



HM INSPECTORATE OF PRISONS

HMP DUMFRIES

INSPECTION: 22-23 MARCH 2006

LAST INSPECTION 6-10 DECEMBER 2004



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

CONTENTS	PAGE(S)
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. PREAMBLE	2-3
3. PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS AND POINTS OF NOTE	4-16
4. NEW DEVELOPMENTS	17-18

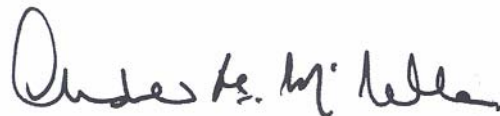
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The visit to HMP Dumfries was made as part of a programme to visit every prison each year in which a full inspection is not being made. In the course of such visits the purpose is to follow up points of note from previous inspections, to examine any significant changes, and to explore issues arising from the establishment's own assessment of itself. It should not be seen as an attempt to inspect the whole life of the establishment.

1.2 The Inspection Team comprised:

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2. PREAMBLE

2.1 This report indicates that Dumfries Prison has made a good response to the inspection report of 2005. An impressive number of matters of concern raised in that report have been addressed and resolved completely.

2.2 Prisoners and staff alike drew the attention of inspectors to a sense of purpose, focus and motivation which was making a significant impact on the prison. From a staff point of view there is a marked reduction in sick leave; prisoners spoke of a clearer understanding of what was happening in the prison and what was expected of them. The Visiting Committee representative declared that the committee was aware of “tremendous improvement” in the prison.

2.3 The arrival of sex offenders from Peterhead in 2004 was well managed, as last year’s report showed. At the time of the last report, however, there was little evidence that the prison had addressed the needs of that population. That is no longer true, and this report shows that there is significant improvement in the provision specifically for long-term sex offenders.

2.4 However, that improvement has not come without cost. Remand prisoners in Dumfries are less well provided for and their needs are less well met. They spend long hours locked in cell: at weekends prisoners on remand can spend 22 hours out of 24 locked up. No wonder they call it a “boring” day. In Dumfries remand prisoners have no access to work and very little access to education; they are locked up most of the day, often with strangers for company, and sometimes in cells which hold four people. The prison is fulfilling the terms of its Contract, but the conditions of remand prisoners are not good. Moreover, remand prisoners in Dumfries cannot receive any visits on Fridays, despite the Prison Rule which states that they are so entitled.

2.5 In several prisons remand prisoners are often the victims of overcrowding: it is usually the prisons which take remand prisoners which are overcrowded; and there is little provision for them in the new prison Contracts. More often than not they will be sharing cells; and more often than not they will not be in the best accommodation. It is to the credit of the SPS that they have until recently tried to hold remand prisoners in the best

accommodation: these prisoners are, in the main, innocent people in the eyes of the law. It will be very disappointing if remand prisoners continue to be held in poor accommodation and in shared cells, and to receive very little in the way of useful activity.

2.6 The other group of prisoners who should not be ignored in the context of this positive report on Dumfries are the female prisoners now in Cornton Vale who would have been held in Dumfries had the Female Unit not closed. The report recognises the force of the argument that it has been possible to bring real advantage to the prison by closing the Unit; but it also recognises that women who are imprisoned many miles from their families, particularly those imprisoned for a short time, are likely to be disadvantaged.

2.7 The number of complaints received from prisoners has increased significantly. After examination of the statistics and a selection of the complaints themselves, and after discussion with the Scottish Prisons Complaints Commissioner, the conclusion of this report is that the increase in the number of complaints does not represent a deterioration in the conditions and treatment of prisoners; rather it represents a change in the attitudes of prisoners towards the complaints system. Many of the complaints are trivial.

3. PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS AND POINTS OF NOTE

Four Recommendations and fifty seven Points of Note were made in the last full inspection report. Progress as follows:

Recommendations

Addressed	4
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Points of Note

Addressed	42
Partly addressed	8
Not addressed	4
No longer relevant	3

RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 The SPS Sentence Management Scheme for long-term prisoners should be introduced to Dumfries as a matter of priority (paragraph 5.21).

Addressed. At the time of the last inspection, no long-term prisoners (LTPs) were being managed using the national SPS scheme. It is now used with all LTPs. Dedicated office and storage space has been created and Sentence Management is now carried out as effectively as anywhere in SPS. A random sample of folders revealed some very good quality of completion. Although there is still some backlog from the period when no Sentence Management was carried out, the prison now regularly meets 100% of its monthly targets. The efforts of all staff involved in putting Sentence Management in place are commendable.

