



Annual Report
of the
Independent Monitoring Board
at
HMP Usk & Prescoed

for reporting year
1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017

Published
August 2017



Monitoring fairness and respect for people in custody

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 THE PRISON

3.0 HMP Usk and Prescoed is located on three sites. HMP Usk is a Category C prison in the town of Usk, HMP Prescoed is a Category D prison in the area of Prescoed, and the Cwlirgi prison farm is a few miles away at Coed-y-paen.

Some of the prisoners from Prescoed work on the farm. Prisoners at Usk and Prescoed are supported by Personnel Officers, Case workers, a Psychology Department, a Substance Misuse team, the Chaplaincy, a Healthcare Department and a Resettlement Team. Healthcare offers a day care facility at Usk and Prescoed, but there are no beds for in-patients. HMP Usk and Prescoed have libraries and gymnasiums, and Prescoed also has a multi-faith chapel.

3.1 HMP Usk opened in 1844 and is an old-fashioned building with three main wings fanning out from a central control point. It last hanged a prisoner in 1961, and housed Rudolph Hess for part of the Second World War. It is now a male Category C prison holding vulnerable prisoners: the majority are sex offenders. The Certified Notional Accommodation (CNA) is 278. The Sex Offenders Treatment Programme (SOTP) was available to all inmates until these were terminated in March 2017 and replaced with the Horizon and Kaizen schemes, and there is a thriving Education Department.

The objectives of the prison are to hold prisoners securely and safely, and to provide a well-ordered establishment where prisoners are treated humanely and with decency and respect. The structured regime is intended to prepare prisoners for a safe release, and reduce the risk of re-offending. There are carpentry, bricklaying and plastering workshops at HMP Usk.

3.2 HMP Prescoed is situated in open country on the site of a previous Young Offenders Institution which opened in 1939, about three miles from Usk. It is now a Category D resettlement prison and the CNA is 260. The regime at Prescoed is designed to rehabilitate and educate through a structured sentence plan and resettlement plan; and to promote the reduction in risk of prisoners re-offending when they return to their communities. Opportunities exist for education, training and work placements, and resources are allocated to the resettlement of prisoners. The established regime at Prescoed has included a

range of industries and activities and continues today as it looks to increase the number of suitable work placements.

The Board can report that during the period there were very few absconds and ROTL failures. This reflects a success rate of which the prison is naturally proud, particularly when considering how many temporary licences are issued each year. All prisoners who abscond are returned to closed conditions. Other unauthorised absences are subject to the adjudication process and robust action is taken (e.g. loss of privileges).

3.3 Cwlirgi farm consists of 460 acres, of which 160 acres are woodland, plus a variety of outbuildings. The farm has a thriving milk herd. There are a number of training opportunities for prisoners, e.g. milking parlour, herd management, animal husbandry, arable farming, sawmill activities, basic skills on farm machinery. On average, there are between 15 and 25 prisoners working and training on the farm every day. The addition of a horticultural specialist to the training team has broadened the opportunities for the prisoners.

The farm is designated an area of Special Scientific Interest (SSI).

Section 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 4.1 The continuing senior management changes and shortfall in some positions has been of concern both in communication with the board due to lack of attendance at the Board meetings and in pushing forward planned developments within the prison. A new No 1 Governor has recently joined the team and the board are looking forward to the improvements he is driving.
- 4.2 The continued success of the Farm in both horticulture and training for employment has been a highlight this year
- 4.3 Involvement in the Substance Misuse course by the prisoners, trainers and outside agencies seems to be resulting in positive outcomes. The board hope that any funding required for this project is given consideration.

- 4.4 Changes resulting from consultation re Education, learning and skills will be monitored closely to ensure that the prison maintains the high standard we currently see.
- 4.5 The lack of communal dining areas at Usk continues to be of concern with prisoners having to return to their cells to eat meals.

Section 5

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

The Equalities Officer remains in post, the role covering both HMP USK and HMP PRESCOED. Quarterly Diversity and Equality meetings are scheduled. During the current reporting period, the fourth meeting had to be rescheduled.

The meetings are chaired by various prison governors and prisoner representatives have attended from both establishments. Again, it is unfortunate to report that Healthcare, Catering and Learning and Skills are hardly ever present in spite of the chair giving regular assurances of their future attendance.

The committee manages and monitors matters which relate to the equal treatment of prisoners and the equalities officer presents a report at each meeting. The IMB member is invited and prisoner representatives attend from minority groups within the population. Their representations are both relevant and constructive. Matters are discussed which have occurred during the intervening period between meetings. Management decisions and follow up action points are taken and reported upon at the following meeting. Improvements and/or changes are agreed where possible.

