

**Independent Prison Monitoring Bulletin
HMP Barlinnie
October - December 2019****8 Independent
Prison Monitors****20 Prison
Monitoring Visits****30 Prisoner
Requests****Key Findings**

Time out of cell: IPMs have been concerned about the low numbers of prisoners at Education during visits this quarter. We have raised this matter with the prison management, who also wished for all activity spaces to be used, to ask what action they can take to maximise the number of prisoners able to access education at any time.

Reception: As per previous bulletins, the reception area remains a significant concern. The holding cells are not fit for purpose, and the IPM team have continuously raised this with the prison management, the SPS and the Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland. Following the recent HMIPS inspection, IPMs are hopeful urgent action will be taken, and we look forward to hearing about final plans and timescales for its refurbishment.

Complaints: Numerous prisoners over the last year have raised concerns about the complaints system. On Letham Hall in particular there is a perception and fear that if they put in complaints they will have a worse time, and that they have to keep their heads down. Whilst the IPMs have no evidence of any adverse outcomes for prisoners who do complain or raise concerns, the perception is worrying. IPMs note that PIAC meetings are held regularly on Letham and provide an avenue for prisoners to discuss this perception and how it can be addressed. We have brought this to the attention of the Governor and asked that he take steps to increase all prisoners confidence in the complaints system.

If any prisoners have evidence of negative outcomes after they put in complaints we would ask them to contact us in confidence through the free phone number.

Updates and Actions:

Thank you to everyone who took part in the recent survey. We are currently analysing the responses and will let you know of any changes that we make. In the meantime the IPMs will continue to take a more proactive approach to monitoring. If there are particular areas of the prison that you think the IPM team should focus on then please let us know by either telling an IPM when you see them, or by contacting us in confidence on the Freephone number below.

IPM Focus in the Next Quarter

In the next quarter IPMs will focus on:

- Time out of cell
- Visits
- Decency, including access to clothing and bedding