



HM INSPECTORATE OF PRISONS

Report on HMP & YOI Cornton Vale

Follow-up Inspection - 30 January-2 February 2012

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The visit to HMP and YOI Cornton Vale was made two and a half years after a full inspection and one year after a follow up inspection. The purpose of the inspection was to follow up areas of concern as well as good practice.

1.2 The inspection team comprised

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Margaret Brown, Deputy Chief Inspector

David McAllister, Assistant Chief Inspector

Mick Armstrong, Inspector

Tony Martin, Inspector Designate

Juliet McAlpine, Education Adviser

Davie Thomson, Health Care Adviser

2. OVERVIEW

Progress

2.1 This inspection focuses on progress made in relation to those Recommendations and Action Points where no satisfactory progress had been made at the time of the first follow up inspection of February 2011. It also re-visits the areas of Good Practice noted at that time.

Good Practice

2.2 9 out of 10 areas of good practice are still in place. 1 item has slipped slightly (10.10) but work is in hand to rectify the position.

Recommendations

2.3 At the time of the first follow up inspection there were 20 general recommendations for the establishment of which 15 had made no satisfactory progress. This review found satisfactory progress has been made in 3 of those cases and reasonable progress in 8 cases. Progress is not deemed satisfactory in the remaining 4 recommendations.

Action Points

2.4 At the time of the first follow up inspection there were 75 action points of which 36 had made no satisfactory progress. During the review, 2 of these 36 action points were not re-inspected as they related specifically to Sheriff Courts (12.33 & 12.35) and are covered in a separate courts report and one was no longer relevant (12.45).

In relation to the remaining 33 action points, satisfactory progress has been made in 13 cases, and reasonable progress in 10 cases. Progress is not deemed satisfactory in the remaining 10 action points.

Setting the Scene

2.5 Following the publication of my February 2011 Follow Up Inspection of Cornton Vale, two notable events have happened. Firstly the SPS transferred 114 female prisoners from Cornton Vale to Ratho Hall in HMP Edinburgh in order to reduce overcrowding at Cornton Vale. As a result the total number of women at Cornton Vale has reduced from 385 during that inspection to 280 during this inspection. Secondly, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice announced that Dame Elish Angiolini would lead a Commission on Women Offenders to find more effective ways of reducing reoffending for this group. I welcome both these developments; indeed, the operation to move the female prisoners to Ratho Hall was well conceived and I congratulate the SPS Board and the staff at Cornton Vale, Edinburgh and other prisons, such as Addiewell, for the considerable work and vision required to produce such a positive result.

Follow Up Inspection of Cornton Vale

2.6 In general the reduction in numbers to below 300, as recommended in my previous reports, and increased resources has resulted in a very much better situation for prisoners and staff. The treatment of prisoners has improved. I highlight the greatly improved access to toilet facilities during periods of lock up (paragraph 11.7). Previously, women in Bruce and Younger Houses might have to wait up to one hour to access the toilet causing issues of infection control and health and safety. During this inspection we found no evidence of waits longer than six minutes, which is a considerable improvement.

2.7 I had been very concerned about the large number of prisoners being moved within the establishment, what I originally referred to as 'musical chairs'. Such movements could result in over 300 moves within the prison each week. As a result of the much reduced population (paragraph 2.5) and the introduction of a First Night in Custody Unit (paragraph 11.11), the

numbers of such moves have reduced greatly and the prison is, as a result, much calmer and more stable.

2.8 With a reduced population, there is now much greater access to purposeful activity with 68% of prisoners out of their cells during the day. This is almost double the figure of my previous inspections where the figure had been previously as low as 35%. Nevertheless, access to education is still not as good as it should be; prisoners on remand are still not able to apply for most education classes, for example. I was particularly pleased to see the new gardens work party functioning well, inspired by excellent staff. This new sense of purpose has greatly reduced the sense of boredom that I criticised in previous reports and is a significant advance.

2.9 Consequently, staff morale seems to be much improved and there is a feeling of purpose and enthusiasm around the prison.

2.10 The Mental Health situation also appears to have improved. Mental Health First Aid Training continues and is more strictly regulated. The number of psychologists is planned to increase and, at last, the Sensory Room in Ross House is in use (paragraph 12.24). Importantly, the quality of Care Plans has improved: they have become more individualised and the plans are being audited. This is progress. (paragraph 11.20)

2.11 However, I feel that this can be no more than 'work in progress'. In essence Cornton Vale is still in an unsatisfactory position. This is, perhaps, hardly surprising because many are awaiting how the results of the Women's Commission will be implemented. Indeed there was a palpable feeling of anxiety about the long term future of Cornton Vale whilst we were there. The lack of investment at Cornton Vale over the years continues to mean that the fabric of the prison still has not improved; for example the conditions in Peebles and Bruce Houses are not much better (paragraphs 11.4 and 11.5) and the outdoor exercise areas are in poor condition (paragraph 11.8). The Visits area (paragraph 12.38) and the Health Centre are still not fit for

purpose. Despite this healthcare has made reasonable progress (paragraph 11.18).

