

PRISON	HMP BARLINNIE		YEAR (1 APRIL – 31 MARCH)	2022 – 2023	
Total number of visits	91	Total number of missed weeks	0	Total number of IPM hours	384
Total number of prisoner requests received	119	Number of IPMs in the team (as at 31 March)		7	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of key Independent Prison Monitor (IPM) observations over the 2022-2023 reporting year. The IPM numbers dipped to an annual low of five IPMs between September to December 2022. Despite this the IPM team performed well, ensuring there was at least one visit every week and dealt with 119 requests received in addition to general observations around the prison speaking with prisoners and staff.

The ongoing area of serious concern relates to the buildings, accommodation and facilities not being fit for purpose. Many areas of concerns and issues raised during the year linked directly back to this. The prison experienced various challenges throughout the year, including significant refurbishment work in Reception and the Health Centre. The prison and staff managed this incredibly well acknowledging the high volume of prisoner movements through these areas on a daily basis. Overcrowding, including the remand population, was a particular challenge for the prison to manage and navigate, acknowledging population management responsibility across the SPS estate lies with SPS Head Quarters, and impacts of COVID-19 within the wider justice system.

Although staff shortages presented challenges, in general staff/prisoner relationships were good and IPMs found that staff had a clear understanding of their role and prison rules. They were knowledgeable of those in their care, did their utmost with the resources available and tried to mitigate or minimise any impacts wherever possible.

Throughout the year IPMs observations and issues raised were explored, with areas of concern raised with staff, including management. Management listened to the concerns and issues which were raised with them, considered them and candidly responded. This clear and open communication was welcomed, alongside the actions taken and information provided to enable IPMs to consider the care, treatment and conditions of those held in HMP Barlinnie.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS	Overall RAG rating		
<p>Standard 1: Lawful and Transparent Custody</p> <p>Reception staff were knowledgeable and followed robust processes, positively navigating challenges presented by refurbishment work. IPMs observed the induction processes and reported staff were friendly, understanding and patient. Prisoners interviewed felt it could be overwhelming and they could have benefitted from a detailed induction pack to refer to later.</p> <p>The First Night in Custody Centre accommodated new admissions for around the first seven days and during this time staff from the Link Centre met with prisoners and core screen assessments were undertaken.</p> <p>IPMs continued to raise concerns regarding the prisons ability to comply with Mandela Rules 112 and 113 which relates to untried and convicted prisoners being separated and sleeping in single cells. Accommodation and overcrowding made it near impossible for the prison and IPMs found that around 90% of remand prisoners shared a double cell, although this was determined following a robust cell sharing risk assessment.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 2 – Decency</p> <p>The red RAG rating was due to concerns centred around the nature of the buildings and overcrowding. The 2022/23 average population of 1,234 exceeded the operating capacity by 20.8%, inevitably this required cell sharing. As previously reported by HMIPS, shared cells did not meet the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) minimum standard of 4m² per prisoner, excluding the toilet area.</p> <p>Refurbishment work undertaken during the year was welcomed. This included larger holding rooms to replace the small inhumane holding cells in Reception, alongside improved changing facilities with provisions for those with accessibility needs.</p> <p>IPMs found the ventilation appeared sufficient, however the light was poor in north facing cells. Cell sanitary provisions were basic but adequate and there was a systematic process for daily showering, however due to work, gym/PT etc. every second day was more common. Fresh bedding was provided weekly, clothes were available as required and arrangements were in place for keeping cells and other areas clean. Overcrowding created an issue with cell sharing. IPMs explored and found that, except for one hall, the only individuals not sharing were those with a single cell marker. Issues raised by some prisoners included concerns about meeting cultural dietary needs, variation of meal choices, and portion sizes; and provision of mobile phones which management investigated and explained the position including ongoing cabling work for in-cell phones. Wider general maintenance issues raised were addressed as quickly as possible by the Estates Team, such as heating issues experienced in December 2022.</p>	✓	☐	☐

