



# **HM INSPECTORATE OF PRISONS**

## **HMP & YOI CORNTON VALE**

**FOLLOW UP INSPECTION: 1-4 FEBRUARY 2011**

**LAST INSPECTION 21-29 SEPTEMBER 2009**

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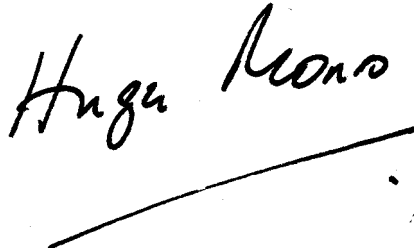
## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The visit to HMP & YOI Cornton Vale was made one year after a full inspection found a number of areas of concern. The purpose of this inspection was to follow up these areas of concern as well as areas of good practice and to examine any significant changes. 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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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hugh Monro". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line.

HUGH MONRO  
HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS

14 April 2011

## **2. OVERVIEW**

### **Progress**

2.1 Progress since the last inspection has been as follows.

#### ***Good Practice***

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Areas of Good Practice still in place                   | 6 |
| Areas which can no longer be described as Good Practice | 4 |

#### ***Recommendations***

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Satisfactory progress made | 3  |
| Reasonable progress made   | 2  |
| Progress not satisfactory  | 17 |

#### ***Points of Note***

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Satisfactory progress made | 24 |
| Reasonable progress made   | 15 |
| Progress not satisfactory  | 36 |

### **Setting the Scene**

2.2 Cornton Vale, Scotland's national facility for female prisoners, was inspected in September 2009 and the report of that inspection was published in January 2010. The report contained an unusually high number of recommendations and points for action. It was an unfavourable report which required timely action by both SPS HQ and the Governor of Cornton Vale to remedy some serious shortcomings. A follow up inspection designed to measure progress took place in February 2011.

2.3 This report sets out the conclusions of that follow up inspection by measuring progress on the areas of Good Practice, the Recommendations and the Points for Action made during the 2009 Inspection. This Overview comments on some of the main issues from the perspective of the follow up inspection.

2.4 When I inspected Cornton Vale in September 2009, it was not providing the care and attention that Scotland's vulnerable women prisoners needed: nor was there sufficient purposeful activity and rehabilitative work available for the rest of the population. Most of all, Cornton Vale required good and strong strategic and local leadership to change the culture of the prison, to improve staff training and to improve the treatment of prisoners. I set out below where progress has been made on these and other important issues.

## **Comment on The Broad Issues**

### ***Overcrowding***

2.5 In the 2009 Inspection I set the scene by stating how overcrowded Cornton Vale was during the inspection: 399 against a Design Capacity of 375. I stated that *“Cornton Vale is in a state of crisis and an ever-increasing prison population is one of the main causes; indeed many of the criticisms I have are directly related to this situation.”*

2.6 During the follow up inspection the population had reduced to 385, but in my opinion this is still far too high. Indeed I take issue with the Design Capacity of 375. Only by reducing the prison population to 300 or less would the prison's *present* resources better match the individual and aggregated needs of the prisoners and allow more quality time to be spent on addressing them. Cornton Vale just cannot cope taking ever-increasing numbers of prisoners.

**2.7 In this respect, I conclude that the SPS should review the Design Capacity for Cornton Vale to a level consistent with the capacity of the infrastructure to cope and in line with ensuring conditions of basic decency for the population. The population also needs to be reduced as soon as is practicably possible to no more than 300 until the prison can be rebuilt to house women prisoners in accommodation which is fit for purpose. In the meantime, options for housing the extra female prisoners elsewhere in better conditions should be examined as a temporary measure. Any move, however, should not be to the detriment of access to appropriate work, interventions and family visits.**

### ***Treatment and Conditions***

2.8 The treatment of prisoners and the conditions in which they live are just not sufficiently good. This was a theme in the 2009 Inspection and except for minor progress in repainting some house blocks, conditions have either remained much the same or failed to improve. Indeed in some areas, such as the Mother and Baby Unit, they have worsened. The very poor access to toilets for women in Bruce and Younger Houses has continued and the dignity, safety, infection control and health issues associated with this unacceptable situation are even more stark than in 2009.

2.9 I also assess that staff/prisoner relationships have deteriorated. This may be as a result of low staff morale and a general malaise which seems to pervade many, though not all, staff groups. In a number of prisoner focus groups there was a recurring theme that staff were not always trusted and this was most obvious in relation to staff handling of prison complaint forms which was perceived by the women to be suspect. In addition to this, prisoners complained to Inspectors about a culture of swearing and shouting among staff and of name calling. This caused some women to feel angry and embarrassed in front of others but reluctant to make formal complaints for fear of reprisal. The practice described by women in relation to shouting and swearing was confirmed by staff to whom we spoke.

2.10 In examining and addressing the negative aspects of the prison's staff culture, the SPS also requires to revisit the gender balance within the uniformed staff group. Inspectors found there are too many occasions when there are insufficient female staff readily available to attend to female-specific issues such as searching. There is also a need to ensure that prisoners can have easy access to female officers and managers should they need to do so for sensitive and personal matters.

**2.11 Overall, I conclude that insufficient progress has been made to improve both physical conditions and the quality of the regime. The treatment of prisoners must be improved by the exercise of stronger leadership and the introduction of effective mechanisms for providing assurance and proper governance. It is encouraging to note that subsequent to the inspection additional Unit and First Line Managers are to be deployed to the prison.**

### ***Mental Health***

2.12 The mental health issues affecting significant numbers of female prisoners held in Cornton Vale continue to be a source of concern. In terms of numbers and complexity these issues are amongst the most serious in any prison in Scotland. Women with mental ill health and serious personality disorders need a therapeutic regime which provides a variety of different elements aimed at addressing the worsening effect of imprisonment, whilst at the same time preparing them for an eventual return to the community.

2.13 Nowhere is the mental health issue more stark than in the euphemistically-named 'Management Suite' in Ross House. This segregation area is more colloquially known as the 'back cells'. These cells are utterly depressing and are an unsuitable environment in which to hold very vulnerable girls and women. It is my view that these cells are used primarily as a control measure. Staff are insufficiently trained to deal with the women held there.

**2.14 I conclude that the treatment of vulnerable women with mental health issues must improve. I want to see appropriate training for uniformed staff who are required to manage these individuals as well as much wider access to therapeutic activity. Above all I have seen insufficient progress on my previous and important recommendation that every vulnerable woman – including all those who are removed from association for any reason - should have comprehensive multidisciplinary care plans in place which are fully implemented.**

### ***Access to Activity***

2.15 The very obvious and real atmosphere of boredom that faces prisoners in much of Cornton Vale has been reported on by my predecessor as well as by me. Far too many women are locked in their cells or house blocks at any one time. Only a minority have access to activity. This situation is not good for mental or physical wellbeing nor indeed for good preparation for release.