2.12 The facilities for family visits remain very poor indeed, not helped by the lack of a Prisoner Visitor Centre, a facility which would go a long way to improving this situation. Fife and Forth Valley CJA and other Third Sector organisations are keen to resource and open such a facility, but they need the help and encouragement of the SPS. Above all others, this prison would benefit from a Visitor Centre and so I find it surprising that this considerable local enthusiasm has, so far, failed to find encouragement and positive support from the SPS (paragraph 11.14). I will continue to monitor the family visits situation.

2.13 In terms of facilities there is positive progress on the horizon with the build of a new 'modular' Separation and Care Unit to replace the 'back cells' in Ross House. This is something the Inspectorate has demanded for many years. Work had started two weeks prior to the inspection and is planned to be completed in June 2012. This is good news and will mean that prisoners under Rule conditions can be managed in a humane way. (paragraph 11.3)

2.14 Unfortunately, during the inspection, some such prisoners were being held on a temporary basis in 'silent cells' in Younger House. This was not only inappropriate use of such cells, but the conditions were disgracefully poor: I saw one prisoner lying on a mattress on a concrete plinth and there was no window to provide ventilation or light. On moral and health grounds these cells are unacceptable. This situation, whereby temporary cells would be required during the build of the new modular unit, should have been anticipated, locally and at Headquarters level. I have demanded that these silent cells be closed immediately and that alternatives be found. Two adjacent 'strong' cells were identified and adapted to a satisfactory standard and were eventually in use over three weeks later. This has been an unnecessarily unpleasant process and I hope that lessons have been learned at all levels. (paragraph 11.3 and 11.16).

2.15 The arrangements for women travelling to distant courts continue to be unsatisfactory (paragraph 11.10). Court video links are still not being used sufficiently and opportunities to use Aberdeen and Inverness prisons are not being considered on a case-by-case basis. Consequently women are having to take long and uncomfortable journeys in order to attend court, often for very short hearings. Yet again, I urge that this situation is reviewed and that the good work going on to introduce court video links as routine for hearings is put in place as soon as possible.

2.16 I also want to comment about the challenges the establishment faces with prisoners who have complex mental health issues. Some of these women might be better located in alternative specialist facilities. I have often argued that prison officers are not sufficiently well trained or equipped, even with support from mental health nurses, to deal with the most challenging of these prisoners. On many occasions, I have observed the staff in Ross House face up to these issues with patience and common sense, which results in good care. But, Cornton Vale is a prison, not a specialist mental health facility and however hard staff try to deal with these challenges, a visit to Ross House is still a harrowing experience. This is a situation that will require review at the highest levels of government and I urge that a long-term solution for this mental health issue is found.

2.17 In summary, considerable progress has been made because of the reduction in the population and the manner in which the opportunity has been taken. However, I find it somewhat disappointing that since my follow up inspection in Cornton Vale a year ago, about one third of my Recommendations and Action Points have not made sufficient progress. I will continue to monitor these areas.

2.18 In September 2009 I recommended that **“female prisoners should have a focus at SPS Board level, with a view to setting the agenda for the future and ensuring such an agenda is implemented quickly and with purpose.”** That recommendation was all about strategic leadership and the setting of priorities. I urge that decisions must now be taken at the highest

levels, as a result of the Womens Commission, which will, once and for all, greatly improve conditions and the treatment of prisoners at Cornton Vale.

3. PROGRESS ON GOOD PRACTICE

10.1 The duty manager conducts random property checks in reception at the weekend (paragraph 3.16)

This area of good practice is still in place. The duty manager conducts a random check on stored property on a weekly basis. This is logged on a specially created form.

10.2 Prisoners are given two new sets of underwear and two new pairs of socks on admission to the establishment (paragraph 3.17)

This area of good practice is still in place. However, there is only one pair of each of the items supplied with further items available on request.

10.3 The induction arrangements (paragraph 3.27)

This area of good practice is still in place. The induction process has changed slightly to reflect the introduction of a new national induction programme. Links Centre staff are responsible for organising induction, for completion of the core screen and for ensuring that all relevant paperwork is sent to the ICM team.

There are now more sessions available to short-term prisoners and remand prisoners are also included. Peer tutors are involved in delivering some sessions.

Family Contact Officers still see every first offender as a matter of routine and an induction visit continues to be offered to all families.

10.4 The Family Contact Officers have their own dedicated telephone number (paragraph 5.2)

This area of good practice is still in place. There are three Family Contact Officers (FCO) who retain access to a dedicated telephone number. All incoming calls are answered in person or returned when staff become available.

Prisoner focus groups were aware of the FCO process and were in the main positive about the service provided.

10.5 The arrangements for prisoners to receive their letters by email (paragraph 5.6)

This area of good practice is still in place. However, the Family Contact Officers noted that usage has dropped over the past few months from approximately 19-20 per day to 5-6 per day. FCO's noted their intention to highlight this service in the visit room and other prisoner areas.

Prisoner focus groups were aware of the service with some of them having used it.

10.6 Mandatory Drug Testing Officers are present during the Care Orderly Rooms (paragraph 6.6).

This area of good practice is still in place. MDT officers attend the Care Orderly Room so that addictions support can be offered in cases where a prisoner tests positive for drugs. This often leads to support being delivered by the enhanced addictions casework team and personal officers.

10.7 The use of Peer Tutors in education, particularly for specific training initiatives (paragraph 7.20).

This area of good practice is still in place. There are two active Peer Tutors.