<p>Standard 3 – Personal Safety</p> <p>Allegations of bullying and intimidation raised by prisoners were escalated to management to seek reassurance regarding steps taken to address any intelligence of bullying and intimidation, either by prisoners or staff, and the wider awareness and implementation of the SPS anti-bullying strategy, including associated staff training and confidential ways for prisoners and staff to report instances. Given concerns, IPMs explored further by speaking with a random section of prisoners. It was a small percentage of the overall population, however most of those spoken with felt safe but reflected that time out of their cell was often extremely limited.</p>	□	✓	□
<p>Standard 4 – Effective, courteous, and humane use of authority</p> <p>IPMs spent time monitoring the Separation and Reintegration Unit (SRU) and found prisoners knew why they were held there. However they spoke about lack of knowledge of their reintegration plans and services to support them. SRU staff were knowledgeable about those in their care and had a good understanding of the rules and case conference processes. However felt some prisoners were held in the SRU too long and that they lacked mental health training to support those most vulnerable. Senior management were acutely aware of the points raised and welcomed the independent IPM report. HMIPS have also completed an SRU Thematic review across the SPS estate and the report will published in July.</p> <p>Case conferences observed by IPMs were polite, courteous and professional, and attended by those required. All those at the meeting had opportunities to have their voice heard.</p>	□	✓	□
<p>Standard 5 – Respect, autonomy, and protection against mistreatment</p> <p>Staff/prisoner relationships were positive and supportive. There were some concerns regarding behaviours, particularly use of inappropriate language and allegations of bullying and intimidation were raised with IPMs. Prisoners had a reasonable awareness of the complaints processes however some had limited confidence in it. These concerns were raised with management and the Resource Hub ran a PCF Awareness Week 18-22 June 2022. Some individuals continued to lack confidence and felt that complaints were lost, whilst others were satisfied.</p> <p>Overall, accepting there could be exceptions, the prison was calm, orderly, and well run within the limitations of the buildings and overcrowding. IPMs reported the tight regime meant the actual time for outdoor exercise was usually less than one hour and was estimated to be around 45-50 minutes. Other physical exercise time was limited due to the gym size compared with the population. Although staff looked to provide other outdoor exercise i.e. a 5km run within the grounds.</p>	□	✓	□
<p>Standard 6 – Purposeful activity</p> <p>IPMs had concerns around the length of time prisoners were locked in their cells and this differed across halls dependent on staffing, work etc. There were signs of improvement following the implementation of the COVID-19 transition plan that</p>	□	✓	□

<p>was issued in June 2022. Increasingly over the year, daytime and evening activities offered were positive, although capacity and uptake could be limited partly due to a restriction on the number of prisoners able to attend (although numbers did increase) and staffing challenges.</p> <p>HMP Barlinnie management acknowledged there was a lack of work and training opportunities. This was an area of high priority and there were ongoing efforts to address the issues, taking an innovative approach to develop alternative activities in addition to traditional work. Additionally, work parties were encouraged to have morning and afternoon workers, and constantly review and introduce new work themes and activities. IPMs heard that a new work shed was to be developed with the intention of it being operational as soon as possible to increase the opportunities available to prisoners.</p> <p>IPMs heard positive messages regarding the Resource Hub, including the services within it, and many prisoners were keen to have more opportunities and time there. The Wellbeing Hub was a positive development during the year. Access and activities opened in a phased approach and IPMs were encouraged to hear that even in the initial stages of operation some residential staff reflected that they had seen a positive change in many prisoners who had attended activities there.</p>			
<p>Standard 7 – Transition from custody into the community</p> <p>The Links Centre and external services, some which also operated out of the Resource Hub, provided support for those preparing for release, such as support for accommodation and banking. Links Centre staff reflected that throughcare support was negatively impacted when throughcare support officers were removed. Pre-release checks and conversations commenced eight weeks in advance and included support and plans for liberation, and sign-posting assistance from external agencies/partners.</p> <p>IPMs heard of challenges experienced by staff in Letham House, the National Top End, in relation to the time taken for First Grant of Temporary Release (FGTR) to be processed. This was a national issue, as was programme placements, however there had been improvements over the year. Progression to HMP Castle Huntly had been slow however, Integrated Case Management (ICM) processes were well understood by the ICM co-ordinators, with ICMs being organised at the relevant points and attended by appropriate partners, such as social work and psychology.</p>	☐	✓	☐
<p>Standard 8 – Organisational effectiveness</p> <p>Staff had a clear understanding of their role, the prison rules and knowledge of those in their care, although they felt the pressure of staff absences and vacancies believing it limited the support they could give to prisoners. Work was ongoing around the local Equality and Diversity (E&D) strategy and plans, alongside the associated resource, engagement, communication and training needs.</p> <p>Experience of the Personal Officer (PO) system varied. It was valued by many prisoners, however less so by a considerable number of others who thought it was of little value and/or did not know who their PO was. The length of time</p>	☐	☐	✓