**2.16 I conclude that the way the regime is run at Cornton Vale must be reviewed with a determination to involve a far higher proportion of women in activities and offending behaviour interventions. This must include short-term prisoners as well as those on remand. For these two prisoner groups in particular, life at Cornton Vale is just far too restrictive, unproductive and lacking in challenge. This is no way to manage female prisoners in Scotland if there is to be any hope of reducing the level and frequency of their offending.**

### ***Strategic Priority***

2.17 In summary, I am very disappointed by the lack of progress made at Cornton Vale. In a perfect world Cornton Vale would be re-built and would have staff comprehensively trained in the very specific role of working with women offenders. Additionally, it would have a regime and interventions tailored to the needs of this complex population. Regrettably it will take time to



get to that stage and so I urge the SPS to take short term measures now to improve the treatment of prisoners.

**2.18 Overall, I conclude that the SPS Board must now put Cornton Vale at the very top of the priority list to address the prison's serious shortcomings, most obviously a poor regime and culture. Since my inspection the Board has taken certain management measures which show an encouraging sign that they are determined to improve the staff culture at the prison. It is also my view that Cornton Vale should be nominated as a development prison and be rebuilt as soon as is practicably possible in order to improve the very poor conditions. All of this will require support and direction from the Scottish Government.**

**2.19 Finally, I continue to recommend a single focus for female offenders on the SPS Board.**

### ***The Need for a National Strategy to Cope with Growing Female Prisoner Numbers***

2.20 Notwithstanding the concerns I have about Cornton Vale and the very detrimental effects of overcrowding in that prison, there is an equally serious issue to be tackled in a coordinated manner: and that is the burgeoning number of women being sent to prison. A significant proportion of these women are in custody for the first time and overall numbers are placing an intolerable strain on the system. The number of women in custody now is rapidly approaching 500 with Cornton Vale itself regularly holding over 400 women. An overspill of some 60 are held in HMP Greenock and small numbers in HMPs Aberdeen and Inverness. The infrastructure in Cornton Vale cannot adequately cope with the demands placed on it by high numbers and there is now a very real danger of doing more harm than good by sending women into an environment which no longer has the capacity to meet their complex needs.

2.21 I would strongly urge that the problem is tackled collaboratively by the Scottish Government, the Courts and the SPS in order to address existing resource and management issues for female offenders. There is also a need to find practical ways of reducing the number of women in custody so that the SPS can deal fully with those women who present a danger to themselves, to others and to the community.

2.22 Overcrowding in any prison has a hugely negative impact on efforts to change behaviours among offenders and to embed the processes of rehabilitation and preparation for release. It may therefore be that, for example, consideration should be given to capping the population in each prison to ensure that environmental, health and safety and minimum standards of custody, care and opportunity are not eroded to unacceptably low standards.

2.23 I am fully aware of the challenges faced by the Criminal Justice system as a whole in tackling the problem of crime in our communities. We should be wary, however, of making communities potentially less safe by overcrowding our prisons and thus spreading resources too thinly to make any positive difference to offenders' behaviour in the future. Under such circumstances, there is the potential to have unintended consequences by making offenders worse after their experience of prison rather than better. That is why I urge, as my predecessors have done, that the overcrowding problem is urgently addressed to allow SPS staff to concentrate on the job of working with those offenders who present the greatest risk to the safety of our communities. **I conclude that overcrowding is a particularly damaging issue for the female prison population and must be tackled as a matter of priority.**

### **Conclusions**

1. **Overcrowding**
  - a. That the SPS review the Design Capacity for Cornton Vale to a more realistic level.

b. That the population is reduced to no more than 300 as soon as is practicably possible.

c. That options for re-housing female prisoners at other prisons is examined as a temporary option.

**2. Treatment and Conditions**

a. That insufficient progress has been made to improve conditions.

b. That the treatment of prisoners must be enhanced by stronger leadership and Cornton Vale-specific training.

c. That the treatment of women travelling to distant courts should be improved and that video court links for court hearings should become commonplace.

**3. Mental Health Issues**

a. That the regime for vulnerable women with mental health issues must improve.

b. That, until a proper Separation and Care Unit can be provided, staff dealing with prisoners in the 'back cells' of Ross House must be appropriately trained to do so.

c. That a properly coordinated process is put in place to ensure that all women held out of association for whatever reason, have comprehensive multi-disciplinary care plans, which are fully implemented.

**4. Access to Activities**

a. That the way that the regime at Cornton Vale is managed must be fundamentally reviewed.

b. That there must be a determination greatly to improve access to activities, particularly for short- term prisoners and those on remand.

**5. Strategic Priority**

a. That SPS HQ, supported by the Government, must now raise the strategic priority of Cornton Vale to the highest level.

b. The SPS must now take positive, determined and timely action to address the establishment's severe shortcomings.

c. That overcrowding is particularly damaging for the female prisoner population and must be addressed urgently in discussions between the Scottish Government, the Judiciary and the SPS.

### 3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1 The detailed assessments of how the prison has progressed are contained in chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this Report. A summary of the main conclusions, based on the September 2009 Inspection of Cornton Vale, are listed below alongside the main assessments of the Follow Up Inspection.

**Issue: Management and Prioritisation**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

The management of female offenders at Cornton Vale needed a focus at SPS Board level *“with a view to setting the agenda to the future and ensuring such an agenda is implemented quickly and with purpose.”* In essence I expected to see the strategic priority of the prison rise considerably higher to ensure that it received improved direction, resourcing and leadership.

**February 2011 Follow Up Assessment** *Not satisfactory Progress.*

Some attention to this has been made by upgrading the Governor’s Post and by making the Director of Prisons and the Director of Partnerships and Commissioning jointly responsible at SPS Board level for the female offender portfolio. However, the promotion of the Governor has not been consolidated by also supporting the management team, some of whom remain inexperienced in working with women offenders.

At a strategic level there is little demonstrable evidence of clear priority action for Cornton Vale; indeed the Governor has lost the temporary additional funding provided for *ex gratia* payments to staff working in the very challenging environment of Ross House, and must now fund this from within existing resources. Despite the pressing need at Cornton Vale, it would appear that ‘development prisons’ continue to receive capital funding, a proportion of which might arguably have been better spent at Cornton Vale. (Paragraphs 11.1; 11.16)

**Issue: Treatment of Female Prisoners**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

The treatment of female prisoners at Cornton Vale fell well short of the standards I would expect on a number of counts. This poor level of treatment was most obviously manifested in the treatment of women in the 'Management Suite' in Ross House and in the long waiting times for women to access toilets in Bruce and Younger Houses.