10.8 The processes for “in possession” medication spot checks in the house blocks (paragraph 8.9).

This area of good practice is still in place. The practice of ‘in possession’ medication spot checks continues. There is a robust protocol in place and an audit trail of activity evident by way of electronic database. Spot checks are initiated either by health or intelligence. However, all prisoners who have ‘in possession’ medication should have an individual safe storage facility; in some cells in Peebles and Bruce, one safe is shared by two prisoners.

10.9 The network and training events held by community agencies in the prison (paragraph 9.11)

This area of good practice is still in place. Statutory and voluntary agencies continue to work together. They get together on a quarterly basis for meetings, networking and training purposes. Prison staff and community based partners combine efforts to introduce new initiatives such as the recent Mandate to Work scheme which is run by the Department of Work and Pensions and is due to start in March 2012.

10.10 The information booklet given out at the end of the pre-release course (paragraph 9.13)

At the time of the inspection, the booklet was no longer being issued in the Links Centre as some of the information contained within it was out of date. When this was highlighted, booklets were once again made available to prisoners and work is in hand to produce an updated version.

4. **PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.3 The use of the "back cells" in Ross House should be discontinued immediately and more appropriate accommodation should be used for the most vulnerable women (paragraphs 2.12 and 3.37).

The use of the back cells in Ross House stopped on 20 January 2012. Work has started on a six-cell replacement facility within the Ross House footprint and complementary resource space is being developed in the original back cell area. This work is estimated to take six months to complete.

Alternative, interim accommodation has been identified. This comprises three cells in Ross House and two cells in Younger House. The cells in Ross House [G10, G4 and F12] are suitable for such use, *however the two cells identified in Younger House [Silent Cells 1 & 2] are not fit for purpose and their use should be discontinued immediately.*

Staff training in the management of prisoners with personality disorders was due to be completed in March 2011 but we could find no evidence of such training being delivered. There is a record of Mental Health First Aid training being delivered in October and December 2011 and evidence of regular 'Mentalisation' training ongoing since mid 2011. Recent staff awareness sessions of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy are also taking place every Friday. We were advised that additional, related training will be made available by the Tavistock Foundation with effect from 7th February 2012.

This is reasonable progress.

11.4 The conditions in Peebles House should be improved (paragraph 2.19).

The conditions in Peebles remain poor. The sitting rooms are dreary, poorly furnished and often do not have enough seats to allow communal dining. The ablutions areas, although kept clean, have chipped soap dishes and shower basins, and mouldy grouting. Arrangements for privacy in these

areas are half swinging doors and curtains. The furniture in most of the cells inspected was in a poor state of repair: handles on cupboards were broken and clothes were simply bundled into these cupboards as there were no racks. The pillows and quilts were badly stained and smelled fusty and dirty.

This is not satisfactory progress.

11.5 The conditions in Bruce House should be improved (paragraph 2.24).

The standard of cleanliness within Bruce House is acceptable. All communal, toilet and shower areas were clean throughout the period of inspection. However they would benefit from a degree of upgrading. Shower areas continue to be screened by a half door and curtain, with all curtains being in place at the time of inspection. The convicted units were of a better standard in relation to overall cleanliness compared to the Remand Units.

Cleaning stations have been created with the correct provision and separation of cleaning materials and during the time of the inspection these were being routinely used by 'housekeepers'. Guides to the use of appropriate mops etc are also displayed within various areas. New cell furniture is required with some rooms having very little furniture. The Unit Manager of Bruce House confirmed a business case has been prepared for new furniture; however it should be noted that even if successful this will not take place until the next financial year.

This is reasonable progress.

11.6 The conditions in Younger House should be improved (paragraph 2.28).

Some minor improvements had been made in Younger House prior to the last inspection (February 2011) but despite a significant reduction in the prisoner population (73 prisoners down to around 38) there is still a claustrophobic feel to the block.

However, despite the physical conditions major improvements have been made in the living conditions in other areas. For instance access to toilets is no longer an issue (see paragraph 11.7) and there are some positive changes to the regime (see paragraph 12.64).

This is satisfactory progress.

11.7 As a matter of priority alternative systems to access toilets in Bruce and Younger Houses should be installed. In the meantime, all prisoners should be able to access a toilet within a reasonable time (paragraph 2.37).

There has been good progress made on this recommendation and access to toilets has improved. Waiting times are now minimal. The improvements result mainly from the lower prisoner numbers. The night sanitation arrangements are now acceptable.

This is satisfactory progress.

11.8 Outdoor exercise areas should be improved and maintained (paragraph 2.40).

All residential areas have outside exercise areas available to prisoners, although these are of varying standards. Ross, Younger and Wallace Houses have 'hard standing' areas which are in a decent state of repair with seating in place. The area to the front of Peebles House required cleaning during the period of the inspection, while the area to the rear was clean, although the surface, which was a mix of Astroturf and matting, required maintenance. During the inspection the Skye House exercise area had upturned tables and piles of leaves which appeared to have been there for an extended period of time. Bruce House has two exercise areas. The area to the front which is used by untried prisoners was of an acceptable standard, however the small area to the rear used by convicted prisoners required cleaning.

