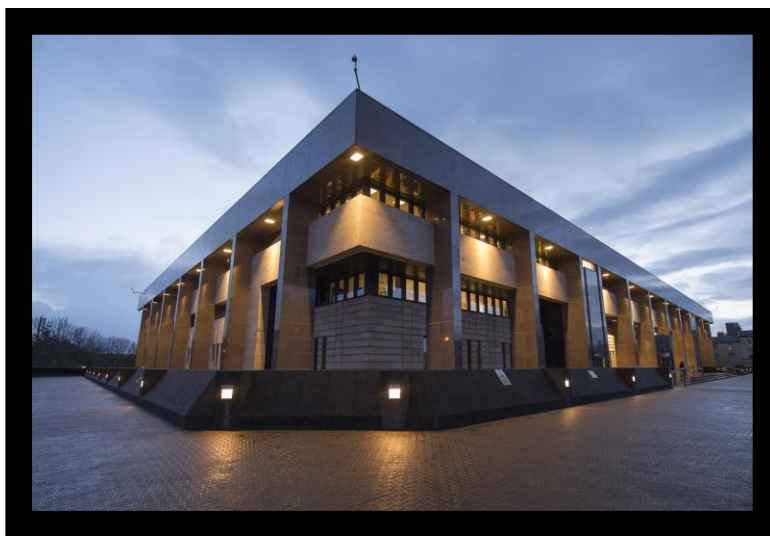


**Inspection of Court Custody Provision
Glasgow Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court**

19 January 2026



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland (HMCIPS) is required to inspect the conditions in which prisoners are transported or held across Scotland in order to establish the treatment of, and the conditions for, prisoners and to report publicly on the findings. This includes prisoners, prisoner transport and Court Custody Units where prisoners and custodies are held awaiting appearance on court.

This report is part of the programme of inspections of Court Custody Provision carried out by HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland (HMIPS).

These inspections also contribute to the UK's response to its international obligations under the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). OPCAT requires that all places of detention are visited regularly by independent bodies – known as the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) – which monitor the treatment of and conditions for detention. HMIPS is one of 21 bodies making up the NPM in the UK.

The inspections of CCUs are informed by a set of Standards as set out in our document 'Standards for Inspecting Court Custody Provision in Scotland,' published March 2017 which can be found at:

[HMIPS Standards for Inspecting Court Custody Provision in Scotland](#)

These Standards contribute positively to the effective scrutiny of court custody provision in Scotland and will encourage continuous improvement in the quality of care and custody of people held in court cells.

The Standards provide assurance to Ministers and the public that inspections are conducted in line with a framework that is consistent, and that assessments are made against appropriate criteria. This report is set out to reflect the performance against these Standards.

HMIPS assimilates information resulting in evidence-based findings utilising a number of different techniques. These include:

- obtaining information and documents from the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) and the court inspected
- shadowing and observing staff as they perform their duties within the CCU
- interviewing custodies and staff on a one-to-one basis
- inspecting a wide range of facilities impacting on both custodies and staff and
- reviewing policies, procedures and performance reports

The information gathered facilitates the compilation of a complete analysis of the CCU against the Standards used. A record of the evidence gathered is produced by those undertaking the inspection against each of the Standards inspected.

HMIPS takes a human rights-based approach to ensure that both the standards and the principles of human rights are integrated into policy as well as the day to day running of organisations under scrutiny.

This report has been created based around a human rights-based approach known as the PANEL principles, set out as follows:

Participation: participation must be active, free, meaningful and give attention to issues of accessibility, including access to information in a form and a language which can be understood.

Accountability: accountability requires effective monitoring of human rights standards as well as effective remedies where human rights breaches occur. Is there evidence of issues raised previously now having been addressed?

Non-discrimination and equality: a human rights-based approach means that all forms of discrimination in the realisation of rights must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated. Are the most vulnerable and at risk identified and supported effectively?

Empowerment: a human rights-based approach means that individuals should know their rights or be made aware of them. Is information readily available and support provided so individuals know their rights and entitlements while in custody?

Legality: a human rights-based approach requires the recognition of rights as legally enforceable entitlements and is linked into national and international human rights law. Are the processes and procedures adopted in the CCU in line with legal obligations and human rights standards?

These are known as the **PANEL** principles.

Overview by His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland (HMCIPS)

Glasgow Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court were located at 1 Carlton Place, Glasgow, on the banks of the River Clyde. This three-storey building was formally opened on 29 July 1986 and houses 27 courts. The three custody courts were busy on the day of the inspection, with 60 custodies having arrived from Police Scotland and 27 prisoners from Scottish Prison Service (SPS) establishments.

There were nine females (one aged under 21) and 78 adult males. Staffing at the CCU was provided under contract to the SPS by GEOAmey. On the day of inspection there were 33 members of staff on duty, with some additional support from van crews, four-line managers and a senior unit manager.