11.2 Management should address access to throughcare for all prisoners as a matter of urgency (paragraph 5.29).

Addressed. The SPS Core Screening Instrument is now used with all prisoners admitted to Dumfries and is the basis for referral to services and interventions.

11.3 The proposed plan in relation to improving ACT procedures should be formalised and documented with action deadlines agreed (paragraph 6.22).

Addressed. ACT procedures are now well managed. The Governor leads on this area; an ACT Forum and separate Multi-Disciplinary Mental Health Team are in place and meet regularly; case conferences are prioritized; 95% of staff are ACT trained; and a Listener Scheme is in place.

11.4 All staff should wear name badges (paragraph 9.10).

Addressed. All staff observed during the inspection were wearing a name badge.

12. POINTS OF NOTE

For SPS/HQ

12.1 SPS should review the level of access which partner agencies have to the Prisoner Record System (paragraph 5.25).

Addressed.

For Establishment

12.2 Offensive material on all walls in ‘A’ Hall should be removed and management should publish a local policy on the displaying of materials (paragraph 2.8).

Addressed. Management have published a notice. Cells in ‘A’ Hall are now free from offensive material and officers regularly check that they remain so.

12.3 Prisoners should be able to make telephone calls in private (paragraphs 2.12, 2.17, 2.23, 2.29).

Partly addressed. Canopies have been fitted to all telephones in the prison. However, they still do not afford an appropriate level of privacy. Some telephones are also located in places which are particularly noisy or located next to staff workstations. The worst of these is in ‘B’ Zero, where prisoners are always likely to be overheard by staff and other prisoners.

12.4 A more productive and constructive environment should be created in the Behavioural Change Unit (paragraph 2.14).

Not addressed. The area is no longer called the Behavioural Change Unit. It is now referred to as ‘B’ Zero. The area is used to house local protection prisoners and local remand and convicted prisoners who cannot be accommodated elsewhere in the prison. High numbers of local prisoners is a regular occurrence, so the need to use ‘B’ Zero because ‘D’ Hall is full, is the norm. Prisoners in the Segregation Unit remain in the adjacent unit. This means that the officer in ‘B’ Zero has to manage three different regimes. The most that is achieved is access

to washing facilities, access to the telephone and dining in cells. Prisoners do not go to work and access to education or the gym is rare. Although prisoners are offered outside exercise the take up is low because they know it will be with prisoners from 'D' Hall. The reason most are in 'B' Zero is to avoid contact with prisoners in 'D' Hall. It is a very empty existence for prisoners in 'B' Zero.

12.5 The situation where some cleaners in 'C' Hall are left out of their cells during parts of the day, thus restricting others access to a toilet, should be reviewed (paragraph 2.21).

Partly addressed. While this practice continues, fewer 'C' Hall prisoners stay in the wing during the day because more work places are available. Staffing levels are more consistent because of reduced levels of sick absence which means that officers are not required to undertake duties away from the wing as often as before.

12.6 Management should be more visible in 'C' Hall (paragraph 2.22).

Addressed. First Line Managers are now in the residential areas more frequently than before. The Unit Manager's office is now located within the residential complex, which means that he is more visible.

12.7 Some of the shower plinths in 'C' Hall should be replaced (paragraph 2.24).

Addressed. The shower areas have been refurbished.

12.8 Inappropriate graffiti in the ablutions area in 'C' Hall should be removed (paragraph 2.24).

Addressed. The graffiti has been removed.

12.9 The floor in the ablutions area in 'D' Hall should be cleaned and repainted (paragraph 2.26).

Addressed. This work has been completed.

12.10 Prisoners in ‘D’ Hall would benefit from being allowed to exercise in the large yard on their own, or with ‘A’ Hall prisoners (paragraph 2.30).

Partly addressed. ‘D’ Hall prisoners use the large exercise area Monday to Friday. At the weekends they still use the very small, enclosed yard next to ‘D’ Hall. Management should continue to seek ways to allow these prisoners access to the open air in the more appropriate facility.

12.11 The chairs in the Female Unit should be replaced by sofas, and the carpet should be cleaned (paragraph 2.35).

No longer relevant. The female prisoners have been transferred to Cornton Vale. The future use of the unit is currently under consideration.