The Astroturf areas are in a poor condition. The areas available to Peebles and Skye Houses have moss growing on them and require maintenance. The area within Younger House requires repair work to be undertaken as the surface is uneven and as such unsuitable for most sports. The small area at the rear of Bruce House is in the best condition, although still requires routine maintenance.

The Estates Maintenance Manager provided a document from Estates and Technical Services Directorate at Calton House confirming these areas were not included in the agreed maintenance schedule.

This is not satisfactory progress

11.10 Arrangements should be put in place which allow women to be held in custody nearer the court at which they are appearing, if significant travel from Cornton Vale is involved or that greater use is made of court video link facilities. In the meantime, it is recommended that women travelling to court are offered the opportunity to shower before travel; are given a proper breakfast prior to travel; receive their methadone dose prior to travel; are allowed reading materials during travel; and have a hot meal on return (paragraph 3.8).

Women travelling to distant courts are still being subjected to unnecessarily long journeys. Inspectors witnessed people arriving in Reception from Wick, Tain and Oban. Conversations took place with these and other prisoners who had undertaken journeys to and from courts in the North East and Stranraer in the South West.

As an example, the journey to Wick started at 06.00hrs, it took over five hours to get there. The court appearance lasted two minutes. The prisoner left the court building at 14.05hrs and arrived at Cornton Vale at 19.10hrs. There were no stops for comfort breaks on the journey. A hot snack was provided at Wick but this is unusual. The other prisoners who had long journeys did not have any hot food at all whilst away from the prison or in Reception on return.

Inverness and Aberdeen prisons are not being used as a matter of course to house female prisoners in these circumstances, despite this being the norm for their male counterparts. The use of these prisons for women travelling from Cornton Vale to courts in the North should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Prisoners who were prescribed methadone did not receive it before they left (see paragraph 11.21). Also, as the medical staff are not on duty at 06.00hrs no other medication was issued.

Breakfast is given the night before prisoners travel to court. A Protocol is in place to accommodate early morning showers in all house blocks apart from Ross House who offer this the night before. No reading materials are available during journeys.

Court video links are not being sufficiently used for court hearings.

This is not satisfactory progress.

11.11 A purpose-built First Night Centre should be created (paragraph 3.23).

A First Night in Custody Centre has now been created in Ross House. Cells F1 to F7 inclusive are now designated as the FNIC Centre. Each of these seven cells is suitable for use by two prisoners, providing a total of 14 spaces. The average number of prisoners in the FNIC Centre in use at any one time is 10.

Disabled prisoners or prisoners deemed to be at risk will be allocated to more appropriate accommodation within Ross House. The accommodation is clean and fit for purpose. Cells are cleaned and fresh bedding is issued daily.

No towels, other than paper towels, are issued and there is no opportunity for prisoners to shower while in the FNIC Centre. Liquid hand soap is available

but only on request. *Access to showers, towels, soap and shampoo should be made available in the FNIC Centre or offered on admission in Reception.*

Access to a telephone is provided after the remainder of the house block is locked up, on the evening of admission. Language line is available to those prisoners for whom English is not their first language.

Separate breakfasting, medical examination, medication dispensing and allocation of personal property are all managed in Ross House on the morning after admission prior to onward transfer to the prisoners' hall[s] of allocation.

This facility has been in operation for several months and the associated processes are proving to be beneficial, particularly in relation to more efficient onward allocation of prisoners, more effective information gathering methods and reduced risk of drug related bullying on the day of admission.

This is reasonable progress.

11.14 A purpose built visits facility including a visitor centre as a national resource for Cornton Vale should be created (paragraph 5.9).

There has been no progress made in this area.

This is not satisfactory progress.

11.15 A purpose built Mother and Baby Unit should be created (paragraph 5.20).

The Mother and Baby Unit is still located in Unit 1 in Peebles House. However, since the last follow up inspection the Unit has been refurbished and now provides a more welcoming, decent and hygienic environment for mothers and babies.

This is reasonable progress.

11.16 A purpose built unit to hold prisoners out of normal circulation should be created and staff working in this unit should be properly trained to do so (paragraph 6.28).

Work has recently started on the creation of an Intensive Management Suite for prisoners who require to be held out of normal circulation. The estimated completion date for this new six-cell facility is July 2012.

Each cell will have integral sanitation and shower facilities. Two exercise areas are included in the design to maximise the best use of staff time. As part of this project, the existing back cells will be re-developed to provide a case conference/meeting room, a staff area and possibly a small fitness room. Although attached to Ross House, the new Intensive Management Suite should be far enough removed from the main cellular area to reduce the impact of noise and will feature an external entrance which will negate the disturbance caused while admitting someone into the new facility from an area out with Ross House.

Funding for an uplift to the staff complement has been approved. Staff selection process, attendance pattern and training plan have all yet to be decided and similarly the overall regime design remains in the planning stages. Additionally, consultation with relevant internal partners and visits to segregation units in other SPS establishments, while planned, has yet to be finalised.

This is reasonable progress.

However, concern remains high over the treatment of prisoners held out of normal circulation and the conditions in which they are kept between now and the opening of the new facility, particularly in light of the continuing number of vulnerable and often disruptive women being admitted to Cornton Vale. It is often this group who display abusive and violent behaviours which increases the risk to themselves, other prisoners and the staff who will have to manage them in not-for-purpose accommodation from now until the summer.

