

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release 25 NOVEMBER 2005**

**INQUEST OPENS INTO THE DEATH OF JESSICA ADAM AT HMP NEW HALL**

**Inquest starts 10.00 am Monday 28 November 2005**  
**HM Coroner David Hinchcliff**  
**Sitting at:**  
**Wakefield Coroner's Court**  
**71 Northgate,**  
**Wakefield**  
**WF 3BS**

The inquest into the death of 22 year old Jessica Adam, who was found hanging in her cell on 21 June 2003, begins on Monday and expected to last 5 days.

Jessica Adam was the fifth of ten women to die at HMP New Hall since the beginning of 2002. She had a serious drug problem, was extremely distressed at the severity of her sentence (4 years for theft and handling stolen goods), and had made a previous serious suicide attempt.

There are number of important issues of concern to be explored at the inquest including the detoxification facilities available at Newhall for women with drug problems and the implementation of suicide prevention policies.

Deborah Coles, co-director of INQUEST said:

*“This inquest will once again raise concerns about the imprisonment of vulnerable women. Newhall prison has a disturbingly high suicide rate and serious questions must be asked of its ability to keep women in its custody safe.”*

The family are being represented by barrister Colin Hutchinson of Garden Court Chambers instructed by Joanne Kearsley from Farleys Solicitors.

Notes to editors:

INQUEST is the only non-governmental organisation in England and Wales that works directly with the families of those who die in custody. It provides an independent free legal and advice service to bereaved people on inquest procedures and their rights in the coroner's courts.

### Self inflicted deaths 2002-date at HMP New Hall

Name	Date of Death	Ethnicity	Age	Status	Cause
Victoria Robinson	02/02/2005	UK White	26	Remanded	Hanging
Mandy Pearson	12/10/2004	UK White	37	Sentenced	Hanging
Marie Walsh	29/07/2004	UK White	29	Awaiting Sentence	Hanging
Louise Davis	18/04/2004	White	32	Sentenced	Hanging
Petra Blanksby	24/11/2003	UK White	19	Remanded	Hanging
Jessica Adam	21/06/2003	UK White	22	Sentenced	Hanging
Helena Price	14/02/2003	White	27	Sentenced	Hanging
Jacqueline McPartline	18/08/2002	UK White	32	Sentenced	Hanging
Miranda Cox	26/01/2002	UK White	41	Remanded	Hanging
Victoria Winterburn	04/01/2002	UK White	21	Remanded	Hanging

Source: INQUEST Casework and monitoring

Further Information	<a href="http://www.inquest.org.uk">www.inquest.org.uk</a>
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