**February 2011 Follow Up Assessment.** *Not satisfactory progress.*

The 'Management Suite' cells in Ross House are still in use. Staff remain inadequately trained to deal with such vulnerable and disturbed women and there seems to be little expectation of a new Separation and Care Unit being built in the near future. The existing situation has now gone on for far too long and action must be taken firstly to upgrade training for staff and secondly to improve the treatment of prisoners and the conditions in which they live that are exceptionally poor. (Paragraphs 11.3; 11.16)

Toilet access in Bruce and Younger Houses has not improved and remains disgracefully poor. The situation is exacerbated because staff are not as aware of medical information as they could be and of prisoners with specific medical conditions (pregnancy, kidney infections, diarrhoea etc) are therefore not always being given special treatment or priority. (Paragraph 11.7)

**Issue: Access to activities**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

The high proportion of women (and particularly those on remand or short sentences) who had poor access to activities, including education and employability training. The majority of women spent a high proportion of their day locked in their cells, leading to boredom and a lack of purpose.

**February 2011 Follow up Assessment.** *Reasonable progress in parts but overall not satisfactory progress.*

The poor access to activities can best be demonstrated by our analysis of figures during the inspection: On the first analysis 86 prisoners were out of the houseblocks on activities with 270 remaining in the houseblocks, some of whom were pass women. The second had figures of 98 and 262 respectively. Whilst there has been improvement with new life skills classes (which are well led) and access to art classes, the overall figures show that the vast majority of prisoners remain in the houseblocks and often locked in cells doing nothing constructive. Given the number of vulnerable women who need access to purposeful and therapeutic activity, this is an unsatisfactory result. (Paragraphs 11.17)

**Issue: Treatment of Women Travelling to Distant Courts**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

The poor treatment of women travelling to the more distant courts. These women often had to do the return journey in one day and without receiving a hot meal during the day, without a shower prior to travel, without receiving their methadone (if prescribed) prior to travel and without reading material on the journey.

**February 2011 Follow up Assessment.** *Not satisfactory Progress.*

The situation has not improved. I had hoped to see greater use of court video link for court hearings in order to reduce prisoner movements. It is

difficult to understand why hot meals cannot be provided, why methadone cannot be issued and why prisoners cannot have access to a shower. No credible explanations were forthcoming. (Paragraph 11.10)

**Issue: The Internal Progression System**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

The internal progression system created an average of 300 cell moves within the prison per week and this made for an extremely unsettling atmosphere for prisoners and staff alike. It also made monitoring prisoners' individual progress and management an almost impossible task.

**February 2011 Follow up Assessment.** *Reasonable Progress.*

Internal moves have decreased from 300 to an average of 100 per week. This is a significant improvement given the high population numbers that the prison is having to deal with. Nevertheless there is still too much prisoner movement and this will not reduce until sufficient cellular accommodation is constructed. It is unclear whether the reduction in the number of cell moves taking place is primarily a function of the prison simply having run out of places to house the women as opposed to any clear plan to reduce such a high number of disruptive moves. (Paragraph 11.12)

**Issue: Provision of New Facilities**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

Four key facilities were not fit for purpose and need timely strategic action. Firstly, a proper 'Care and Separation' Unit needed to be provided to manage women exhibiting extreme behaviours which represented a threat to themselves and to others, as well as for those presenting mental ill health. Secondly, a new health centre is required to be built as the existing facility no longer meets the needs. Thirdly a purpose built visits facility was

urgently needed. Fourthly a purpose built Mother and Baby Unit was a basic requirement for a female establishment.

**February 2011 Follow up Assessment.** *Not satisfactory Progress.*

Business Cases for these vital facilities were produced but have not yet been taken forward. The need for new units is even more important than in 2009. (Paragraphs 11.14;11.15;11.16; 11.18)

**Issue: Family Contact**

**September 2009 Full Inspection**

An area of Good Practice was the performance of the Family Contact Officers at Cornton Vale, not only because of their individual commitment to the role, but also because a complement of three FCDOs is unusually generous. However, the Visit Room at Cornton Vale is small and restrictive and needed to be replaced with a purpose built visits facility, including a Visitor Centre.

**February 2011 Follow up Assessment.** *Not satisfactory Progress.*

The opportunity to create a new Visitor Centre in partnership with community organisations has not been progressed. The inadequate visit room continues in use. (Paragraph 11.14) The Family Contact Officers remain as strong examples of *Good Practice*.



#### **4. 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 and operating on a weekly basis. The regular checking of property and logging of results by a senior manager helps to ensure that the process is operated effectively by staff.

##### **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.

##### **10.3 The induction arrangements (paragraph 3.27)**

This area of good practice is still in place. Links Centre staff are responsible for organising induction, for completion of the core screen and for ensuring that all relevant paperwork is forwarded to the ICM team. Induction procedures remain comprehensive and well-focused. Induction comprises three modules. All prisoners, no matter their length of sentence, attend a basic induction module with prisoners serving more than 30 days attending modules 2 and 3 which go into greater depth.

Family Contact Officers 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 dedicated Family Contact Officers and they have access to their own dedicated telephone number. Prisoners were positive about the service provided by the FCOs. The arrangements for Family Contact Officers continue to be amongst the

best in Scotland. The direct line to FCOs office is a measure of the commitment shown by the establishment in maintaining this high standard.

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

This area of good practice has now been extended to other establishments.

**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 continue to attend the Care Orderly Room when a prisoner is tested positive for the use of drugs. There is also support from 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).**

The number of Peer Tutors has reduced to one in the past year.

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

“In possession” medication spot checks still take place in the house blocks, and are now standard practice across the SPS.

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

The prison continues to make every effort to involve statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of pre and post-release services. However, staff reported having experienced a reduction (and in at least one case) a withdrawal of services because of funding problems.

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

This area of good practice is still in place. The pre-release pamphlet remains a useful source of practical information.

Prisoners must be serving four months or more to qualify for attending the pre-release course which is run once a week. Those serving less than four months have their identified needs met as far as practicable, following the core screen process.

Attendance at the pre-release course is voluntary. Because Cornton Vale is a national prison, there are a number of challenges for staff in accessing services in a consistent way across all Local Authorities. Obtaining guarantees in relation to housing is particularly difficult. Women nearing release can only be assured of an appointment to discuss their housing needs. Those with no home to go to may be offered at a minimum, a hostel place or B & B accommodation.

There are a number of agencies, both statutory and voluntary engaged in assisting with the pre-release process.

Prison staff feel that it would be hugely helpful to the development of their pre-release service if they had a comprehensive directory of community services available for the support of women offenders and their families.

The effectiveness of pre-release preparation would be considerably enhanced by better collaboration between Learning Centre staff and those providing programme and employability skills. The Life Skills class is a good start, and with a joint pre-release planning approach, a more robust service could be provided.

## 5. PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Recommendations for SPS Headquarters*

**11.1 Female prisoners should have a focus at SPS Board level, with a view to setting the agenda to the future and ensuring such an agenda is implemented quickly and with purpose (paragraph 1.4).**

The Governor's post at Cornton Vale was upgraded and the post-holder given responsibility for the development of the strategy for all female offenders held in custody in Scottish prisons. The Directors of Prisons and Partnerships and Commissioning were then given joint responsibility at Prisons Board level for the female offender portfolio. However, these arrangements have not been consolidated and there is little tangible evidence of improved strategic direction or leadership.