The equalities officer has organised a comprehensive and successful rolling programme of activities and forums at HMP USK. The responsibility of Monmouthshire county council social services care team under the 2010 act has led to regular joint therapeutic projects being run for OAP's at USK with considerable success. Similar joint integration is currently being introduced into HMP PRESCOED. Liaison between equalities officer and other partnerships have introduced both supportive and occupational practises on both sites.

Equality issues are recorded and monitored by the equality officer and where a discrimination incident report {DIRF} has been received it is dealt with by the

officer. These reports are monitored and signed by the appropriate member of the IMB.

Section 6

EDUCATION, LEARNING, SKILLS & PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

1. The annual Self - Assessment Report (SAR) is being prepared at the moment for submission to the Welsh Government as part of the quality assurance process.
2. The Q4 report has been written and returned to HMPPS HQ. Overall a healthy end of year report though there are some issues to be resolved with the data collection which has been problematic.
3. Some difficulties with the implementation of SOP which resulted in some organisations not being paid on time, one of which was C&G who temporarily withdrew the centre status until the payment was made.
4. Shannon Trust Reading Scheme continues to be a success and the 1-2-1 maths charity which runs along similar lines to the Shannon Trust is also very successful in Usk.
5. One of the teachers was awarded Outstanding Teacher of the Year by Prisoners Education Trust which is a great achievement and we are all proud of her.
6. The provision at Prescoed of a one week education package that all prisoners undertake as part of the establishment induction programme is running very successfully and includes qualifications in Health and Safety, Essential Food Hygiene, Literacy, Numeracy, ICT, and drug awareness. The open learning facility and ongoing literacy and numeracy facility are well used
7. A GCSE in Religious Education in Usk in collaboration with the chaplaincy has been introduced and it is very successful and generates some lively debates.
8. A senior manager in the OU wrote a very complimentary note to the section on 27 January 2017 as in the extract that follows: 'Usk prison is viewed as a centre of excellence for prison education'. As well as being very supportive and facilitating Open University study, it also offers opportunities for prisoners to

study examined external qualifications at GCSE and A level using a range of exam boards such as AQA, WJEC and City and Guilds.'

9. The Activities available across the establishment include Bricklaying, Plastering, Woodworking, Recycling, Horticulture, Farm, Forestry, Kitchen and Industries all designed to prepare individuals for the outside environment when they are released.

10. Cwllirgi Farm, through its contract with Farming Connect, resulted in it being nominated the 'Forest Focus' for South Wales enabling it to demonstrate best practise to other organisations.

Section 7

HEALTH CARE

The local Anuerin Bevan Health Board is responsible for healthcare in Usk & Prescoed Prisons. Whilst maintaining an observational role the IMB regularly and actively monitors this partnership.

Key elements of prison health care continue to develop in response to a changing demographic and legislation. The Usk prisoner population is ageing and Health Care is coping with increased and varied requirements. For example, in the fields of:

- asthma
- hypertension,
- mobility
- mental health
- smoking cessation

There is no full-time health care provision at either prison. This means that hospital visits and admissions are unavoidable. They require an escort of two prison officers this has a noticeable impact on the prison regime - resulting in increased time in cell. Some, though not prison officers, think that more effort could be made (by Healthcare) to arrange elective appointments outside staff choke periods such as lunchtimes. For a time, Physiotherapy services were brought within the prison and this made a considerable positive difference both in terms of treatment and reduced lockdowns. Unfortunately, funding issues meant that this service was suspended. The board now understands that

management team intervention means that additional funding has been found.

Usk has been successful in piloting the change management involved in introducing a no smoking policy within the Welsh estate. A trial is now underway to allow men to use new composite vaping devices rather than the standard e-cigarettes which were the subject of many complaints around nicotine withdrawal - this resulted in some prisoners attempting to achieve higher nicotine levels e.g. by smoking nicotine patches. This practice has now been curtailed.

In general prisoners appear to feel that their health needs are being met and that the service they receive is at least as good as they would receive in the community. The IMB agrees with this view.

Section 8

RESETTLEMENT

The staff continue to show a good deal of commitment towards delivering an effective resettlement programme.

The numbers working out in the community are generally maintained at around 100-150.

Around one third of these prisoners are either on paid work or trial/training that is likely to lead to paid work on licence. It is expected the majority of these will be sustainable for the men on their release.

Finding employers, particularly National ones, to take on serving prisoners remains very challenging. It is pleasing to report there are now a number on the books with Willmott Dixon and DHL being added to that list. The list of employers with paid employees or volunteers continues to grow as a result of the efforts being made to build excellent relationships based on mutual trust.

Prescoed continue to work successfully with the CLINK restaurant in Cardiff and have increased the numbers working there as a result of late openings being introduced. In return CLINK sourced 5 other employers offering paid work for prisoners.

