

Ealing Samaritans Prison Support Group

HMP Wormwood Scrubs

Known informally as “The Scrubs”, HMP Wormwood Scrubs is a Category B prison located in Du Cane Road, W12, in the Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It holds up to 1279 adult males. The establishment has five main wings A – E, plus a number of smaller units, a First Night Centre, a Healthcare Centre and a Conibeere/Drug Detox Unit. There is a mix of shared and single accommodation throughout the establishment.

Ealing branch volunteers have two primary roles: to train prisoners to become Listeners, and to attend weekly offloads during which Listeners debrief in a way similar to Samaritans. The difference is that all Listeners attend the offload, which is once weekly.

The Listeners’ role is similar to that of Samaritans’, although given the nature of the establishment all callers are seen face to face. A lead Listener is in place to allocate shifts on a Listener rota and to record statistics concerning the number of calls. The statistical information only is shared with Safer Custody. Most wings have Listener suites although some calls are held through the door (TTD). Listeners are available 24 hours a day.

With the consent of the Listener and the cooperation of the prison, Listeners are put “on hold” (see glossary entry), although this does not prevent them from applying for a transfer to another prison, should they wish. Listeners receive no reward for their commitment to the scheme.

Brent branch has a weekly presence in the Visitors Centre, to offer support to social visitors.

Glossary

A/B/C/D/E wings = wings within the prison.

ACCT = assessment, care in custody and teamwork. This a series of forms held together in a folder opened in response to concern that an individual in prison is at risk of self-harm or suicide. Observations are made on the prisoner at frequent intervals and recorded in the folder. An ACCT is closed when a person is no longer considered at risk.

Adjudication = internal disciplinary proceedings brought against a prisoner.

App/application = forms prisoners fill in with requests, e.g. to see a doctor, move cell etc.

Banged up/behind the door = locked up.

Basic/Standard/Enhanced status = each person within a prison is set a status dependent on their behavior in prison. Compliance with prison rules enables progress

to an improved status that carries benefits, including more, and longer, social visits. (See IEP).

Bender = a suspended sentence.

BPSO/RPSO = Branch Prison Support Officer and Regional Prison Support Officer (Samaritans volunteers).

‘Burn’ = prison speak for tobacco.

Canteen = prisoners buy items within prison through a system known as ‘canteen’ – a weekly form which tells how much a prisoner can spend and what items he can buy e.g. phone credit, some foods, writing paper, toiletries.

CAT A/B/C/D = There are four different security categories:

Category A – Category A prisoners are those that would pose the most threat to the public, the police or national security should they escape. Security conditions in category A prisons are designed to make escape impossible for these prisoners.

Category B – Category B prisoners do not need to be held in the highest security conditions but, for category B prisoners, the potential for escape should be made very difficult.

Category C – Category C prisoners cannot be trusted in open conditions but are considered to be prisoners who are unlikely to make a determined escape attempt.

Category D – Category D prisoners can be trusted in open conditions.

Conibeere = drug/detox unit.

DC = Detention centre.

DIC = Death in custody.

‘Down the block’ – in the segregation unit (see ‘segregation’ below)

EDR = earliest date of release, given to serving prisoners shortly after sentence.

FNC = First night centre.

Freeflow = scheduled period when prisoners move freely within designated areas of the prison.

HC = Healthcare Unit.

HDC = Home Detention Curfew.

Hold = being ‘on hold’ means that a prisoner will not be transferred to another prison.

IEP = Incentive and earned privileges (see basic/standard/enhanced).

IMB = Independent Monitoring Board, a statutory body set up to monitor the welfare of prisoners.

Induction = new arrivals are given an introduction to the prison regime. Listeners give an outline of the Listener Scheme, including playing a DVD produced by Samaritans in which Listeners describe their role.

Inside Time = prison newspaper.

Licence = conditions attached on early release, before the prisoner has served the full term of his custodial sentence; non-compliance will lead to recall to prison (see recall below).

Listener = prisoner who has successfully completed training by Samaritans volunteers.

Lock down=prisoners are confined to their cells, usually when there is a security alert.

LS=Listener Suite.

MDT/RDT = mandatory drug test and random drug test.

MHI = mental health issues (used in off load notes).

MOJ = Ministry of Justice

N/C = no calls (used in off load notes)

NOMS = National Offender Management Service.

Nonce = prison slang for a sex offender.

Off loads = weekly meeting of Samaritan volunteers and Listeners.

OMU=Offender Management Unit. OMU is responsible for the day-to-day management of each prisoner's sentence. This includes monitoring behaviour and attitudes, identifying appropriate courses and programmes, processing applications for Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), preparing reports for the Parole Board, transfer to other prisons etc.

'Ones', 'twos', 'threes', 'fours' = numbered landings on wings.

OSG = Operational support grade – non uniformed staff who carry out e.g. gate duties, stores, admin, comms jobs.

Parole = the temporary or permanent release of a prisoner before the expiry of a sentence, on the promise of good behaviour.

PIN number = issued to allow prisoners to use phones.

RAPT = Rehabilitation for Addicted Prisoners Trust.

Recall= when a prisoner who has been released early on licence breaches one or more of the conditions attached to his licence he will be returned to custody to serve part, or all, of his remaining sentence.

Re-categorisation = when a prisoner's categorisation changes following a risk assessment.

Reception = the area of the prison where arrivals are processed and placed in holding cells pending allocation to a wing/healthcare.

Remand=on remand (not sentenced yet)

ROTL = Release on temporary licence.

Rule 45 = Segregation of prisoners under Prison Rule 45, usually for their own safety.

Sams phone=designated phones for calls to Samaritans.

SC=Safer Custody: the management of prisoners at risk of harm to themselves, others or from others.

Screws = slang for prison officers.

Seg/segregation, a prisoner is housed in a cell separate from the general prison population as an extra punishment, usually for a disciplinary offence, and after an adjudication.

Serving=serving a sentence.

S/h = self-harm (used in off load notes).

Spice = synthetic cannabis.

Spine link = a corridor linking different wings of the prison.

TTD = through the door (used in off load notes); calls with Listeners are sometimes conducted through the wicket of the cell door, often due to shortage of prison officers.

VPU = Vulnerable prisoner unit.

VR = violence reduction

WO = wing officer

YO = young offender