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HMP WYMOTT – A POSITIVE REPORT

HMP Wymott had sustained its performance, in spite of expansion, said Dame Anne Owers, publishing the report of a full announced inspection into the category C training prison near Preston.

Inspectors found that the prison was performing at least reasonably well against all four inspection tests, and in relation to one, activity, was performing well. However, in some areas there were issues that needed to be addressed to ensure that performance can be maintained and improved.

Inspectors found:

- Wymott was relatively safe, with low levels of drug use and bullying. However, safer custody strategies were over-complex and not fully understood.
- Relationships between staff and prisoners were reasonable, though aspects of diversity needed development.
- Resettlement work was poorly focused, though there were some effective interventions and services and nearly all prisoners were subject to offender management. Arrangements for visitors were poor and many sex offenders were not engaging in treatment programmes.
- In spite of the prison's significant growth, there was activity available for all prisoners, and the quality of education and training was very good, with links to employability. Prisoners' access to time out of cell had been reduced.

Anne Owers said:

“Overall this is a very positive report on a prison that has managed to progress despite a considerably increased, and very varied, population. Unlike many similar prisons, Wymott was in fact as well as in name a training prison, providing both sufficient quality and quantity of activity.

“In other areas, and particularly in resettlement, there are issues that need to be tackled if the prison is to continue to improve and to provide a safe and effective environment for the thousand men held there.”

Phil Wheatley, Director General of the National Offender Management Service, said:

“This is a good report and the Governor and staff should be commended for maintaining a sustained improvement.

“I’m pleased that the Chief Inspector has recognised the improvements made during a period of growth for the prison and I am confident that Wymott will build on this success.”

Notes for Editors

1. The full report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 5 May 2009 at <http://inspectors.justice.gov.uk/hmiprisons>
2. The announced inspection of the HMP Wymott was carried out 20–24 October 2008.
3. The operational capacity at HMP Wymott at the time of the inspection was 1,144.
4. The last inspection of HMP Wymott took place on 30 October 2006.
5. HMP Wymott is a category C male training establishment, holding both vulnerable prisoners and medium- to long-term category C prisoners.
6. Anne Owers, Chief Inspector, is available for interview. If you would like to speak to her please contact Andrew Winstone in the Press Office on 0203 334 3530.