During this period, a formal process of application and selection for job vacancies has been put in place. This is to ensure prisoners are treated fairly for all job opportunities.

With a view to further enhancing resettlement opportunities Learning and Skills together with the Community Placement Team: Careers Wales and Job Centre Plus, Prisoner Education Trust and Cilwrgi Farm recently organised a careers guidance and employability open day at the Farm. A number of supporting charities, training providers, Colleges and employers were in attendance. As a direct result of this event Heads of the Valleys training are now delivering accredited qualifications at Cwlirgi Farm training centre as well as offering spaces on courses to suitable prisoners.

Men from Prescoed continue working voluntarily for Kaleidoscope [Drug and Alcohol rehab] in a mentoring capacity

More recently Careers Wales, in hand with the Community Placement team have provided volunteering opportunities to attend the Fire Service programmes as mentors working with young people in the community. It is hoped this will lead to the Fire Service taking on some full-time volunteers from HMP Prescoed.

HMP Prescoed is also proud to say that in the 2016/17 academic year there is currently one student on licence attending Cardiff and the Vale College and a further two attending the Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Additionally, the prison staff have now managed to secure three placements that will take sex offenders to work voluntarily on licence. One of these may be leading to permanent employment on release.

The Community Placement Team work closely with CRC (Working Links) to ensure the prisoners working out in the community during the 12 weeks prior to their release get time off work to attend sessions as required by the Resettlement CRC

Section 9

SECURITY

The IMB attends security meetings at Usk and Prescoed sites, reviews meeting

minutes and liaises with key Officers. Such functional meetings are organised with representatives from departments within the establishments and considers the security implications of all activities that are undertaken. A recent security audit was satisfactory and showed no significant causes for concern regarding operational issues. Liaison with Gwent Police is an important part of these meetings and relevant information is exchanged. The security objectives include:

- Escape/Abscond/ROTL issues
- Disorder Control
- Crime Reduction
- Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco
- Public Protection
- Commodities
- Terrorism/Extremism

Observation indicates that notwithstanding the different nature of both prisons, there are currently no significant causes for concern regarding security performance at Usk or Prescoed.

As mentioned in the section on Health Care Usk has been central in piloting the change management involved to introduce the “No Smoking” policy within the Welsh prison estate. A trial is underway to understand and allow men to use new composite vaping devices (refillable and rechargeable) rather than the standard e-cigarettes which were the subject of many complaints around nicotine withdrawal. These (e-cigarettes) resulted in some prisoners attempting to achieve higher nicotine levels e.g. by smoking nicotine patches - this practice has now been curtailed. N.B. staff seem well aware of the potential of any device to be abused and are mandated to report any concerns.

As far as the IMB is aware there are no significant issues at Usk/Prescoed with NPS and MDTs are showing low incidence of positives for illegal substances. The main drug strategy issue at Usk relates to prisoners taking other inmates medication and using meds as currency e.g. pain relief drugs such as gabapentin. This situation is being monitored and addressed.

CONTINGENCY PLANS

Usk and Prescoed hold a range of contingency plans which have been viewed

by the IMB on both sites. Usk is a Non-Resettlement prison managing VP & sex-offender prisoners many of whom are subject to MAPPA. Conversely, Prescoed manages its population to prepare them for release from prison. A significant number of prisoners are involved in work outside the prison and security monitor their daily activities and appear successful in keeping to a minimum, illegal items entering the prison. A key priority for both prisons is public protection. Again, the IMB consider security on both sites to be well managed and monitored and that threats are identified and dealt with.

SAFER CUSTODY (USK)

Monthly meetings are held to promote all issues related to safer custody. Representatives from the Samaritans, Listener Group, Buddy Scheme, the IMB and officers attend the meetings. The introduction of the Buddy Scheme is proving to be particularly helpful to older prisoners or those with disabilities. There are approx. 18/20 prisoners supported with a variety of tasks, e.g. assisted to health care, collect canteen deliveries, cells cleaned. help with mobility and meals delivery. All activities are recorded and monitored.

During the past 12 months' listeners have spent an average of 63 hours per month assisting prisoners. Their range of support is also extensive and includes prisoners experiencing suicidal thoughts, self-harming, bullying etc. due to other pressures within the prison there is no longer a listeners' suite at Usk which is a facility that is missed by listeners and prisoners alike.

Both the listeners group and the buddy scheme provide a valuable support for prisoners at Usk. The IMB commend the work they do but will continue to monitor that they do not assume any responsibilities that should be carried out by staff.

SEGREGATION

As a prison catering for Vulnerable Prisoners and Sex Offenders, Usk does not support a Segregation Unit.