A "Framework for the Management of Women Offenders in Custody" was drafted in March 2010 but a fully developed action plan for delivering the strategy could not be provided to us by the prison at the time of inspection. An updated plan was provided shortly after the inspection had ended.

This follow up inspection found very little evidence of a clear and comprehensive improvement plan for Cornton Vale along with adequate resources for its delivery. The *ex gratia* payments fund provided to address staffing shortfalls, especially in Ross House, have been withdrawn and now have to be funded locally.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**11.2 The SPS should encourage uniformed members of staff to become familiar with a foreign language in order to build up a pool of expertise in each prison (paragraph 4.20).**

No action has been taken to progress this recommendation. During Black and Minority Ethnic Focus Groups, prisoners provided examples of times when staff struggled to manage non-English speaking prisoners. One example given was where a non-English speaking prisoner had not left her

cell and no member of staff approached to tell her it was time to eat. The main methods of communication are other prisoners or the language-line.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

### ***General 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 most challenging and vulnerable women are still held in these cells. Training in the management of prisoners with personality disorders for staff with responsibility for these cells was due to be completed in March 2011.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Conditions in Peebles House remain very poor. The toileting facilities are poor and screening is a curtain and a half door. Paint on the floor was peeling and grouting within the tiles of the shower facilities was black and mouldy. The general feel was shabby with an overpowering stale smell throughout. The rest rooms or communal rooms are sparsely decorated and uninviting. The dining areas are small and cramped. The cells are primarily double occupancy and bed linen and furniture are poorly maintained. There were new blinds in some cells. A painting programme of the units had been instigated and was ongoing.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Some improvements have been made. There was cleaning in progress during the inspection, but overall the standard of cleanliness was not good. The toilets were clean although screening was poor with only a curtain and a half door. Rooms were, in the main, in an acceptable condition although

some of the beds were dilapidated and wobbly. There had been a painting programme which Bruce House had benefitted from. Blinds and new bed linen had been provided in the majority of the rooms shortly before the inspection team arrived. The communal area was sparsely decorated and overall the House was a bit brighter having been painted.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Some improvements have been made, although Younger House still has a claustrophobic atmosphere. This is exacerbated by the tired fabric of the building and the acute overcrowding. Inspectors carried out spot checks and found that there were 73 prisoners in rooms that are designed to take 41.

There has been some improvement in decoration and this was ongoing during the week of the inspection.

**This is not 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 no progress on this recommendation. The night sanitation<sup>1</sup> arrangements are still inadequate to cope with the overcrowding situation that exists in Bruce and Younger.

The process of unlocking was observed by an inspector during a night shift and a further check was made on historical records to check on past

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<sup>1</sup> Night sanitation is the term given to the practice of the electronic unlocking of prisoners to allow them to use shared facilities during the times that the prison staffing levels are lower. This is called a patrol state. This is when all prisoners are confined to their rooms. Although there are strict time limits applied to time out of cell for using the facilities delays inevitably build up as only one room at a time can be unlocked.

performance. This information revealed that on one weekend evening in January 2011, 28 women had to wait between 40 minutes to an hour to gain access to a toilet. On a second check 19 women had a similar wait.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that there is inconsistent handover of medical information – often women with specific medical conditions (such as pregnancy, Crohn’s Disease, kidney infections and diarrhoea) are not invariably being given priority access to night sanitation. Some members of staff appear indifferent to the situation and on one occasion a member of staff questioned an inspector as to why anyone should access sanitation during a 45 minute patrol period.

This situation generally was confirmed in each one of the five prisoner focus groups and two staff groups that inspectors held. Prisoners also informed us that they were often told by staff to use the sink in their room if they faced long delays in being unlocked to use the toilet.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Capital funding was provided in the spring of 2010 to lay a number of Astroturf pitches. Unfortunately, their location and poor condition have rendered them unsuitable for contact sports and so their use is limited and to date, they have been little used.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

#### **11.9 The regime and arrangements for catering should be improved at the weekend (paragraph 2.44).**

New menus are in place. The menus clearly show healthy options and it is possible to have five portions of fruit or vegetables each day. The meal times and quantity of food have both been changed for weekends. The meal times for the whole week are now 12.00 for lunch and 17.00 for the evening meal.

The majority of prisoners on focus groups and in individual conversations commented that the food had improved recently. They were satisfied with the timing, the temperature and the quality. The meals were tested by an inspector at the weekend and were found to be of a good standard.

**This is 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).**

The situation has not improved, particularly for women travelling to courts in the North. Inspectors again observed prisoners who had left Cornton Vale at about 06.00 hrs and returned late in the evening. This is despite the fact that there are now female units in HMP Aberdeen and HMP Inverness. The use of these units for women travelling from Cornton Vale to courts in the North should be considered on a case by case basis. Those who were prescribed methadone did not receive it before they left and none of the prisoners received a hot meal on the day that they went to court. One prisoner had not had a hot meal for two days.

Showers are not available in the morning but prisoners can have one the night before a court appearance. No reading materials are available during journeys. Breakfast is still given to prisoners the night before they travel to court.

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).**

There is still no first night in custody centre in Cornton Vale. The reason for the lack of progress in relation to this recommendation is given as the pressure of overcrowding and a consequent lack of accommodation which can be dedicated for this single purpose. Convicted prisoners therefore continue to be allocated on admission to available cells in Bruce House or if assessed as being at risk of self-harm, to the remand (Ross) House where they are accommodated along with other women who require additional support and supervision.

In an effort to limit the disadvantages of being unable to provide a FNIC area, staff have revised some of the paperwork used to process admissions to ensure that all immediate issues are recorded and where practical addressed as a priority.

Despite staff having undertaken a good deal of research in relation to good practice in other prisons in anticipation of commissioning a FNIC, population pressures, a lack of facilities and unresolved negotiations on staffing levels have frustrated progress.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**11.12 The internal progression system should be improved and prisoners should not be moved around the prison as often as they are (paragraph 3.33).**

The last inspection emphasised that there were approximately 300 moves within the prison each week. Since then there have been slight alterations to the progression system, the main one being that Wallace House now holds mainly low supervision prisoners serving more than twelve months. A sample of moves that have taken place in recent months indicates that the average is around 100 a week. The situation however is not helped by the extremely high population numbers in the latter half of 2010.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**11.13 The Suicide Risk Management Group should be reinvigorated (paragraph 3.39).**

The Suicide Risk Management Group has been reinvigorated and is scheduled to meet on a quarterly basis.