a prisoner was locked in their cell was a barrier to strengthening relationships and some prisoners felt the culture was 'old fashioned' and there was a need for better training, although some spoke of excellent constructive support from staff. Steps to address culture change and a journey for staff and prisoners to adapt and contribute to were underway.

IPM reported concerns regarding E&D and were disappointed to hear that some support, such as the Autism Group, had been paused for evaluation. Prison management explained a local E&D strategy and plans were in development and the E&D officer was supported by E&D Ambassadors from each hall who were appointed during the year. The E&D group met monthly, chaired by the Governor, and were well attended, although prisoners were not represented at all meetings. IPMs were encouraged by a multidisciplinary approach going forward.

GEOAmev capacity and performance issues, across the SPS estate, resulted in hospital cancellations. This was an ongoing national concern which had been escalated to the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland and who escalated concerns to the SPS Chief Executive Officer and the Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary.

Standard 9 – Health and wellbeing

IPMs met with the Health Centre Manager and The Scottish Government to raise concerns regarding the lengthy wait for mental health assessments. The Mental Health Team for Barlinnie, and all Glasgow prisons, were and continued to be significantly under resourced. Mental health resources and support are of a national concern across the prison estate. Prisoners felt the NHS complaints process was lacking and some felt complaints were never dealt with. This was raised with healthcare who explained complaints received were dealt with as swiftly as possible and in line with complaints processes and timescales.

☐	✓	☐

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 their judgement.

KEY ISSUES	
1.	Limitations and conditions linked to the nature of the buildings which has a negative impact particularly in relation to overcrowding and operation of the regime.
2.	Insufficient work, training, and activities opportunities to adequately provide for the population resulting in prisoners spending a considerable proportion of their day locked in their cells (and links to mental wellbeing).
3.	Equality and diversity – noting that a local strategy and plans are ongoing to better embed support and increase awareness.

ENCOURAGING OBSERVATIONS

Refurbishment work was welcomed including the removal of the small inhumane holding cells in Reception and in healthcare related spaces. The repurposing of space to create the Wellbeing Hub was also a positive development. It was encouraging to hear that even in the initial stages, during the phased opening, residential staff had seen positive change in many prisoners who had attended activities.

E&D – progressive steps were being taken to embed support and increase awareness of E&D through ongoing development of the local strategy and plans. This included E&D Ambassadors across all halls supporting the E&D officer.

Positive signs of staff being encouraged and involved in the wider culture change. It was a stepped change and would take time, and therefore in the initial stages the slight changes may not be obviously to all however change and developments are important, especially when linked to the HMP Glasgow journey.

CONCLUSION

The impacts on prisoners and challenges for management and staff due to the limitations presented by the prison estate and overcrowding should not be underestimated, reiterating the importance of HMP Glasgow.

Works undertaken during the year, such as that in Reception, the Health Centre and the Wellbeing Hub are an improvement, alongside innovative approaches to the work and activities opportunities. However, the building, accommodation, facilities and the overcrowded population limits the possible. However staff and management navigated these challenges to the best of their abilities with the resources available.

During the year IPMs were able to spend more time doing focused monitoring of the HMIPS standards. Going forward it is hoped to continue with this approach to better identify, target and explore issues and concerns observed and raised via prisoner requests.