11.18 A purpose built health centre should be created (paragraph 8.2).

There has been no progress in developing additional rooms within the health centre, although the introduction and adoption of a reviewed and improved scheduling system has improved functionality and prisoner/patient flow. Scheduling is well circulated and displayed locally.

The reduction in the prisoner population has led to a reduced demand for health services. This is perceived to have had a beneficial effect on managing efficient service provision.

A business case has been submitted to increase officer escorts to the clinics from the House Blocks which would further help the efficiency of service delivery.

It was reported that there is now a reduced necessity for additional rooms to be developed.

This is reasonable progress

11.20 Very vulnerable women should have proper care plans in place (paragraph 8.20).

Improved awareness and completion of care plans is apparent. There is now a standardised care plan template in use, supported by a process mapped flow chart to ensure consistency of approach.

There is a two weekly health team review where care plans may be discussed.

There is now a care plan audit tool in place to aid monitoring of consistency.

This is reasonable progress.

11.21 Prescribed methadone should be given to prisoners on the day of their liberation (paragraph 8.24).

The rationale for not dispensing methadone to women on liberation is based on two points of risk:

- If methadone is dispensed prior to liberation, it has the potential to reduce the motivation of the individual to attend arranged follow up care, potentially contributing to an increased risk of relapse and re offending behaviour.
- There is potential for an individual to seek additional prescribed medication on release compounded by inadequate communications about care transitions that can cause delay in the appropriate medication regime being conveyed to the appropriate community based prescriber. Risk of overdose is also increased.

Methadone is not prescribed prior to a court appearance. It is deemed unnecessary as a default position by health centre staff as there may be no specific clinical requirement to dispense prior to a court visit. Arrangements are in place for methadone to be dispensed on a prisoners return from court. This may reduce potential effect on a person's actual or perceived capacity.

This is satisfactory progress.

11.22 Prisoners should be assessed for programmes to address offending behaviour, and when they have been assessed they should be provided with the relevant programme (paragraph 9.10).

In terms of resourcing programme delivery and supervision there has been an overall increase:

Function	(Pre) February 2011	February 2011	Current/ Planned
Officer	6	6	6 + 1 Temporary
Psychologist 'D'	0.4	0	2
Psychologist 'F'	0.4	1	1.5
Psychologist 'G'	0	0.2	0.6
Social Work	0	0	0

This represents a major increase in the overall compliment in relation to Psychology and should improve previous issues related to monitoring and supervision. The Programmes Manager noted the temporary D band officer has supported the completion of assessments and delivery of programmes. However this 6-month period is scheduled to end in February 2012.

Generic assessments are now being undertaken and at the date of inspection 80 had been completed, with four waiting to be completed. The four awaiting completion had been referred for assessment in the previous four to six weeks. The target group for Generic Assessments is prisoners serving four years and over, however those serving two to four years are offered the opportunity to undertake a Generic Assessment at induction.

The range of programmes being delivered remains the same as during the last inspection. However there has been a large increase in waiting lists from the previous inspection:

Waiting Lists

Programme	February 2011	February 2012	Difference
FOBP	4	17	+13
SROBP	6	4	-2
Constructs	5	9	+4
Drugs action	0	20	+20
Alcohol	0	22	+22
Anxiety	0	33	+33
Connections	0	26	+26
Parenting	0	14	+14

The Programmes Manager attributed the increase in waiting lists to the Generic Assessment process.

Access to programmes continues to be based on assessed need and critical dates; however there are 28 prisoners who are in the Parole process with an identified need for either FOBP, SROBP or Constructs.

This is reasonable progress.

5. PROGRESS ON ACTION POINTS

12.1 Ross House staff should supervise the women using the four recreation areas in the hall at all times (paragraph 2.9)

The level of prisoner supervision observed throughout the inspection was proportionate to the volume and types of prisoners contained in Ross House at that time.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.2 The arrangements for maintaining privacy in the ablutions areas in Peebles, Bruce and Younger houses should be improved (paragraphs 2.18, 2.23 and 2.28).

New curtains have been fitted to the toilet and shower doors in these house blocks. Some of the curtains were tied back which has the potential to lower the level of privacy offered to prisoners. Although these arrangements offer the minimum decent levels of privacy, full length doors would be preferable.

This is reasonable progress.

12.5 Every effort should be made to keep adult prisoners and young offenders separate in Bruce House and in Younger House (paragraphs 2.23 and 2.28)

Younger House is now solely dedicated to young adults and Bruce House no longer holds women under the age of 21 years.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.13 A full range of toiletries should be available in the canteen (paragraph 2.50).

By end February 2012, the stock room housing all prisoner canteen items will be relocated, within the same building, to an area almost double in size of the present facility. This increase in capacity will provide opportunities to expand

the range of all stock available to prisoners. In advance of the move, prisoner focus groups are planned to review and expand the range of all canteen items including toiletries.

The present range of toiletries on the canteen sheet is basic but adequate in light of the very well stocked prisoners' shop. The shop is managed by the officer instructor who manages the card making work party and is located in the same area with easy access for all prisoners. A full selection of makeup and toiletries from budget items including shampoo and soap to top of the range cosmetics is available through this facility. Included in this is a choice of toiletries and make up for Black and Minority Ethnic women.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.14 The shortage of laundry bags and the problem of bags being overfilled should be addressed (paragraph 2.53).