**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).**

Apart from the purchase of some new furniture for the visits room, no progress has been 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 on the ground floor of Peebles House which holds a combination of adult and under 21 mainstream convicted prisoners. Unit 1 comprises 7 cells, one of which is larger than the others and is capable of accommodating a mother and her baby – albeit in limited space. If there is more than one baby in the Unit, then a mother may have her baby with her in a single room or a second room may be provided for the baby. There is also a sitting room, kitchen, storeroom and toilet, bath and shower area. There is a fenced off yard accessible from the Unit.

The physical condition of the Unit is poor and in the short term, is in need of complete refurbishment in order to make it fit to hold mothers and babies in safe, hygienic and decent conditions. It is presently grubby, in some areas dirty and the only shower has large patches of black mould. The kitchen area is in need of deep cleaning and the broken cupboards and drawers need to be repaired; the fridge/freezer is unfit to hold foodstuff hygienically. The sink

surround in the mother and baby room was damaged and therefore liable to provide a breeding ground for bacteria. The furniture and soft furnishings in the Unit require to be replaced. Baby milk in the store was found to be out of date. In its present condition, this Unit is not fit for purpose and certainly not in any condition safely to accommodate the new baby who is due in some three weeks time.

At the time of our inspection, there were six pregnant women in the prison, two of whom were located in the mother and baby unit along with other mainstream prisoners who were assessed as being of sufficiently low risk to be suitable to share with the pregnant women. On visiting the Unit however, Inspectors found that a prisoner with mental health problems and a history of violence had been located in the mother and baby unit contrary to the local protocol. This situation was drawn to the attention of the Governor and remedied straight away.

There was a mother and baby in one of the independent living units (ILUs) outside the prison. The facilities there are good and the baby attends a nursery in the community. There is no training available for non-healthcare staff who work with mothers and babies.

Minutes of monthly Mother and Baby meetings showed that they were attended by healthcare and social work staff only. There was no Residential staff representation though Inspectors were advised that they are routinely invited to meetings. Mother and baby meetings should be multidisciplinary and outcomes and proposed actions recorded in full for the benefit of *all* those staff who will be required to work with the women.

Urgent steps require to be taken to resolve the serious lack of attention given to this area from both an environmental and managerial perspective. The prison requires a custom-designed and fully resourced facility for the proper care of mothers, babies and small children.

**This is not satisfactory 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).**

It was clear during this and previous inspections that the behavioural problems presented by a number of women represent significant problems for the prison. The most severe difficulties tend to be found among women on remand – most of whom are held in Ross House.

The most challenging women are accommodated in the ‘separation and care unit’ which comprises a row of cells on the ground floor of Ross House, and four cells in the ‘management suite’. The latter operates to all intents and purposes like a segregation unit although staff are not fully trained to manage disturbed women in these conditions although they do their best in very challenging circumstances.

Because of the violent, often unpredictable and frequently abusive behaviour demonstrated by many of the women held in these cells, the whole of Ross House is affected when staff need to deal with them. The shouting and banging which is a daily occurrence can be heard throughout Ross House and can be disturbing for other women who may already be struggling with their own problems.

The need to ensure that each woman in the separation and care cells is dealt with on an individual basis, disrupts the routine for other prisoners and can lead to unplanned lock ups at different times in the day. Despite the best efforts of staff, it is an almost impossible task to provide a constructive and therapeutic regime for damaged and difficult women within standard accommodation without detriment to all concerned.

There is a very clear need to provide a custom built separation and care unit, away from the mainstream, in which a fully trained multidisciplinary staff team can work constructively with the women. The facility should have the capacity to meet the very different needs of those who require intensive care and

support, as well as those who represent a danger to others because of their aggressive behaviour. At present, the staff in Ross and Younger Houses are too often diverted from their involvement with mainstream prisoners because of the sometimes extreme demands and behaviour of those held out of association. The level of violence against staff in these areas has reached a seriously concerning level.

Staff expressed concern to Inspectors that they did not feel sufficiently well-equipped in terms of their training, to deal with the degree of personality disorder, severe anti-social behaviour and mental ill health demonstrated by the women in their care. As one indicator of the nature of the women with whom they are dealing, 11 prisoners were transferred from Cornton Vale under the Mental Health (Scotland) Act to psychiatric facilities in a 12 month period prior to the follow up inspection.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**11.17 The range of education, learning and employability programmes available should be broadened (paragraph 7.4).**

The range of programmes has broadened in the past year.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

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

A business case has been submitted to SPS HQ for a number of additional rooms to be created in the health centre. Although this would not lead to a purpose built health centre, it would assist health care staff to improve service provision.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**11.19 Waiting times to see the dentist should be reduced and dental care should be provided to all prisoners on a needs basis (paragraph 8.11).**

There have been six additional sessions per month added to the dental care provision which has reduced the waiting times from approximately ten weeks

to six weeks. This is a marked improvement and more than meets the ten week target in the SPS Healthcare Standards.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

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

Not all women held out of association had multi-disciplinary care plans prepared for them.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Prescribed methadone is not issued to women on liberation or when going to court.

**This is not 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).**

Programmes continue to be delivered from within the same facility, but in common with other establishments, specific site accreditation no longer takes place. Similarly, because of a shortfall in psychology provision until very recently, there has been no comprehensive and consistent treatment supervision in place for staff. This means that programmes staff have not always had the level of supervision and support required by programme accreditation standards. It also means that there has been inconsistency in monitoring and assuring programme delivery standards.

At the time of our inspection, there was one accredited programme being delivered – Constructs. This programme has been accredited for *male*

offenders but not for women. In addition, the following approved activities were provided at the time of inspection:

| Programme                             | No. prisoners awaiting a place | No. prisoners awaiting assessment |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Constructs                            | 5                              | 18*                               |
| Female offending behaviour            | 4                              | 9*                                |
| Substance related offending behaviour | 6                              | 7*                                |
| Connections                           | 0                              | 3                                 |
| Anxiety and sleep                     | 0                              | 3                                 |
| Alcohol                               | 0                              | 4                                 |
| Drugs action for change               | 0                              | 10                                |
| Parenting                             | 0                              | 2                                 |
| Total                                 | 15                             | 56                                |

A further seven long-term prisoners were listed for generic programme assessment.

\*Includes women awaiting assessment for more than one assessment.

Programme referrals can be made by any department within the prison and women may also self-refer. 75% of all referrals required some kind of intervention. Access to programmes is based on assessed need and proximity to critical dates. However, because so many women are serving comparatively short sentences, they have insufficient time in custody to go through the assessment process and then to participate in a programme.

In relation to the level of resourcing in support of programme delivery, the amount of social work input has dropped by over two thirds over the last 12-18 months to some 400 hours, which falls far short of the requirement. This means that programmes staff have to fill the gaps and as a result, are over-stretched. One consequence of this is that the team cannot keep up with post-programme report timescales.

Psychology support has recently changed from .4 of a D Band and .4 of an F Band to a full time F Band and .2 of a G Band. In our view, however, this small additional resource is not adequate to meet the requirements of

treatment supervision, involvement in the Multidisciplinary Mental Health team, MDPMG, Act2Care, parole and MAPPA. The Psychology provision requires early review.