In 2021, HMIPS reported that Scottish Courts should make greater use of video-link technology to reduce the number of individuals in custody being brought to court unnecessarily or for short procedural appearances. That report noted a significant increase in the use of video-link court appearances during the Covid-19 pandemic and recommended that this practice be expanded and sustained beyond the easing of public health restrictions.

In April 2020, a total of 110 custodies appeared in court via video-link from police custody. This figure rose to 471 in December 2020 and increased further to 535 in January 2021. Lengthy travel times and extended waiting periods for very short court appearances not only has an impact on the public purse, but has a disproportionate impact on all custodies, particularly women and young people. Short-notice cancellations also place additional and avoidable pressure on escort services.

On the day of the inspection, no individuals were appearing by video-link from either police custody or SPS prisons. On 15 January 2026, the Thursday before the inspection, Glasgow Sheriff Court received 68 prisoners from seven different prisons. Of these, 19 (28%) were not required to appear in court, either because business progressed in their absence or they were no longer required. This illustrates the continued need for further collaborative work between agencies to increase the use of video-link court appearances.

Females within the CCU were accommodated in an area separate from the main body of the Unit, locally referred to as the "partitioned area." This arrangement appeared to operate effectively, with female staff deployed to support specific health and wellbeing needs and to provide an element of trauma-informed care. It was positive to note that a previous recommendation made by HMIPS regarding the provision of an appropriate level of staffing and the establishment of clear lines of emergency communication to ensure the safety of both staff and women in the event of an incident, had been implemented in this area.

In 2022, HMIPS identified excessive levels of vandalism and poor levels of cleanliness in the cells. This inspection found significant improvements with arrivals mostly being made aware of a Graffiti Prevention Policy to try and deter damage. Despite this statement being added to every Personal Escort Record (PER) it was not being verbally delivered to every custody on arrival.

Staff worked collaboratively as a team. Managers performed well in their role and communicated instructions clearly and effectively, contributing to the maintenance of a calm and controlled environment despite challenging operational conditions.

The long-standing practice of loudly calling out the names of people and their cell allocations between staff on arrival had ceased, resulting in a noticeable and positive improvement in the overall atmosphere within the CCU. Throughout the inspection period, there was notably less shouting by both staff and custodies than on previous inspection, further evidence of a respectful and well managed environment.

Food was sourced from the public cafe located in the court building. By providing fresh food on request it reduced waste, provided choice and allowed the provision of food that met dietary and cultural requirements. This has been recognised as good practice.

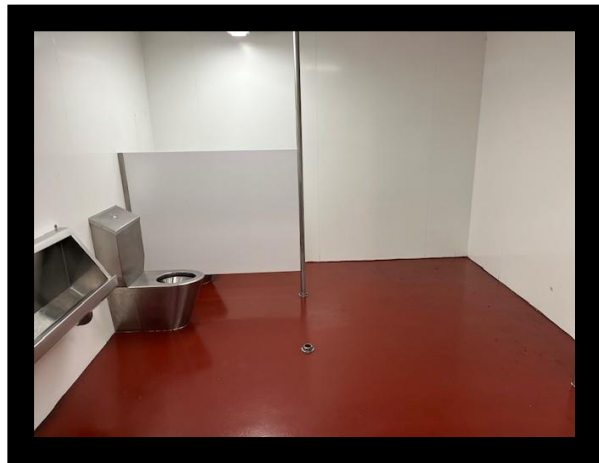
A death in custody at Glasgow Sheriff Court in early 2025 highlighted the critical importance of all agencies involved in the CCU process giving due regard to the health, vulnerability, and physical and mental wellbeing of all custodies. A response by GEOAmev was the recent implementation of a process whereby every custody is asked upon arrival whether they are unwell or wish to see a nurse, and it was operating effectively. Glasgow CCU had nursing provision in place between 10:00 and 12:00 on Mondays and between 11:00 and 12:00 for the remainder of the week. This arrangement was functioning well, allowing custodies to self-refer or to be referred by GEOAmev staff where concerns were identified. Nursing staff provided positive feedback, noting that they now had a clear and structured approach to delivering care and support to custodies. Additionally, the identification and management of life-saving medication or medical equipment found in the possession of custodies on arrival, such as epinephrine auto-injectors, had improved significantly following the introduction of a dedicated, secure, and easily accessible storage facility.

In 2022, HMIPS recommended that disabled individuals be provided with access to toilets suitable for their needs. This recommendation had not yet been implemented, with the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) citing financial constraints as a barrier. People with disabilities were being held in Glasgow CCU despite suitable toileting facilities not being available there, rather than being accommodated in another area of the court building that meets accessibility requirements, as we see in many other court buildings. Under the Equality Act 2010, public sector organisations are required to ensure that disabled individuals have access to facilities that meet their needs. Accessible toilets should be sufficiently spacious to accommodate wheelchair users and should be equipped with appropriate fixtures, including grab rails and suitable toilet seats.

