

**Independent Prison Monitoring Bulletin**
HMP Open Estate
April to September 2018**7 Independent
Prison
Monitors****26 Prison
Monitoring
Visits****4 Prisoner
Requests****Key Findings**

- **Lawful and transparent custody:** Independent Prison Monitors (IPMs) observed the process of prisoners being released. Paperwork was to hand and everything was explained fully to individuals, who were treated with courtesy. Plenty of time was taken to explain the procedures to them, which was welcomed, given that release from prison can be a stressful time.
- **Bedding:** IPMs inspected some prisoners' cells and found that some mattresses were in need of replacement. Senior management have since conducted an audit of all prisoners' mattresses and replaced any in need of renewal. IPMs welcomed this approach.
- **Decency:** IPMs noted that the toilet door in the Drug Testing Unit (DTU) had a large window with no blind or curtain. This meant absolutely no privacy if someone else was in the DTU whilst someone was using the toilet. Management informed IPMs this was necessary to prevent any tampering with samples.
- **Transition to the community:** Hostel accommodation availability for those on home leave appeared reasonable. Staff informed IPMs that there was enough space to accommodate need. There had however been examples of drink-related incidents at hostel facilities, which had resulted in prisoners being returned to closed conditions. Staff are addressing this.
- **Purposeful activity:** Staff and prisoners had prepared an evening activities programme for winter evenings, and as an alternative to assist with implementing the smoke free prison policy.

Updates and Actions

- **Smoke-free prisons:** IPMs have been assured that the prison is on track to implement the new smoke-free prisons policy, and that a range of support mechanisms will be made available to prisoners who smoke, including 'vaping' devices, and support to stop smoking.
- **Health and wellbeing:** The problems around repeat prescriptions for prisoners on home leave appeared to have improved, which IPMs welcomed. It was acknowledged that prisoners need to take some responsibility with this process, as they would have to do in the community. However, SPS management will review the process with NHS partners to ensure it is as efficient as it can be.

IPM Focus in the Next Quarter

- **Health and wellbeing:** IPMs will check how improvements to the repeat prescriptions process are progressing.
- **Smoke-free prisons:** IPMs will monitor the implementation of the SPS 'Smoke-free prisons' policy.