Overall, the programmes team work hard to maintain standards and to meet intervention needs. There has, however, been considerable drift in site and programme accreditation standards (no fault of Cornton Vale) and inconsistent levels of social work and psychology input have made their task especially challenging.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**



## **6. 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).**

Ross House staff now make periodic visits to the recreation rooms. However, given the vulnerability and violence demonstrated by this population, they should be supervised at all times.

**This is not 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).**

There have been new curtains placed at the top of the toilet and shower doors but these do not afford decent levels of privacy as there is still a large gap at the bottom of the door.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.3 All telephones should have hoods (paragraphs 2.20, 2.25 and 5.12).**

All telephones now have privacy hoods.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.4 Notices informing prisoners that calls are recorded should be placed beside the telephones (paragraph 2.20 and 2.25).**

All telephones have appropriate notices in place.

**This is satisfactory 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).**

The situation has improved in Bruce House, but not in Younger where there is still daily mixing of young and adult prisoners.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.6 Additional telephones should be installed in Younger House (paragraph 2.29).**

An extra telephone has been installed and there is now adequate access for prisoners.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.7 The procedures for reporting faults in the Independent Living Unit and responding to these should be reviewed (paragraph 2.33).**

An inspector spoke to five of the seven occupants of the ILUs who confirmed that the response to requests for repairs is now to a good level.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.8 Meals should be served later at weekends (paragraph 2.44).**

Both the lunchtime and evening meals have been altered to 12.00 hrs and 17.00 hrs.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.9 The amount of food served on Saturdays should be increased (paragraph 2.44).**

A Saturday lunch and evening meal were observed by an inspector. The quantity and choice has been increased. The menus that are in place for future weeks reflect this improvement as well (see paragraph 11.9).

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.10 The standard of food at the point of dining should be improved (paragraph 2.46).**

Food is now of a good standard (see paragraph 11.9).

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.11 Sufficient cutlery should be issued to prisoners as a matter of course (paragraph 2.48).**

All pantry areas were visited, questions asked on focus groups and of pantry workers. Staff were also asked about supplies. This no longer seems to be an issue.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.12 Senior managers should record when they taste food in the kitchen and at the places where it is served (paragraph 2.49).**

Meal tasting records, conversations with houseblock staff, prisoners and the catering manager all confirm that this is now being carried out. A catering officer also visits the house blocks every day to monitor standards of food and hygiene (although standards of hygiene are judged not to be of a sufficiently high standard). A handover book in the kitchen records these visits and observations made.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

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

There is a limited range of toiletries available. There are no toiletries suitable for Black and Minority Ethnic women within the Canteen. Requests are made through sundry purchases. BME Focus Group identified delays and difficulties in obtaining products.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

New laundry bags have been purchased and these appear to be more robust than those previously used. There is only one standard size laundry bag issued to allow the separation of white and coloured clothing. The issue of overfilling and damp clothing still exists.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.15 All escort vehicles should have drinking water on board (paragraph 3.9).**

At least six vehicles were inspected and all had drinking water available. Feedback from prisoners also confirmed this to be the case.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.16 The safety message on escort vehicles should always be played, and heard by prisoners, before the journey starts (paragraph 3.9).**

Prisoners who were asked confirmed that the message is played and was heard by everyone.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.17 Admission information should be played on the TV in the holding room in reception (paragraph 3.13).**

There is comprehensive information continuously played on a television screen in the holding room. However, there was no information in the presentation regarding the Listener Scheme or the free telephone line to the Samaritans.

**This is 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 is still open plan with two seats adjacent to each other in order to allow the processing of two receptions at the same time. An Inspector observed prisoners giving personal details in the presence of others.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

No effort is made by the escort contractor or by the prison to ensure that any prisoner arriving after the evening meal is given a hot meal. One prisoner who was interviewed had not had a hot meal for two days.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.20 The telephone interpreting service should be accessed by staff in reception (paragraph 3.19).**

There is a "language notice" which helps staff identify the language spoken by foreign nationals who don't speak English. In addition to this, reception officers were able to describe the process involved in accessing the interpreting service.

**This is 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 last inspection report 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. The funds have not increased. A 30p telephone credit is provided on arrival to prisoners with private cash. However, there is no consistent provision for untried prisoners who do not bring cash into the prison with them. This was confirmed by reception officers who regularly allow an advance to untried prisoners who do bring cash in with

them. This means that there is no way for those without cash to inform family members where they are.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Feedback from prisoners and staff confirms that senior managers still do not have any input into the induction process.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Care plans in the ACT documents are still unimaginative and tend to focus on keeping prisoners locked up. There is no evidence of trying to engage prisoners in useful activities or to have family members involved in case conferences

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Residential staff and Listeners are still waiting for training in the use of this facility.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.25 Appropriate meeting rooms for Listener interviews should be available in each house block (paragraph 3.41).**

The Listeners focus group confirmed that appropriate rooms are generally available in discreet areas of each house block. Also they have no problems in accessing prisoners in their own cells.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.26 Notices highlighting the Listener Scheme should be put up around the establishment (paragraph 3.41).**

There is an abundance of notices in the house blocks, usually located beside the telephones. They are also displayed in non accommodation areas of the prison such as reception, activity areas and the Health Centre.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.27 When a Listener goes into a house block to see a prisoner staff should not shout out the prisoner's name and that a Listener is there to see them (paragraph 3.42).**

The Listeners focus group and inspectors' observations indicate that this would be a very rare occurrence.

**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).**

Standard operating procedures were completed in March 2010 but as yet they have not been issued to night staff. Despite this, staff who were on duty for the night shift were able to answer questions about emergency procedures.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.29 Senior management should record visits that they make during the night (paragraph 3.44).**

A new recording tool was created in August 2010. This is signed for every visit. At least one visit a month is made by a member of the senior management team.

