

# Grendon Prison

The full official news story, with extra detail of special interest to Works Staff.

A NEW PRISON at Grendon Underwood, near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, for selected sentenced prisoners whose condition does not warrant detention in a mental hospital, but who require psychiatric treatment and management, came into use on 12th September, 1962. It has accommodation for 250 men, 50 boys and 25 women and girls.

The provision of psychiatric treatment in prison is nothing new; there are psychiatric clinics at Wormwood Scrubs and Wakefield Prisons for men, at Holloway Prison for women, and at Feltham Borstal for boys, and these will continue. What is new is the use of a whole prison entirely for mentally abnormal inmates.

Grendon will have three primary tasks. These are:

- (1) The investigation and treatment of mental disorders generally recognised as responsive to treatment in suitable cases.
- (2) The investigation of offenders whose offences in themselves suggest mental morbidity.
- (3) An exploration of the problems of dealing with the psychopath.

Prisoners will not be committed direct to Grendon by the Courts, but will be selected after a period of observation in other prisons. No minimum period of stay has been laid down, but it appears probable that a period of at least six months will be necessary for effective treatment. Equally no maximum period has been specified, but a prisoner would not be kept at Grendon after it appeared that he would not benefit from any further treatment. Prisoners may therefore either be returned to ordinary prisons to complete their sentences or released from Grendon at the end of their sentences if treatment continues up to that time. These arrangements are not intended to replace in any way the existing arrangements under the Mental Health Act for the transfer of prisoners to mental hospitals.

Grendon will be a maximum security prison. Each prisoner will be accommodated in a separate cell, except for a few whose needs are best met by dormitory accommodation. None will sleep three to a cell.

The routine will be similar to that in a training prison. Only a part of a prisoner's time will be

spent in specific psychiatric treatment, and for the major part of each day he will be required to work. The type of work provided will be determined in the light of each prisoner's needs. It is not intended at present that prisoners should work outside the prison grounds. Association with other prisoners will be allowed in so far as it is considered desirable.

The prison will be in the immediate charge of a medical superintendent who has been chosen from among the senior prison medical staff with a wide experience in psychiatry. He will be assisted by psychiatrically trained medical officers together with psychologists and social workers. An experienced lay assistant governor will co-operate with the medical superintendent on those matters within his special sphere. The officer staff will be drawn partly from the hospital side of the prison service, many of whom are state registered nurses, and partly from the discipline side; all will be specially selected. The ratio of staff to inmate will be higher than in the ordinary prison. Specialists and technicians, probably on a part-time or sessional basis, will be required for radiology and electroencephalography. In order to make all the usual forms of psychiatric investigation and treatment available it will be necessary to invoke many outside sources and it is hoped to achieve a close co-operation with the National Mental

### Health Services.

In the first stages only adult male prisoners will be received, and the prison population will be built up gradually in the light of experience gained.

### Design

Grendon Psychiatric Prison has been designed to provide living quarters, work and class rooms, and full scale hospital facilities for some 325 inmates in security conditions. Separate units have been arranged for men, women and boys, although all will use the hospital, assembly hall and chapels.

The 13-acre site is enclosed by an 18 ft. high wall of reinforced concrete, of an average thickness of six to eight inches. The wall was constructed by means of a travelling steel framework designed especially for this job.

Grouped inside the main gate are the reception and visitors' block, the administration building, assembly hall and chapels, and the hospital and outpatients' buildings.

The single storey reception and visiting block provides accommodation for the reception of inmates, and visiting rooms for private visitors and legal advisers.

The two-storey administration building houses the Medical Superintendent's office and offices for his staff, as well as prisoners' classrooms, library, shop and hobbies rooms on the ground floor.

The adjacent assembly hall provides facilities for religious

services and for film and stage shows. To segregate female from male inmates, there is a gallery within the hall. A small Roman Catholic chapel has also been provided.

The two-storey hospital building has full facilities, including an air-conditioned operating theatre and ancillary departments, and wards for 16 male and six female patients. There are also special units for psychiatric treatment, physiology and physio-therapy. The outpatients' block accommodates medical consulting rooms, X-ray services, dental surgery, laboratories, and dispensary.

The women's section, to the right of the main entrance, consists of a two-storey block in its own compound, within the main security wall. It is completely self-contained, with its own dining room, kitchen, class rooms and exercise area, with facilities for games and sport, agriculture and horticulture. There is direct controlled access to the administration block, and assembly hall.