12.12 The arrangement for transporting food from the Kitchen to the Female Unit should be reviewed (paragraph 2.40).

No longer relevant.

12.13 Management should consider offering women the opportunity to cook their own meals in the unit (paragraph 2.40).

No longer relevant.

12.14 The inability to cover operations posts and deliver the escort service should be addressed (paragraph 3.4).

Addressed. A significant reduction in the level of staff sickness levels, as well as escorts being contracted out and ex gratia payments being available for the vacant operational posts mean that this is less of a problem.

12.15 Management should review the Orderly Room procedures (paragraph 3.7).

Addressed. Orderly Room procedures are now in line with SPS guidance.

12.16 Timescales for Internal Complaints Committees should be met (paragraph 3.10).

Addressed. ICC's now take place every Saturday.

12.17 Complaint Procedure forms should be readily accessible to prisoners (paragraph 3.11).

Addressed.

12.18 The Addiction Service offered to prisoners is reduced by the fact that the addictions manager is unable to oversee the management of Cranstoun properly, and also by the fact that there is no addictions nurse (paragraph 4.2).

Partly addressed. Although addictions services are now provided by Phoenix, the situation remains the same. There is an addictions manager but no caseworker, so the manager is responsible for the contract and for individual casework. A caseworker was appointed but subsequently left. An addictions nurse is now in post.

12.19 The prison should ensure that counselling is part of the delivery of addiction services (paragraph 4.5).

Addressed. A full time addictions counsellor is now in place.

12.20 If the bath in reception is to be used it should be replaced. If not it should be removed (paragraph 5.2).

Addressed. The bath has been replaced.

12.21 Prisoners should not spend excessive periods of time in the reception cubicles (paragraph 5.4).

Partly addressed. When prisoners who require to be managed separately and those who do not require separation are in the Reception at the same time, the first group are located in cubicles while the second are located in a communal holding cell. However, to reduce time

spent in the cubicles, those who are held there are now dealt with first. Although this is an improvement it still falls short of the norm in SPS, which is the use of communal holding cells.

12.22 The process of interviewing prisoners on reception should be reviewed (paragraph 5.6).

Not addressed. There is only one member of staff located in reception, and in order to view the CCTV covering the holding cell, this person has to be in the office. Consequently, prisoners are still interviewed standing at a window. This is not normal practice in SPS.

12.23 The size of the boiler suits issued on reception should be reviewed (paragraph 5.7).

Addressed.

12.24 Management should review all information available in reception (paragraph 5.10).

Addressed.

12.25 The system for ensuring that two officers are available when the reception process is taking place should be reviewed and a clear protocol put in place to minimise delays and ensure timescales are met (paragraph 5.11).

Not addressed. Only one member of staff is employed in the Reception. When the reception procedures for admissions have been completed this person radios for assistance for searching and escorting. This happens on a very ad hoc basis. No clear protocol has been put in place.

12.26 Management should ensure consistency and quality of induction for all groups of prisoners (paragraph 5.17).

Addressed. A system is in place to ensure all admissions receive an induction. An induction checklist, signed by the prisoner, is placed in their Sentence Management or Core Screening

file. There are no longer any women held in Dumfries. A limited induction programme has been devised to meet the immediate needs of those deemed vulnerable until they are able to complete the national programme. The prison waits until it has a group before running an induction programme, although the “First Night” and Core Screen Assessments compensate for this.

12.27 Prisoners who go straight to protection or vulnerable individuals managed outwith ‘D’ Hall should have the SPS Core Screening Instrument done (paragraph 5.24).

Addressed.

12.28 Signage in the health centre should be updated to reflect the multi-disciplinary approach to maintaining good health (paragraph 6.1).

Addressed.

12.29 The second consulting room in the health centre requires more lockable cupboards, particularly for non-drug items (paragraph 6.1).

Addressed. The cupboards have been purchased but not installed as the health centre is in the process of being redesigned.

12.30 Management should consider any data protection implications arising from having prisoners’ names on a white board in the examination room – and in the residential areas in relation to prisoners receiving medications at particular times (paragraph 6.1).

Partly addressed. The white boards are still in use, but the information recorded is not intrusive.

12.31 Management should urgently explore joint arrangements for RMN input with the local health board (paragraph 6.4).

Addressed. Rather than explore joint arrangements, a RMN has been recruited and a starting date is imminent.

12.32 Prisoners should be escorted to doctor's appointments in the health centre on time (paragraph 6.8).

Addressed. New attendance patterns and lower staff sickness level have contributed to this. A health centre 'runner' is also in place.