There has been no change in the laundry service since the last inspection. During the inspection we held five prisoner focus groups and all reported that clothing is still returned to them damp.

There are constant issues with bags being overfilled and clothes being mixed inappropriately. Sometimes when they are overfilled they are returned to the house blocks unwashed. Heavy items and light items are often put in the same bags making the drying time difficult to gauge. Efforts are made (by way of an induction session) to impress on prisoners the correct way to fill the laundry bags.

Added to this there has been a problem with hair and stains being discovered on laundered bedding. Inspectors were shown examples of this. Also, we examined the quality of new bedding and found it to be of questionable standard, this seems to have contributed to the poor standard of wash. Laundry staff are doing their best to address both of these issues.

On top of these issues there is an inordinate amount of damage to bedding caused by prisoners, such as cigarette burns to the duvet covers.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.18 Prisoners should not be required to give personal details in the presence of others in reception (paragraph 3.15).

The interview area has been altered slightly to accommodate a 'baffle board' that acts as a screen between the two desks in the open plan area. This offers sufficient suppression of sound. Inspectors observed prisoners giving personal details in the vicinity of others and confidentiality being maintained.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.19 The food available to prisoners arriving too late for the evening meal should be reviewed (paragraph 3.18).

As highlighted at paragraph 11.10 it is very rare for a female prisoner who has returned from a lengthy journey to be given a hot meal. This means that a prisoner who leaves Cornton Vale at 06.00hrs for a long journey will always return to the prison after the evening meal has been served. Therefore she does not get a hot meal at court or on return to Reception.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.21 Prisoners should be given a telephone credit on admission which meets their immediate needs (paragraphs 3.20 and 5.13).

The full inspection in September 2009 called for sufficient funds to be made available so that prisoners (most of whom are not local) with family responsibilities would be able to meet their immediate needs.

In the follow up inspection of February 2011 there was no provision for untried prisoners who do not have any cash with them. This meant that there was no way someone without cash could make contact with family members.

During this inspection, observations and focus groups confirmed that there is a 30p telephone credit provided on arrival to all prisoners regardless of their financial position. However only prisoners with private cash can increase this minimum amount. The 30p allowance should be increased substantially for those who do not have any cash.

This is reasonable progress.

12.22 Senior managers should have an input to the induction process (paragraph 3.26).

Staff who deliver the induction confirmed that senior managers do now have an input into the induction process. Feedback from prisoners confirmed this.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.23 Suicide risk care plans should be based on individual risk and need (paragraph 3.36).

There appears to be improved use of the ACT2Care documentation in identifying useful activities and actions that may reduce risk as well as improving engagement with prisoners. Examples of ACT2Care care plans were reviewed and supported this action. Improved effort is also being made to promote family involvement in case conferences: but with varying success. There also appears to be improved multi disciplinary review processes in place.

There is reasonable progress

12.24 Staff should be trained and the multi-sensory room should be used as a matter of course (paragraph 3.38).

Training for staff is now regularly available and there is evidence of the room being used.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.28 A copy of night shift orders specific to role should be available to all night duty staff (paragraph 3.43).

Night duty orders are in place for all night duty posts. All night duty staff were able to answer questions about emergency procedures.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.30 The quality of the property bags and seals for the bags used by Cornton Vale for women going to court should be improved (paragraphs 4.7 and 4.16).

It is still easy to remove the seals and then reapply them.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.37 There should be regular reviews with non-English speaking prisoners via an interpreter (paragraph 4.20).

There has been no progress with this. No regular reviews take place.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.38 Access to visits for disabled prisoners and visitors should be improved (paragraph 4.23).

Visits for disabled prisoners take place in the same areas as they did at time of the last inspection. Discussions with management pointed to a number of potential ways of improving the visit room, however at the point of writing the report no definite progress had been made.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.39 The draft mother and baby policy should be finalised (paragraph 5.16).

The Cornton Vale Equality and Diversity Manager is working with SPS HQ to highlight the key elements in the current unsigned document. This is taking

account of new developments in child protection and other Cornton Vale based issues.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.40 There should be a clear training strategy for officers and healthcare staff working with mothers and babies (paragraph 5.16).

A trained Child Development Officer has been piloting a one year Aberlour Mother and Baby Project within the establishment. The purpose of the project is to assist prisoners in the Mother and Baby Unit to develop parenting skills. The longer term aim of the prison is to develop a multi disciplinary approach to issues in this area rather than rely on only uniformed staff.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.41 The door between the Mother and Baby Unit and the accommodation for convicted prisoners should always be locked (paragraph 5.19).

The door was not locked on the first day of inspection, although it was locked on two further visits. Even if there are no mothers and babies living in the Unit, the door should still be locked to control infection from prisoners passing through and using the facilities.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.42 The arrangements for holding disciplinary hearings in Younger House should be improved (paragraph 6.3).

The Orderly Room in Younger House has now been moved to a different room which is fit for purpose. There are also orderly room hearings held in other areas of the prison where the accommodation seems to be suitable.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.43 Prisoners should be offered a copy of the Prison Rules at disciplinary hearings (paragraph 6.4).