Section 10

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

The Prescoed kitchen is now 3yrs old and the initial teething problems now appear to have been eliminated. The defective drain cover causing a trip hazard has been repaired. The IMB will continue to monitor this on a regular basis.

Shortage of prisoners working in the kitchen has been an area of concern which the board has taken up with the governor.

Food complaints to the IMB have been at a very low level [1] for the year

Usk is a 19th Century radial prison and despite this it is generally well maintained, clean and tidy. It is unfortunate that its current utilisation does not permit prisoners to eat communally.

Work was carried out in the last year on brickwork to the external walls. This was a particularly well planned project that took into account both security issues and welfare of prisoners. Restricted access to the outside field was minimal.

Prescoed is a modern open prison. Overall the nine single story units are well maintained. The other double story unit [Lester] has a shabbier appearance and a limited number of showers [4 for 40 prisoners] which the board are informed are often blocked and one of which often fails to work.

The frequency of activation of the fire alarm at Prescoed is still under investigation.

The contract with external building maintenance suppliers [Amey] is developing through regular meetings with senior leadership team and a deeper understanding of what the contract contains.

Some concerns have been raised about the general state of cleanliness/tidiness of the grounds at Prescoed.

Section 11

PROGRAMMES

The full range of SOTPs were delivered at USK until March 2017. The new programme [HORIZON] is being successfully introduced to medium risk prisoners. These include men in denial and holding IPP sentences, to date two complete courses have taken place. The KAIZEN programme for high risk men is about to get under way.

Usk has recently enrolled in the attractive ENABLING ENVIROMENTS programme. This will be good for future relationships within the prison.

The continuation of the SUBSTANCE MISUSE programme at PRESCOED leading to formal qualifications at level 3 city and guilds is proving to be a huge success. So far, the course has run twice with 24 men taking part. Twenty have gained the desired qualification. A further 5 men have completed a COUNSELLING COURSE

Since finishing their course 6 individuals have been released back into the community. Five of the men are presently in full time employment with 3 of them volunteering in local drug and alcohol services. There no evidence of recidivism by those trained on the course. Of those remaining 2 men are on placement with the local YOT, 1 on placement with a youth project, 1 on placement with the local magistrate's court, 3 on placement with a local drug treatment centre, and others awaiting placement opportunity.

Section 12

TIME OUT OF CELL

USK

The changes to physiotherapy provision within the establishment has had a negative effect on time out of cell due to increased need for hospital appointments.

0800hrs -1800hrs

PRESCOED

Free movement from 06.00hrs Roll Check

Return to own Unit by 22.00hrs

Section 13

EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

- 1] The continuation of family days and visitor improvements has been welcomed and appreciated by the prisoners.
- 2] The continuing work at the farm with training and links to outside bodies gives much hope for future employment possibilities.
- 3] The success of the Drug and Alcohol course at Prescoed has enhanced chances for the large number of prisoners historically involved in substance misuse.
- 4] Cheryl Penn was awarded the 'Outstanding Teacher of the Year' by the Prisoner Education Trust
- 5] A terminally ill prisoner was given excellent care by both health care and prison staff in his desire to remain at Usk in his final days.

Section 14

AREAS OF CONCERN

1. It is still of concern that prisoners at USK must eat meals in their cells. No areas for communal dining can be identified
2. The poor attendance at Equalities meetings by certain sections will be monitored
3. The development of a 7-day Health Care System within the prisons will become a priority with the Social Care Legislation being developed and the ageing population, at Usk in particular the National Policy on Palliative Care in USK.
4. Changes to reduce the frequency of 'lie downs' at Usk will be encouraged and monitored.
5. Overall, The Board has no serious concerns with the way that Usk and Prescoed function.

Section 15

BOARD STATISTICS

<u>BOARD STATISTICS</u>	
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	13
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	6
Number of members leaving within the reporting period	4
Number of Board Meetings during the reporting period	12
Total number of visits to the Establishment	344
Total number of Segregation Reviews	N/A
Total number of Segregation Reviews attended	N/A
Date of Annual Team Performance Review	Nov 2016

Applications to the IMB during the reporting period

CODE	SUBJECT	YEAR
A	Accommodation	2
B	Adjudications	1
C	Equality & Diversity (inc. religion)	0
D	Education/ employment/training	6
E1	Family / Visits inc mail & phone	4
E2	Finance / Pay	2
F	Food / Kitchen related	1
G	Health related	6
H1	Property within current establishment	0
H2	Property during transfer in in other establishment	6
H3	Canteen, facilities, catalogue shopping, Argos	1
I	Sentence related. (ROTL, parole, release dates, re-cat etc	2
J	Staff/ Prisoner concerns inc bullying	3
K	Transfers	2
L	Miscellaneous	10
	Total number of IMB Applications	46
	Of total – number of Confidential Access was	1