

## **HMP USK AND PRESKOED - AN EFFECTIVE UNIT**

HMP Usk and Preskoed are good prisons that are striving to improve further and striving to be better still, says a report into the two South Wales prisons, run as a unit, published today by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Anne Owers.

She added that USK had maintained the extremely high level of performance reflected in previous inspection reports and that each previous inspection report and Prison Service rating to date had found Usk to be an extremely good and well-run prison. Preskoed has begun to rise risen to the challenges of managing a more complex population than in the past with renewed energy and focus, and this should also be maintained

The report of the full announced inspection particularly commended both prisons for their:

- Safety records - no self-inflicted deaths for 14 years, no act of self-harm for over 3 years, no use of force for at least 5 years and no use of segregation units.
- High quality education and training, with a participation rate of 75%.
- Time out of cell and association activities, and a greater focus on reintegration.

The report also praised:

- Usk's excellent relationships between prisoners and staff.
- Usk's effective offending behaviour programmes.
- Preskoed's energetic resettlement programme and dedicated resettlement staff.
- The opportunities available to work outside Preskoed and in the community.
- Preskoed's commitment to expand work-related qualifications.

However, the report criticised the quality of some accommodation at Usk, particularly healthcare, also urged prison managers and urged managers to address better the needs of older prisoners, foreign nationals and, prisoners from black and minority ethnic communities. Usk also needed to widen vocational opportunities and focus more on reintegration and those serving life sentences. It noted that PE facilities were poor and recommended that new healthcare facilities be

provided at Usk. Prescoed was urged to improve its work with life sentence prisoners.

Anne Owers said:

"There was no sense, in either establishment, of a prison resting on its laurels. On the contrary, managers and staff were aware that maintaining standards of excellence requires continual effort, and welcomed our proposals for further improvement.

"It is always a pleasure to produce a report on a prison that is good. Such reports attract little publicity, and that is unfortunate for staff and managers who work hard to keep up those standards, and who deserve recognition for that."

Phil Wheatley, Director General of the Prison Service said:

"I am delighted that the Chief Inspector has been able to produce such a positive report that commends both Usk and Prescoed for reacting positively to the challenges they have faced managing potentially difficult populations. This is a considerable achievement and is testament to the hard work and professionalism of both staff and management at the two prisons.

"At the same time, we are already working hard to address a number of the shortcomings raised in the report and have an action plan in place for this purpose. As a result I am very confident that both prisons will continue to perform to a high standard."

### **Notes to editors**

1. The announced inspection of HMP Usk and Prescoed took place between 4-8 April 2005.
2. Usk has been a closed Category C prison since 1990. The majority of its population are sex offenders, and the main task of the establishment is the delivery of the sex offender treatment programme.
3. Prescoed is an open resettlement prison, preparing its Category D prisoners for release into the community. It became an open young offender institution in 1988, but has been an open prison exclusively for adult males since 2004.

4. The two establishments are run as a unit by a single Governor and management team.

5. Inspectorate reports and releases are available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk.justice/prisons/inspprisons>

6. For an electronic copy of the report, please call 0207 035 35 35.