

<b>PRISON</b>	<b>HMP LOW MOSS</b>		<b>YEAR (1 APRIL – 31 MARCH)</b>	2022 – 2023	
<b>Total number of visits</b>	92	<b>Total number of missed weeks</b>	1	<b>Total number of IPM hours</b>	286
<b>Total number of prisoner requests received</b>	86	<b>Number of IPMs in the team (as at 31 March)</b>		6	

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The IPM Team continued to report on a well-run prison with a complex population and set of challenges. IPMs recognised the initial impact of reviews and changes to processes and structures and welcomed many of the innovations taking place. HMP Low Moss is a dynamic environment and it is noticeable that the pace of work and practices around the prison picked up post pandemic. It can also be a challenging environment for staff and prisoners alike, and the observations below highlight areas of good practice and some concerns which IPMs continue to liaise with management about. IPMs were assisted in their role by staff to see any prisoner requiring to speak to an IPM and were able to speak with relevant staff to escalate or resolve.

<b>GENERAL OBSERVATIONS</b>	<b>Overall RAG rating</b>		
<b>Lawful and Transparent Custody:</b> IPMs observed the admissions process in reception which was noted to be friendly, professional and humane. IPMs also attended ICCs, ICM meetings and visited the SRU. The SRU was observed to regularly be full with challenging circumstances to manage. IPMs noted a prison where decision making processes were respected, and monitors welcomed managements willingness to discuss several matters which prisoners had raised with the IPM Team.	☐	☐	✓
<b>Decency:</b> Prisoners were observed taking time in the fresh air on all visits. The prison was noted to be clean. Kitchen staff commented on rising costs and availability of some food items as an emerging issue, but it had not impacted menu choices. Laundry was visited and IPMs noted the mitigations taken after a fire in one of the dryers, with clothes being sent to HMP YOI Polmont to be laundered.	☐	☐	✓
<b>Personal Safety:</b> IPMs were informed of increased quantities of illicit substances entering the prison in late 2022 and the early part of 2023. Officers described negative changes in behaviour in the halls, especially Kelvin Hall. This resulted in high attendance at orderly rooms through January and February. IPMs were saddened to be informed of deaths in custody at HMP Low Moss throughout the last twelve months.	☐	✓	☐
<b>Effective, Courteous and Humane Exercise of Authority:</b> In general, IPMs reported an orderly prison where interpersonal relationships were generally observed to be good. Monitors were assisted in following up prisoner queries. In many cases, monitors experienced officers and non-operational staff doing more than was required in order to assist or motivate prisoners in their care. As noted above however, HMP Low Moss is a large and complex prison with a number of different population groups and order is	☐	✓	☐

<p>maintained through the authority of the officers and compliance of prisoners. Prisoners have commented to IPMs that at times in Low Moss this had created an 'us and them' divide , particularly on the residential halls. Where there had been allegations of staff harassment, they were forwarded to management who responded proactively.</p>			
<p><b>Respect, Autonomy and Protection Against Mistreatment:</b> IPMs spoke with staff and management and observed many of the internal forums which allowed prisoners to express their views or appeal against decision-making. Reception was a particularly busy area of HMP Low Moss, and it appeared well-run for the most part. Many prisoners expressed concern about delays in receiving property in a timely fashion in the last year and this was raised with management. IPMs wish to recognise that many internal processes and structures had been reviewed in the last twelve months, with a view to improving good governance throughout the establishment and further enhancing staff practice.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p><b>Purposeful Activity:</b> IPMs were present at November's memorial service which was extremely well attended by staff and prisoners. Initiatives in the Education and Links Centre including the launch of the radio station and the training of a group of prisoners as 'Listeners' who will facilitate SMART recovery sessions in the future were welcomed. IPMs were pleased to note that protection prisoners were having scheduled time with Chaplains should they wish to take this up. IPMs received positive feedback from prisoners about a meditation class in the Education Centre and about support provided by Samaritans and Listeners. IPMs met prison staff responsible for processing mail, hearing about recent challenges and successes, and also met DWP staff, who explained processes in preparing for release. In general, IPMs commented positively on levels of purposeful activity at HMP Low Moss. Essential work parties remain well run and prisoners and staff should be commended for maintaining laundry provision after a fire meant clothes had to be sent to other prisons for a short period. The gym and physical training facilities were good and well used by all of the prison population.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p><b>Transitions from Custody to Life in the Community:</b> IPMs received detailed information about the review of Integrated Case Management procedures at HMP Low Moss and its implementation. IPMs also discussed the issues that non-attendance can raise, and it was clear that some prisoners chose not to attend if they felt that it had no purpose or benefit for them. The ICM process also gave the prisoner an opportunity to raise issues or ask for help and support. Some prisoners expressed dissatisfaction with the length of time taken to be assessed for programmes / GPAs to be undertaken and there was a lack of psychologists available to meet the need. IPMs acknowledge these issues around progression often require national solutions. It should also be recognised that the pathway does appear to have eased again with several prisoners progressing through their sentence to National Top End and Open conditions from HMP Low Moss in the later months of this reporting period.</p>	☐	✓	☐
<p><b>Organisational Effectiveness:</b> There were significant problems getting prisoners to a variety of external appointments affecting their health and progression among other things. Many of these failings relate to the GeoAmey contract on transport with hundreds of cancellations in the last year. While the prison mitigated these where they could, many of these cancellations had a material impact on prisoners progression opportunities, their health and well being and also in the maintenance of family and social bonds.</p>	✓	☐	☐
<p><b>Health and Wellbeing:</b> IPMs were assisted with prisoner requests by the Healthcare Team throughout this year. Healthcare continues to be a key concern for prisoners at HMP Low Moss, including the prescribing of medication. IPMs noted the significant</p>	☐	☐	✓

pressure on nurses and health staff during periods where illicit substances had been prevalent in the halls with numerous emergencies responded to during the year.

**RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status key:**

Some serious concerns

Some slight concerns

No concerns / good practice

*RAG rating: where IPMs felt each standard would be rated given their experience - not a complete analysis but based on the judgement of the IPM team*

### KEY ISSUES

1. Cancellation of external appointments by the prison escort contractor, GEOAmev and the impact on prisoners noted above
2. Transitions from custody and delays in progression
3. Personal safety / illicit substances

### ENCOURAGING OBSERVATIONS

Dynamic establishment, good range of activity and innovative practice.  
Robust processes reviewed across all areas of the prison.  
Compassionate approach to prisoners well-being evidenced on many monitoring visits.

### CONCLUSION

HMP Low Moss is a challenging environment with a large transient population which can make forward planning a challenge. However, prison staff and management proactively address all of these challenges on a day-to-day basis. IPMs were pleased to note that basic entitlements were met daily. Where there were concerns raised by IPMs, they were responded to quickly and communication was clear and welcomed from management.