Two cell blocks each four storeys high, accommodate 120 and 130 male inmates respectively. Each block is a self-contained unit, with dining room, association and quiet rooms, stores and exercise area.

The boys' cell block is similar to the men's and is also self-contained. A central kitchen serves both the men's and boys' dining rooms; the food being taken by trolleys to serveries attached to

each dining room.

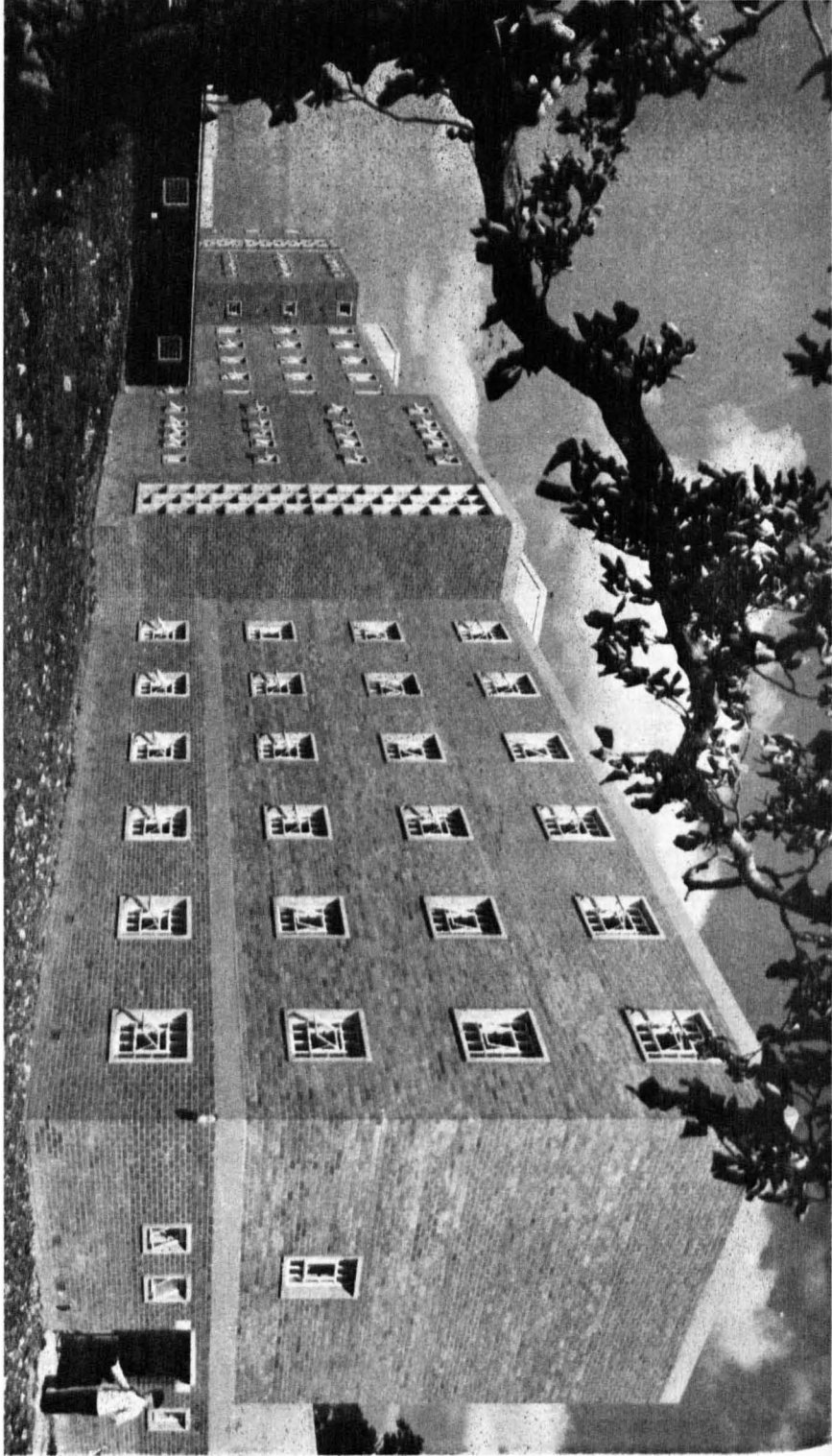
All cell blocks, kitchen, administration building, assembly hall and hospital are connected by security corridors. There is a fully equipped laundry operated by the inmates, a central boiler house, and five single-storey buildings with a total floor area of 13,750 sq. ft. to house main stores, garage, and workshops.