**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).**

Property bags in the reception store at Cornton Vale had seals which were easily removed and reapplied by an inspector.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.31 The arrangements for ensuring privacy in the toilet area in Kilmarnock Sheriff Court should be improved (paragraph 4.8).**

In a follow up visit to the Kilmarnock court cells it was noted that the glass pane is still in place in the door but there is also a screening wall and half door for privacy purposes.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.32 Disabled prisoners should not be required to pass through a public area to reach the court rooms in Kilmarnock Sheriff Court (paragraph 4.10).**

Access for disabled prisoners is still through public areas where the court is on the first floor. The escort contractor tries to persuade the court to re site the hearing wherever this is possible. This means that the situation rarely occurs.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.33 The toilet for female prisoners in Glasgow Sheriff Court should offer adequate privacy (paragraph 4.13).**

The arrangements remain inadequate. A member of staff or another prisoner can go up to a grille gate and look into the toilet area. An additional screening door should be added as soon as possible.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**



**12.34 Alternative arrangements should be found for getting women from the Glasgow Sheriff Court holding cells to the District Courtroom (paragraph 4.14).**

The escort contractor has altered the system for housing male prisoners so that the holding cells concerned are rarely used. They only come into operation on days when there is extreme overcrowding. On speaking to female prisoners from Cornton Vale they stated that the distress and potential abuse that was previously reported was an extremely rare occurrence.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.35 Processes should be reviewed to reduce the time held in overcrowded holding cells in Glasgow Sheriff Court (paragraph 4.15).**

Prisoners and staff cited instances where delays had been experienced in transportation back to prisons after court hearings had finished. This was a frequent comment made by women arriving back at the prison. On the day of inspection the minimum time was 4hrs 20 mins.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.36 Graffiti should be removed from the walls of the cells in Glasgow Sheriff Court (paragraph 4.17).**

The overall conditions in the cells were better than they were during the last inspection. Some areas had been redecorated. However there are still some areas where prisoners have caused damage and there should continue to be a rolling programme of painting.

The Scottish Court Service is also experimenting with wall cladding in the communal areas. This seems to be having a positive impact on the environment.

**This is reasonable progress.**

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

There was no evidence to suggest that this was happening. Prisoners in the Black Minority Ethnic focus group said that prisoners who do not speak English still encountered difficulties.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

There has been no attempt to improve access for disabled visitors. The closed visits area or agents visits rooms are used when necessary. These rooms are not fit for this purpose.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

There is still no signed off Mother and Baby Policy and Practice Document to inform the care of mothers and children in Cornton Vale. The draft strategy dated June 2010 has not yet been endorsed and published.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

There is no planned neonatal training for officers or comprehensive nurse training in preparation for supporting a mother and baby in the prison.

**This is not 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 connecting door was not locked at the time of inspection.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Orderly Rooms are now held in temporary locations (in the house blocks) due to the facilities in Younger House being refurbished. An inspector observed two different sessions and in one of these staff stood throughout the process. This could be perceived as being intimidating.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

During both of the observations no prisoner was offered a copy of the Prison Rules.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.44 Consideration should be given to how the timing of Sunday worship services could be made more predictable (paragraph 6.7).**

All Sunday services are now held at a consistent time. There has been a change of personnel in the team which has facilitated the service taking place at 15.30hrs each week.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

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

Two of the back cells still have mattresses on the floor.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**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).**

There have been no developments in this area in the past year.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.47 Teaching areas in the learning centre should be cleared of clutter (paragraph 7.4).**

Teaching areas in the learning centre have been cleared of clutter.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.48 Visual displays should promote learning opportunities more effectively (paragraph 7.4).**

Visual displays within the learning centre have been improved and provide prisoners with useful and current information about learning opportunities. This has been further enhanced by the installation and application of a plasma screen in the reception area, which is used well to promote learning activities and events.

However, within the house blocks visual communication to promote learning activities is generally carelessly displayed and insufficient effort is made to update and promote the full range of opportunities. (For example, in one block a poster advertising a card making and literacy class was displayed four times on two adjacent notice boards and no communication of wider activities was in evidence). As a result, visual displays within the house blocks do not promote learning opportunities effectively enough to encourage and support participation.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.49 There should be sufficient access to technologies to assist learners with disabilities or additional needs (paragraph 7.4).**

Learning centre staff have reviewed and increased access to assistive technologies within the learning centre.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

**12.50 Education staff should have effective plans in place to maintain the levels of Peer Tutors required (paragraph 7.5).**

The number of Peer Tutors has continued to decline due to prisoners being liberated or undertaking other duties. Learning centre staff recognise this and have taken steps to increase the number. However, a range of factors including a lack of suitable candidates, churn of the prison population and prisoners being involved in other activities have inhibited progress.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.51 Cornton Vale should look at ways of significantly increasing participation in education (paragraph 7.6).**

There are still significant waiting lists for access to most education classes. However, learning centre staff have proactively planned and coordinated appropriate projects and events to attract and engage prisoners in taking part in learning activities. These include *The Homecoming Project*, *Readers in Residence*, *Behind the Vale*, movie discussion groups, *Story sacks* and visits from authors. Thematic projects, such as *Behind the Vale*, have been very successful in engaging prisoners who would not have undertaken more traditional subject-based learning. A recently established life skills room which houses catering facilities is being used very successfully to engage prisoners in cookery programmes. These approaches are being effective in increasing participation. There are some examples of programmes being well-linked to identified needs. These include classes for prisoners to improve their literacy skills, such as card making with literacies.

However, although there are waiting lists for most programmes, participation in education activities continues to be erratic. In many cases attendance in learning centre classes is poor and the reasons for non-attendance are frequently not communicated to learning centre staff. Learning centre staff have recently implemented systems to record and collate non-attendance patterns by class and block. However, this information is not being used

effectively to identify the causes of non-attendance and to take action to address issues to improve participation.

**This is reasonable progress.**

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

Across the establishment, promotion of learning is poor. Only 40% of prisoners engage in activities and insufficient effort is made to further promote opportunities to prisoners who do not participate in learning. Learning centre staff provide useful information to prisoners on the range of programmes and activities at induction. However, most SPS staff in house blocks are not aware of the range and types of education programmes and activities available to prisoners in the learning centre and do not promote these opportunities sufficiently or effectively to prisoners. Learning centre staff are not proactive enough in addressing these issues.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.53 Route movements and other prison matters should not limit the ability of prisoners to access their education programmes (paragraph 7.8).**

Route movements no longer limit access to education but other issues related to staff do (paragraph 12.62).

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.54 Prisoners should be able to undertake classes in art, cooking and gardening (paragraph 7.10).**

Despite demand for art-based programmes, there are very limited opportunities for prisoners to participate in arts and crafts classes. There is no dedicated art room for prisoners and very few examples of prisoner work on display. The newly established life skills room is providing good opportunities for prisoners to undertake cookery classes and attain certification for their

culinary skills. This is a very positive development which is popular with prisoners. However, there are long waiting lists for these programmes and prisoners have a lengthy delay to access them.

Apart from the small work party in gardens there are no other activities for prisoners in gardening or horticulture. The Community Garden within the Learning Centre is underutilised which results in missed opportunities for prisoners to work on preparing plants and shrubs to maintain the garden and develop other areas of the prison. The prison plans to offer an SVQ in Horticulture in May to 10 prisoners.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.55 There should be sufficient access to life skills classes to prepare prisoners for release (paragraphs 7.12 and 9.15).**

Across the prison, insufficient priority and focus is given to equipping and preparing prisoners for release. Although there are number of very good life skills classes and programmes which incorporate topics such as cookery and money matters, insufficient collaboration between SPS and education staff has resulted in significant missed opportunities for prisoners to develop, gain and extend skills to help them access and sustain and employment after liberation. Programme planning does incorporate or highlight sufficiently acquisition of vocational and employability skills.