12.33 The situation where dental appointments are cancelled because there is no officer available to take prisoners to the health centre should be addressed (paragraph 6.11).

Addressed. As 12.32 above.

12.34 Prison health services should give higher priority to health promotion (paragraph 6.17).

Addressed. A range of health promotion initiatives are in place including sexual health, healthy eating and Alcohol Awareness.

12.35 Learning centre staff should improve their use of individual learning plans to more fully engage prisoners in setting their learning goals and reviewing their progress towards achieving them (paragraph 7.3).

Addressed. This is carried out as far as possible. However, some prisoners decide they do not want to engage or drop out before achieving their goals.

12.36 Education provision should be made for short-term protection prisoners (paragraph 7.4).

Addressed. Short-term protection prisoners are offered the opportunity to engage in education with long-term protections. Take up is low.

12.37 Plans to re-instate a dedicated officer to provide escort functions for education should be implemented (paragraph 7.4).

Addressed. The uniformed officer present in the learning centre picks prisoners up and takes them back. A learning centre timetable is circulated to all staff in the prison, so everyone knows which prisoners require to be picked up, at what time and from where.

12.38 Learning centre staff should implement their plan to consult prisoners about their needs (paragraph 7.4).

Addressed. A major learning, skills and employment assessment has been carried out by Motherwell College. Attempts are being made to meet all requests identified in this assessment.

12.39 Motherwell College should ensure that its processes deliver certificates to prisoners as soon as possible after completion (paragraph 7.5).

Addressed. It appears that the delays are a result of SQA processes.

12.40 Learning centre staff need to apply more systematic approaches to self-evaluation as part of planning for improvement (paragraph 7.7).

Addressed. This is contained within the training and strategy section of the new Education Contract.

12.41 Management should improve the range of opportunities for accredited vocational training (paragraph 7.9).

Addressed. A great deal of effort has been put into this. Accredited vocational training is available in the bricklayers, cleaning parties, and gardens. All other areas are being developed: PT, production, laundry and catering.

12.42 The development of the library needs to be taken forward (paragraph 7.10).

Addressed. A new librarian is in place.

12.43 The fact that staff shortages were adversely affecting the range, continuity and consistency of prisoners' opportunities for relevant vocational training should be addressed (paragraph 7.15).

Addressed. The establishment now has lower staff sickness levels. New staff attendance patterns have also contributed to this.

12.44 The Family Contact Development Officer should be provided with dedicated time to develop family contact (paragraph 8.3).

Addressed. The FCDO also covers a residential post which makes him accessible to prisoners and visitors on request. He also contributes to induction sessions with new prisoners. In partnership with the Chaplains he has helped introduce HOPE visits to the prison. He is now able to attend national FCDO meetings and is supported by management to ensure an increase in the profile of family contact within the prison.

12.45 The staffing levels in the social work unit need to be addressed (paragraph 8.4).

Addressed. The social work unit is now fully staffed.

12.46 Management needs to consider how it best meets the needs of the long-term prisoner population, especially vulnerable prisoners (paragraph 8.13).

Addressed. Reduced levels of absence and a change to attendance patterns have resulted in programmes officers being able to focus solely on programmes duties.

12.47 A formal Race Relations Monitoring Group should be set up, and the meetings minuted (paragraph 8.16).

Addressed.

12.48 The Chaplaincy team should be fully staffed (paragraph 8.18).

Addressed.

12.49 Consideration should be given to allowing long-term and short-term prisoners to mix at church (paragraph 8.19).

Addressed. Managers and Chaplains considered this, but felt that it was not an option because of the volatile relationship between the two groups. If relations improve it may be considered again.

12.50 The Chaplaincy Team should become more directly involved in the formal structures of prisoner management (paragraph 8.21).

Partly addressed. Chaplains provide church services and one-to-one support to prisoners as they go around the prison. Their contract leaves little time for other things. They have an open invitation to attend meetings and take part in other elements of the regime. This happens only rarely.

12.51 The Estates department team should be reconfigured to include a painter (paragraph 9.4).

Addressed. Most of the prison has been redecorated by prisoners in the last year. The improvements in the standard of decoration show that this has been very successful.

12.52 Non-managerial staff should receive refresher training in Health and Safety (paragraph 9.6).

Not addressed. This training has still to be undertaken. It is in the prison's training plan for 2006-07.

