

PRISON	HMP INVERNESS		YEAR (1 APRIL – 31 MARCH)	2022-2023	
Total number of visits	72	Total number of missed weeks	0	Total number of IPM hours	202.5
Total number of prisoner requests received	11	Number of IPMs in the team (as at 31 March)		7	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IPMs met the statutory duty of one visit per week. Although there were relatively few prisoner requests in comparison to other IPM teams, the IPMs at HMP Inverness ensured they spoke to many prisoners over the course of the year, to ensure that the views of prisoners were considered along with the IPMs' own observations along with discussions with staff.

Despite the ageing fabric of the building the prison operated efficiently to deliver a well-run regime. Added complications such as a very high percentage of remand prisoners and staffing shortages were similarly well-managed, and the prison made efforts to ensure that both convicted and remand prisoners were offered a reasonable regime. Staffing levels improved over the year.

IPMs did uncover a potential rights-based problem in the fact that remand prisoners who did not work did not receive a cell wage (unlike convicted prisoners). However, IPMs fully acknowledged that the issue was one of national SPS policy rather than being specific to decisions made by HMP Inverness management (who in fact demonstrated a willingness to redress the imbalance where empowered to do so locally).

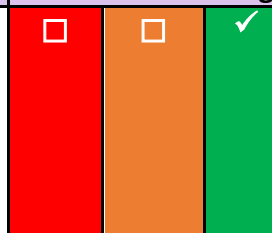
Overall, though, IPMs rated the vast majority of their findings as very positive and look forward to the positive culture transferring to the new HMP Highland.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Standard 1: Lawful and Transparent Custody

IPMs concluded that the prisoner induction process was thorough and that prisoner welfare was given careful attention. Nursing cover was available for admissions up to 9pm. IPMs saw evidence of cell-sharing risk assessments being undertaken on prisoners' arrival.

Overall RAG rating



<p>IPMs spent a lot of time checking in with prisoners being held in the Separation and Reintegration Unit (SRU), and concluded that staff were doing everything within their power to ensure the prisoners there were well looked after, and had their needs met by staff (i.e. offered daily showers, fresh air, etc.).</p>			
<p>Standard 2: Decency</p> <p>IPMs were satisfied that the food on offer was of sufficient quality. IPMs noted that the rising cost of food generally had had an impact on menu choices, but that food quality had not diminished. Prisoner complaints about the food were rare and isolated.</p> <p>IPMs were concerned that canteen prices were rising while prisoner wages remained the same, resulting in prisoners being able to buy less from the canteen. This was not in keeping with wage increases observed in public sector jobs, as well as increases in benefits and pension payments. The Scottish Prison Service implemented a freeze on canteen prices in order to help with affordability, which was welcomed.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 3: Personal Safety</p> <p>IPMs spoke with a number of prisoners being managed under the Talk-To-Me policy, and all said they were being well cared for.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 4: Effective, Courteous and Humane Use of Authority</p> <p>IPMs noted concern about the relatively high prisoner population (10% above design capacity at times). Despite overcrowding, prisoner/staff relations were observed by IPMs to be very good, and prisoners reported several times how good relationships were with staff who dealt with their various needs and requests in good time. During times when the regime was restricted due to short staffing, these positive relationships were particularly important.</p> <p>Treatment of disabled prisoners was considered by IPMs to be good, including access to round-the-clock care provision from external service providers, which was facilitated well by the prison.</p>	☐	☐	✓
<p>Standard 5: Respect, Autonomy and Protection Against Mistreatment</p> <p>IPMs noted that remand prisoners who were not working did not receive a cell wage, unlike non-working convicted prisoners, and noted concerns that this could be viewed as discriminatory. IPMs identified a risk that some remand prisoners could fall into poverty (for example if they were unable to receive money from their families), and they were unable to purchase items from the canteen.</p>	☐	✓	☐

<p>IPMs recognised that this was a national policy rather than a local one, however the difference between prisoner groups was concerning. The prison management did however ensure locally that these prisoner groups were treated equally, in issuing a £10 Christmas bonus to all categories of prisoner, in order to mitigate the rising cost of living.</p> <p>IPMs felt that there was a slight question mark over the effectiveness of the Personal Officer system in supporting prisoners who are new to the system, lacking in confidence or for whom a large volume of written material may be difficult to digest. This was discussed with management who undertook to make improvements.</p>			
<p>Standard 6: Purposeful Activity</p> <p>IPMs felt that there was not a lot of space in the visit room, but that it was adequate, and arrangements for booking visits seemed to work well. Although at times there was a relatively low uptake for in-person visits, virtual visits remained an option. Having no family visiting after 5pm caused a degree of frustration for prisoners whose families were in full time work and could not visit during the daytime. IPMs discussed this with staff and were informed that this was primarily due to a lack of staff to facilitate evening visits.</p> <p>IPMs received very positive feedback from prisoners regarding in-cell telephony as a good way of maintaining family contact, and IPMs also felt that the new Family Visits Centre was better located, welcoming, and well-run.</p> <p>Education uptake was assessed as very good, and IPMs were pleased to hear that 50 SQA awards were issued in December '22.</p>	□	□	✓
<p>Standard 7: Transitions from Custody into the Community</p> <p>IPMs examined arrangements for supporting prisoners back into the community, and accessing support there, concluding that there was adequate preparation and support available. Services included access to benefits, job support, ensuring a place to stay, and healthcare. Prisoners were involved in the process and were encouraged to identify any difficulties they may have or foresee, and their families were also involved where possible.</p> <p>The Link Centre appeared to be working well to address prisoners' needs on release, including efforts to secure jobs.</p>	□	□	✓
<p>Standard 8: Organisational Effectiveness</p> <p>Due to staff shortages (earlier in the year), the prisoners' regimes had to return to a 'Core Day' shift pattern, meaning prisoners had to be in their cells for longer each day. Prisoners that IPMs spoke to were however understanding of the situation and the</p>	□	✓	□

consequences, and IPMs noted the potential for a more stable and predictable regime. Staffing improved towards the end of the year.		Red	Amber	Green
Poor GEOAmev performance resulted in prisoner transfers being delayed.				
Standard 9: Health and Wellbeing		Red	Amber	Green
IPMs interviewed prisoners, NHS staff and SPS staff and formed the view that, in general, access to healthcare (GP, Dentist) was good. However waiting times for mental health and addictions services were thought to be in need of improvement.				
RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status key:				
		Some serious concerns	Some slight concerns	No concerns / good practice
<i>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</i>				

KEY ISSUES	
1.	Ageing fabric of the building reduced capacity for improvements to be made.
2.	Staffing shortages impacted upon the efficient delivery of regimes.
3	Poor GEOAmev performance

ENCOURAGING OBSERVATIONS
The relationships between prisoners and staff has remained consistently positive, and IPMs saw this as an enabler for the efficient and effective running of the prison.

CONCLUSION
The prison was well run, with little by way of any major concern. While the fabric of the building is ageing, staff demonstrated a willingness and ability to work around this to ensure that impact was minimal, that prisoners' rights were not adversely impacted upon, and that the treatment of and conditions for prisoners were acceptable. This positive staff attitude was believed by IPMs to be an excellent asset that could be instrumental in successfully transferring to the new HMP Highland once it opens.