**This is reasonable progress.**

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

Literacy skills of new prisoners are assessed, collated and used to inform the planning of literacy programmes. Various types of prisoner skill assessments have been carried out by learning centre staff; however, these have not been collated and have not been used more widely across the prison to ascertain the different types of skill levels across different prisoner groups. Across the prison, there are no formal or systematic arrangements to collate and utilise

information on prisoner skill levels to prompt cross-prison collaboration and inform future planning of LSE provision.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.57 Some learning materials should be updated (paragraph 7.14).**

Most learning materials have been updated. However, within the sample looked at by inspectors, a few learning materials were out of date and in one case inappropriate for the client group. For example, in one literacy class prisoners were using materials on how to use a mobile phone, dated 2004. Technology has advanced significantly since this resource was produced and prisoners do not have access to mobile communications within prison.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.58 Computing workbooks should be consistent with the versions of software being used (paragraph 7.14).**

The workbooks used in the ICT courses are consistent with the software being used.

**This is satisfactory 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).**

Across the prison there is no sense of prison staff working with learning providers towards a shared vision or common purpose. There are no formalised or systematic arrangements for prison and learning centre staff to work together in the planning and delivery of provision across education, work-based and out of cell activities. Each of these services plan and deliver activities in isolation which results in a disparate experience for prisoners and significant missed opportunities for the prison to maximise resources in order to prepare prisoners better for employment and life outside prison. Overall, differing priorities, insufficient collaboration and poor communication between



SPS staff and staff working in the learning centre and gym, militate against positive experiences and outcomes for prisoners. There is an urgent need for the prison to address these issues.

**This is not satisfactory 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).**

In a few cases arrangements have been made provide certification within work-based activities. This includes 'Recyke a Bike'. However, there are insufficient opportunities for prisoners to gain formal recognition of core skills gained through their work experience. As a result many prisoners are not gaining accreditation for the range of skills they have gained, which reduces their ability to compete in the job market and obtain employment.

**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 have carried out prisoner surveys and coordinated focus groups. However, it is too early to gauge the impact of these activities on improving the quality of provision. Overall, processes for evaluating programmes are complacent and not sufficiently robust. Staff do not analyse prisoner attendance, achievement, attainment and progression rates thoroughly enough and do not take sufficient action to explore and address the reasons behind poor performance rates. Evaluation documentation does not specify targets which makes it difficult for staff to gauge the success of their programmes and approaches. Overall, documentation produced by staff as a result of evaluation processes, is not sufficiently comprehensive and does not specify timescales, responsibilities for action and sufficient information on progress towards achieving targets.

There are no arrangements for learning centre and prison staff to work together to evaluate the impact of programmes and to collaborate on ways of improving the quality of provision. This militates against learning centre staff improving aspects of prisoner performance which are outwith their control.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Prison officer leave arrangements and sickness cover results in work parties being cancelled. For example during the week of the inspection, the bike shop was closed due to the lack of absence of cover for an officer on leave. This resulted in the cancellation of the work party for the week of the inspection and prisoners were kept in their cells during the times they would normally be working in the bike shop.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.63 Gardening should become a properly trained activity and more appropriate grass cutting equipment should be purchased (paragraph 7.26).**

The prison has purchased additional equipment for the upkeep of grounds and in preparation for the introduction of an SVQ in Horticulture for the grounds party. However, there are no plans to offer activities in gardening and horticulture to the wider prison population.

**This is reasonable progress.**

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

The very limited programme of out of cell activities is a major cause for concern. There are very few opportunities to participate in activities in the evening or at the weekend. Evening activities are limited to PE classes and weekend activities consist of PE, Bingo and dance classes. The library in the

learning centre is under-utilised by prisoners and there is no access to library materials for those prisoners in the residential blocks. There are no art or craft classes in the evening or at weekends to stimulate prisoner interest or engagement in developing creative or social skills. As a result of the narrow range of out of cell activities, the vast majority of prisoners do not engage in any social, physical or cultural activities and spend most of their time watching television or in their cells.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

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

Outdoor sports areas have been created next to the house blocks but they are severely under-utilised. The prison has recently laid three artificial turf surfaces. However, PE staff were not consulted on the positioning of these surfaces and the location of the turfs is inappropriate for most of the planned outdoor activities. The prison has carried out risk assessments on these areas and have found that they are unsuitable for contact sports.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

#### **12.66 Healthcare notices should be updated (paragraph 8.3).**

Healthcare notices have been updated.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

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

Nurse stations are still dirty with no specific action plans for housekeepers or cleaners to make marked improvements. Ross House nursing station was of a reasonable standard.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.68 Up to date healthcare information should be available in the waiting room in the health centre reception (paragraph 8.4).**

There was up-to-date healthcare information in the waiting room area and prisoners using the room said they did use the booklets and leaflets and found the material valuable to them.

**This is satisfactory progress.**

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

The clinics are still affected by staff shortages, exacerbated by a practitioner nurse working full-time in administration to cover staff absences.

**This is not 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).**

Prisoners attending hospital appointments said that they are not informed of the appointments. However, the health centre passes appointments to the house blocks on the day prior to appointments. Some prisoners also claimed that the showers in some blocks were cold and that there was a shortage of bath towels.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.71 Multidisciplinary Mental Health Team meetings should not be cancelled because of a lack of meeting rooms or because the psychiatrist or mental health nurse is unavailable (paragraph 8.18).**

These meetings now take place on a regular basis. However, the Team needs greater diversity in terms of membership. Residential officers should be represented to work in partnership with wider services in the prison.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.72 Remand prisoners should not have access to in possession medication (paragraph 8.21).**

Remand prisoners are allowed antibiotic medication in possession and existing practices meet SPS Healthcare Standards.

**This is reasonable progress.**

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

The operating practices for the dispensing of methadone still need to be reviewed. There can be 150 prisoners going to the health centre each morning and there is one waiting room with eight seats.

**This is not satisfactory progress.**

**12.74 The times at which evening medication is dispensed at weekends should be reviewed (paragraph 8.23).**

The healthcare team has worked hard to introduce a new practice of issuing evening medications 'in-possession'. This has remedied the issue of night sedation medications being given too early. However, a minority of woman continue to take night medication early to avoid being approached by other prisoners seeking medications.

**This is reasonable progress.**

**12.75 Alternative arrangements should be put in place to allow greater family participation in Integrated Case Management Conferences (paragraph 9.4).**

Like other prisons, Cornton Vale has a 'Service Agreement' target to increase family involvement in ICM case conferences. The prison has three full time Family Contact Officers who are a considerable asset in helping to generate interest among family members. Participation is actively encouraged but prisoners may not wish their families to be fully aware of the details of their

offence and for some family involvement would be counter productive. The most recent data shows that Cornton Vale has a 21% uptake of family involvement in ICM.

**This is reasonable progress.**



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