Copies of the Prison Rules are available in all House Blocks.

This is satisfactory progress.

12.45 All prisoners being held in the back cells in Ross House should have a bed (paragraph 6.21).

No longer applicable. The back cells in Ross House are no longer in use.

12.46 A more structured approach to the management of prisoners subject to 'Rule 37' and/or 'Rule 39' should be developed (paragraph 6.28).

A separate facility is currently being built to accommodate those prisoners who need to be managed out with the prison mainstream. Examination of a sample of care plans for such prisoners demonstrated improvement in both awareness and completion.

This is reasonable progress.

12.52 Arrangements for promoting learning across the establishment should be improved (paragraph 7.7)

In November 2011, Learning Centre staff held a very successful open day to raise prisoners' awareness of education classes and activities. Almost all convicted prisoners attended and provided very positive feedback about the event. Some of these comments were featured in the December edition of the magazine *Vanity Vale*. However, support from prison staff for this event was poor. Numbers of prisoners attending education classes rose in December as a result of this event. Another Open Day has been scheduled for Spring 2012. The *Vanity Vale* magazine also promotes prisoners' work and achievements to the whole prison population. Education staff continue to

inform SPS staff in house blocks of new and continuing classes and activities, in person and through the prison intranet, *sharepoint*. Generally, SPS staff still do not communicate this information to prisoners. The new First-Line Manager structure within the prison plans to address this issue further. The FLM with responsibility for education now raises the issue at FLM meetings. The early impact of this is positive. Learning Centre staff hold a welcome session every Monday for new prisoners, to inform them of education classes and activities and how to access them.

This is reasonable progress.

12.56 Processes should be put in place to meet the assessed skills needs of prisoners (paragraph 7.13).

Learning Centre staff assess the core skills of new prisoners who will remain in Cornton Vale for 30 days or more. This information is recorded on prison systems and is accessed by SPS staff during case management and other meetings. Learning Centre staff contribute annually to *risk and needs reports* for all long-term prisoners. Occasionally, SPS staff from work parties refer prisoners to the Learning Centre for additional support in literacy. Staff from SPS *Programmes* consult Learning Centre staff about every prisoners' progress and skills. Learning Centre staff use information about learners' skills levels effectively to ensure that learners are placed at the appropriate level of study. However, while there is some improvement in communication between Learning Centre and SPS staff regarding learners' skills levels, much of the resulting action is reactive. Learning Centre and SPS staff should be more proactive in formalising processes for sharing this information and actions should be more targeted and formal.

This is reasonable progress.

12.59 Sufficient arrangements should be put in place for prison and learning centre staff to work together in the planning and delivery of provision across education and work-based activities (paragraph 7.17).

Communication between work party staff and Learning Centre staff has improved. However, progress has been slow. There are some examples of staff working together to maximise opportunities for prisoners. For example, Learning Centre staff and those running the hairdressing work party work well together to provide an integrated experience for prisoners. Plans for Learning Centre staff to provide underpinning knowledge for the SVQ in Horticulture, when it commences, are well advanced and a similar approach with SPS staff who will deliver the planned SVQ in Retail is at a very early stage. There are plans to introduce open learning units into a selection of work party activities. Learning Centre staff have worked well with Unit managers on a range of purposeful activities, such as the introduction of the *Koestler Award*, the Malawi project and a project with the Arches Theatre. These initiatives are popular with prisoners and well attended. New monthly Contract Meetings, involving senior SPS managers, the Learning Centre Manager and the FLM for *Offender Outcomes* are now taking place. Although in very early stages, indications suggest that these meetings will further improve communication and planning between SPS and Learning Centre staff. Learning Centre staff are also providing underpinning knowledge for the weight management classes provided by the PTI in the gym. The arrangements for access to and use of the well-stocked library are incomplete, resulting in missed opportunities for prisoners to access reading materials, or to work in the library's welcoming environment. Access depends on the availability of the pass-woman, whose duties involve recording the issue and return of books. Responsibility for and ownership within the prison of the library and its current and potential operations is unclear.

This is reasonable progress.

12.60 There should be opportunities for prisoners in work parties to gain informal or formal recognition of core skills gained through their work experience (paragraph 7.19).

Prisoners continue to gain certification in a few work party activities. For example, those taking part in the hairdressing, industrial cleaning and bike shop work parties have the opportunity to work towards appropriate vocational

qualifications. However, Learning Centre and SPS staff still have not addressed the lack of informal or formal recognition for prisoners' core skills gained through their work experience. This reduces prisoners' motivation to take part in learning, and limits their preparation for liberation and employability.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.61 Education staff should involve learners sufficiently in evaluation processes and put systems in place to improve the quality of provision (paragraph 7.22).

Learning Centre staff did not carry out a self-evaluation of their activities over the past year and, as a result, did not plan for improvements for the following year. While the possibility of a change in educational provider may have contributed to the reluctance of staff to plan for the following year, that no evaluation was carried out is not acceptable. Attention to the evaluation of activities is poor, although staff issued an evaluative questionnaire to all prisoners attended the open day in November 2011. As a result of the lack of evaluative activity, staff are unable to plan for improvement in prisoners' experiences, nor do they highlight to SPS staff instances where improved joint-working is required. There have been improvements in the analysis of attendance achievement, attainment and progression rates, although these are at an early stage. Learning Centre staff state that they have difficulty in the analysis of learners' attainment because of the *roll-on, roll-off* nature of the provision.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.62 Work parties should not be cancelled because of staff shortages or sickness (paragraph 7.25).