The main buildings are constructed of load bearing brickwork, with reinforced concrete floors and flat roofs. Generally the windows have precast concrete surrounds, and the cell windows are made secure by incorporating manganese steel in the glazing bars.

Internal finishes were selected with a view to hard wear and minimum maintenance costs. Colours were chosen to create a feeling of lightness and cleanliness, and to avoid monotony.

The walls of the assembly hall are of buff-coloured facing brick, with natural hardwood for the stage proscenium opening. The ceiling is of deep yellow and the curtains to the high level windows, grey.

Floors vary according to their location and use. Coloured granolithic concrete is used in cells. The floors of corridors, offices, classrooms, dining rooms, association and quiet rooms are covered in linoleum. In the hospital and outpatients buildings the floors have vinyl tiles. Quarry tiles are used in the kitchen and ablution areas and hardwood strip flooring



in the assembly hall and chapel.

All the cell blocks are designed on a corridor plan. Each cell is 70 sq. ft. in area and its furniture includes a built-in unit designed by the Supplies Division of the Ministry of Public Building and Works in collaboration with the Prison Commission. This unit combines a cupboard with drawers, a writing top and a backboard which can be used for displaying pictures or photographs.

Staff quarters comprising 112 three and four bedroom houses, and a hostel for 24 single officers have been built on an 18 acre site near the prison.

The layout has been designed to preserve the mature trees on the site. In addition, a belt of new trees has been planted to screen the estate from the main road.

All the houses are of traditional design in brick contrasting colour with tiled roofs, and the areas in front of the houses are left as open grassed forecourts.

The two-storey staff hostel is constructed of 11 in. cavity brick walling with a timber-trussed, pitched, felted roof. The concrete floors are covered in linoleum in the bedrooms and cork carpet in the corridors. The accommodation comprises 20 bed-sitting rooms for junior staff and four bedrooms with separate sitting rooms and bathrooms for senior staff. The single-storey flat roofed section accommodates the boiler house, kitchen, dining room, and lounge.

### Engineering Services

A steam boiler house, containing two 8,000 lbs. per hour oil-fired, two pass, economic boilers provides steam for heating direct by means of coils and/or unit heaters, via steam/water calorifiers for low pressure hot water heating by radiators and convectors and via steam/water calorifiers for domestic hot water.

Domestic hot water is also provided in a few instances by steam/water thermostatically controlled mixing valves. In addition, steam is provided for the laundry, kitchen and disinfector. Distribution is by pipes in concealed trenches. The condensate is returned by gravity and by pumps to a collecting tank at low level in the boiler house.

The 3,500 seconds oil for the burners is stored in two 12,000 gallon tanks in a compound together with a 500 gallon tank containing 35 seconds oil for firing the large baking oven in the kitchen.

### Operating Theatre

The operating theatre is provided with an input and extract system of ducting with temperature and humidity control. It also contains a Scialytic lighting fitting over the operating table with automatic changeover to emergency lighting from its own trickle charged battery in the event of mains failure. A steel mesh is embedded in the floor finish to equalise potentials to eliminate possible static discharges.

### Electrical

The East Midlands Electricity Board have provided a 500 kVA Sub-station adjacent to the site. Distribution is by two .2-4 core paper insulated lead covered underground cables, from a low voltage switchboard adjacent to the sub-station to an intake room in the visiting and reception block, and from thence a .3-4 core underground paper insulated lead covered main ring embraces the site. The individual buildings are served by spurs. Following the same route is an emergency AC/DC ring main, a multi-core cable for the watchman's patrol recording system and also a general alarm cable. An emergency battery will provide lighting for two hours at full load to give ample time to

start a standby diesel generator which is also provided. The ring main spurs consist of either 2-or-4 core paper cable as may be required, terminating in an iron-clad fuse switch and busbar chamber from which feeds are taken to local distribution boards and final sub-circuits using V.R.I. cable in conduit. In the boiler house, kitchen, laundry and calorifier rooms galvanised conduit is used.

The scheme was designed in the Chief Architect's and the Chief Engineer's Divisions of the Ministry of Public Building and Works (Senior Architect, E. H. Brown, L.R.I.B.A., Engineer A. I. W. Holt, A.M.I.E.E.) in collaboration with the Prison Commission (Director of Works, Lt.-Col. S. P. Sartain, F.R.I.B.A.).

---

## COMING FEATURES

European Prisons

Borstal Absconding

"Shop Lifting"

New Detention Centre Statistics