12.53 Infection control measures should be addressed (paragraph 9.7).

Addressed. An Infection Control Management Team was formed and an action plan created. The work has now been completed and infection control matters have been passed to the Health and Safety Committee to monitor. Since the full HMCIP inspection of last year, an SPS Health and Safety audit has been undertaken and the establishment compliance rate increased from 85% to 95%.

12.54 Management should review the way in which it organises and delivers staff training (paragraph 9.14).

Partly addressed. IIP accreditation was achieved in March 2005. However, the prison has very limited facilities. In particular there are no e-learning facilities.

12.55 A complaints book should be introduced in the kitchen (paragraph 9.17).

Addressed. A book has been created and forms are available. However, prisoners still prefer to use the CP system. There was only one entry in the food complaints book.

12.56 Consideration should be given to providing training for the laundry officer to allow him to carry out SVQ work with prisoners (paragraph 9.21).

Addressed. The laundry officer has received training.

12.57 Management should review the policy that no prisoners can access toasters or microwave ovens (paragraph 9.24).

Addressed. Prisoners now have access to microwave ovens in all residential units. Management have been told that fire regulations dictated that toasters could only be used in appropriately fitted kitchens.

4. NEW DEVELOPMENTS

4.1 Earned Privileges Scheme

An Earned Privileges Scheme has been introduced since the last inspection. Although it is not popular with all prisoners, it does introduce an element of progression that did not exist before. The differentials between the separate parts of the prison are based on information gathered by surveying the prisoners. It focuses on those parts of the regime that prisoners said were most important to them. There is still not a great deal of difference between one level and the next but the scheme is at an early stage.

4.2 Exercise

The previous insecure exercise yard has been replaced by a secure yard, sub-divided into two separate areas. This has improved security and offers more opportunity for access to the open air. However, exercise has become a problem. The main exercise period for long-term prisoners has been moved to 07.30-08.30. This means that in the winter the main exercise provision takes place in the dark and probably during the coldest part of the day. A compensatory thirty minute period at lunchtime is welcome but does not offset this change which is very unpopular with prisoners.

4.3 Addictions

With the implementation of new arrangements for transitional care, Cranstoun are no longer contracted by SPS to provide the caseworker who previously did transitional care work (identified as an area of good practice in the full inspection report). This is not now part of the contract with Phoenix. Transitional care should now be provided by the Throughcare Addiction Service (TAS) element of each local authority's criminal justice social work services. The standard is that the community TAS worker should normally be in touch with those requiring the service six weeks prior to release and have three meetings during this time. This rarely happens. The TAS services in the various local authorities to which prisoners are released from Dumfries are extremely variable and in some areas almost non-existent. The provision for prisoners in respect of transitional addiction services is now poorer than at the time of the last inspection. The prison has no control over this provision.

4.4 Complaints

The complaints system is now better organised. However, there has been an unprecedented increase in the number of complaints and the time taken to deal with these can prevent staff and managers from carrying out other duties and takes time away from prisoners who do not persistently complain.

4.5 Transfer of Women Prisoners to Cornton Vale

The Unit which held women prisoners was closed on 24 February 2006. All imprisoned women from South-West Scotland are now detained at Cornton Vale. This has had a significant impact on family relationships. Evidence from women now in Cornton Vale who might otherwise have been in Dumfries confirmed this. Since female prisoners are more likely to be the carers of children than are male prisoners the increased travelling distance does make it more difficult for mothers to have the contact with their children which they would wish (although it has to be acknowledged that a number of prisoners come from parts of South-West Scotland from which it is not easy to travel to Dumfries). There is certainly more opportunity to spend time usefully in Cornton Vale than there was in Dumfries: but many of the women who would have been held in Dumfries will be on remand or serving short sentences, and so are unlikely to be in Cornton Vale long enough to take advantage of the opportunity.

Against the disadvantage to family contact for this small number of women has to be set advantage to the remaining prisoners in Dumfries offered by the closure of the Unit. A prison which has both long-term sex offenders and women has to devote much planning and staff time to keeping these two groups apart: that difficulty no longer exists. The closure of the Unit has allowed redecoration to begin. There is the opportunity of some small relief from overcrowding in 'D' hall. There is more access to work and education and PE for male prisoners whose access is already limited by overcrowding; arrangements in the visit room and the health centre are also improved for male prisoners. There is also the possibility of the development of a "local top-end" in the Unit to contribute to better preparation for release.