Cancellation of work parties has reduced significantly over the past year. However, managers state that the fluctuating population of the prison presents difficulties for the viability of work parties, with work parties and other activities drawing from a reducing number of convicted prisoners. The *Offender*

Outcomes Manager intends to review all regimes, once the population is more settled.

This is reasonable progress.

12.64 The range of out of cell activities should be widened to all prisoners (paragraph 7.28).

An appropriate range of out-of-cell activities is available across the prison. The Learning Centre organises purposeful activities, including a weekly book club, a magazine club, a weekly film group, author visits, guitar playing and arts and crafts activities. Recent improvements in the effectiveness of communication between prison staff and Learning Centre staff have contributed to increased numbers of prisoners attending these day time activities.

The Physical Education Instructors (PEIs) timetable access to the gymnasium and related activities carefully and thoughtfully, with most house blocks having access at least once per day. All house blocks have access to the gymnasium at the weekends and in the evenings. The PEIs have worked hard to introduce a range of related activities to prisoners, such as *Girls on the move* [dance], weight management classes [in partnership with education staff], charity projects, *Youth Scotland* participation and Zumba classes. PEI staff have a positive attitude towards the challenges of the fluctuating prison population, planning how to continue to stimulate demand amongst new prisoners, rather than seeing the fluctuation as a problem.

Regime plans for all house blocks are now in place and prisoners have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities, including bingo, sewing, art and yoga amongst others. These activities are organised by the management and staff of each individual house block and therefore the provision varies across the prison depending on the prisoner population. The practice in Ross House provides a notable example, where a regular prisoner focus group is held. Prisoners suggest the types of out-of-cell activities they would like to be introduced and the practicalities of these suggestions are discussed with

fellow prisoners and staff. A youth worker attends 2.5 days per week in Younger House which has afforded increased access to activities appropriate to that group of young women. Many prisoners in Bruce and Peebles however continue to spend their evening and weekend recreation time watching television in cell on their own or with other prisoners.

This is reasonable progress.

12.65 Outdoor sports areas should be created (paragraph 7.31).

The outdoor sports pitches are still under-utilised, having been used occasionally and sporadically last summer. They are very poorly maintained and are currently unfit for purpose. On occasions when they were used during the summer, health and safety risks were identified due to the surface material. Managers plan to undertake a risk assessment soon on another outdoor area of the prison.

This is not satisfactory progress.

12.67 "Nurse stations" in the house blocks should be kept clean (paragraph 8.4).

Improvements have been made regarding the cleaning of nurse stations. Stations were cleaned to a reasonable standard during the inspection. Clear confirmation has been given that responsibility for maintaining cleanliness standards lies with the First Line Manager in each house block. Awareness of this was confirmed by officers on site. There is noticeable damage to plaster board walls and sink seals in the nurse stations within Peebles and Bruce that should be repaired.

This is reasonable progress

12.69 The nurse led clinics should not be affected by shortages of nursing staff (paragraph 8.7).

Clinics are now rarely cancelled. On the odd occasion that a clinic is cancelled, the cause is attributed to unscheduled illness of staff or a re-

prioritization due to unforeseen incidents. Follow up clinics are arranged as a priority in the event of a clinic being cancelled. We were informed that no clinics are now cancelled due to nurses being allocated to fulfil administration cover.

This is satisfactory progress

12.70 Prisoners should be told of hospital appointments more than one hour before the appointment, to allow them time to have a shower (paragraph 8.16).

There is now a process in place for informing prisoners when hospital appointments are due. Healthcare staff inform the house block officers with a suitable time to advise a prisoner of their appointment details. This is usually 24 hours prior to the appointment taking place. The Intelligence Management Unit takes responsibility for the security assessment. There is also provision by staff to ensure that prisoners have the opportunity to attend to hygiene needs. This progress is acknowledged as adequate by prisoners via comments received from a prisoner's focus group.

This is satisfactory progress

12.73 Operating practices for the administration of methadone in the health centre should be secure (paragraph 8.22).

There has been a marked reduction in the number of prisoners prescribed methadone: down from 150 during the last inspection to 77 during this one. Of these 77 prisoners 29 were located in Wallace House and 48 in other houses. In normal circumstances Wallace House prisoners receive methadone in that area. This reduction in overall numbers and the removal of Wallace House prisoners from the Health Centre has reduced overall movement in the Health Centre during this process. However, the Health Centre Manager noted that when staff shortages occur all prisoners are taken to the Health Centre to receive methadone. On the day of inspection all prisoners were taken to the Health Centre.

The process of dispensing methadone within the Health Centre remains the same as at the time of the last inspection. On the day of inspection 10 prisoners were located in the waiting room and called individually to the dispensary. After receiving their medication they gathered in the non-secure communal area while waiting on the last prisoners to be seen. This process provides no control or privacy.

This is not satisfactory progress



**The Scottish
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