensure that the sentence is carried out in the most productive way. Wherever possible, both sides are encouraged to deal with some of the psychological aspects of a long sentence.
- 3 Older Persons Group. The “Young at Heart Group” continues to thrive and is a popular source of support for older prisoners in Usk. The Group is primarily prisoner led and engages many topics that are helpful and supportive.
- 4 Gay Prisoner Group. This Group provides opportunities for prisoners to discuss many issues in a safe environment.
- 5 Maintaining standards during difficult times is a credit to staff and prisoners on both sites.
- 6 Police Liaison / Intelligence is first class and greatly assists in dealing with issues within the prisons, particularly in monitoring prisoner contact with people outside and up to date information on drug related trends.

AREAS OF CONCERN

- 1 Visitor facilities at Usk are limited in space and are serviced by vending machines as opposed to refreshments being served by WRVS which happened previously.
- 2 Prisoners at Usk still have to eat their meals in their cells. The age and lay out of the prison makes this understandable but it remains unsatisfactory in a modern age.

Section 7

BOARD STATISTICS	
Recommended Complement of The Board	15
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	11
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	15
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	5
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	1
Number of Board Meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	312
Total number of Segregation Reviews	N/A
Total number of Segregation Reviews attended	N/A
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	29.11.11

Applications to the IMB during the reporting period

CODE	SUBJECT	YEAR
A	Accommodation	2
B	Adjudications	0
C	Equality & Diversity (inc religion)	0
D	Education/ employment/training	0
E1	Family / Visits inc mail & phone	3
E2	Finance / Pay	4
F	Food / Kitchen related	1
G	Health related	6
H1	Property within current establishment	0
H2	Property during transfer in in other establishment	7
H3	Canteen, facilities, catalogue shopping, Argos	0
I	Sentence related. (ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc	3
J	Staff/ Prisoner concerns inc bullying	0
K	Transfers	2
L	Miscellaneous	9
	Total number of IMB Applications	37
	Of total – number of Confidential Access was	0