During the inspection, a male custody confined to a wheelchair had been taken by staff to cell 53 to use the toilet. The custody reported significant difficulty in navigating the toilet and had to rely on holding the urinal for support to pull themselves from their wheelchair and maintain balance while urinating. It would not have been possible for the custody to defecate without intimate assistance from CCU staff. Staff reported that they receive on average four disabled custodies per week.

This situation is wholly unacceptable on both hygiene and dignity grounds. Although cell 53 is clearly of sufficient size to allow wheelchair access and movement, it lacks essential adaptations such as simple grab rails and other basic equipment.

Implementing this would not create a significant financial burden, and the current approach is not acceptable.



Cell 53

Inspection Team

Graeme Neill
Calum McCarthy

Recommendations

Standard	Quality Indicator	Quality Indicator Number	Recommendation	Relevant Agency
1	1	5	PERS should only be updated with activities or information that have happened or been delivered.	GEOAmey
1	2	2	Risk assessment questions should be asked of every custody and the answers acted upon and documented on the relevant PER.	GEOAmey
2	3	2	Cell 53 should have reasonable adjustments made to enable it to be used for those with mobility challenges.	SCTS
4	2	1	The area approaching and within the lift should have CCTV coverage for custody movements.	SCTS

Advisories

Standard	Quality Indicator	Quality Indicator Number	Advisory	Relevant Agency
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Good practice

Standard	Quality Indicator	Quality Indicator Number	Good Practice	Relevant Agency
2	4	1	Freshly prepared food ensured a good standard of quality and enabled dietary requirements and individual preferences to be accommodated.	GEOAmey

INFORMATION ABOUT THE CCU

Description	Name/Number
Name of CCU Manager on duty	Mark Stewart
Number of core staff required for CCU	33 + 4
Number of staff working	33 + 4
Number of cells	58
Number of cells that are operational	58
Total custody capacity	120
Number of interview rooms	7
Number of non SPS custodies expected today	60
Number of SPS prisoners expected	27
Number of custody courts running	3
Number of virtual appearances expected	0
SCTS representative/contact	Neil Christie

DISTRIBUTION OF PRISONERS/CUSTODIES

Adult Males	<21 Males	<18 Males
78	0	0

Adult Females	<21 Females	<18 Females
8	1	0

STANDARDS, COMMENTARY AND QUALITY INDICATORS

STANDARD 1: LAWFUL AND TRANSPARENT USE OF CUSTODY

The custody service provider (“the provider”) complies with administrative and procedural requirements of the law and takes appropriate action in response to the findings and recommendations of official bodies that exercise supervisory jurisdiction over it.

The provider ensures that all custodies are lawfully detained. Each custody’s time in the Court Custody Unit (CCU) is accurately calculated; they are properly classified and allocated to cells appropriately. The provider cooperates fully with agencies that have powers to investigate matters in the custody areas.

	QUALITY INDICATOR 1: Personal Escort Records (PERs)	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
1.1.1	Is each custody positively identified at the time of arrival and are they named on the Personal Escort Record (PER) form?		X	
1.1.2	When names and dates of birth are obtained is confirmation made that the custody is due to appear before the court that day?		X	
1.1.3	Is there a process in place to record the requirement and any subsequent provision for translation services?		X	
1.1.4	Do PERs include recording custody movements, any significant activities or events, timings including arrival and departure times, when case was concluded, any provision or offer of meals, drinks or healthcare?		X	
1.1.5	Are PERs accurately completed and fully updated?			X
	In summary, are Personal Escort Record (PER) forms accurately populated and all relevant sections completed?			X
	QUALITY INDICATOR 2: Custody Procedures	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
1.2.1	Is information given to custodies in a language (and format) that they understand?		X	
1.2.2	Was the custody asked questions regarding the following: ▪ Racism ▪ Homophobia			X

	▪ Transgender discrimination ▪ Religious discrimination ▪ Bullying ▪ Any cell sharing issues ▪ Risk of suicide or self-harm ▪ Solicitor access, their own or one will be provided			
1.2.3	Are medical or special needs, including relevant risk factors identified through information provided from appropriate third parties and were they acted upon?		X	
1.2.4	Are any interventions or interactions recorded including searches or risk factors in relation to the custody in the CCU or during transit?		X	
1.2.5	Are custodies given information on what to expect whilst in the CCU?		X	
1.2.6	Are CCU staff proactive at taking into account changes of circumstances for new arrivals into custody?		X	
1.2.7	Where relevant, is the GEOAmeY IT system updated and maintained, including the most recent custody photograph?		X	
1.2.8	If where a custody is admitted directly from court, do CCU staff enquire as to whether there are any urgent personal, domestic or legal concerns that require immediate attention and bring these to the attention of the court or prison where necessary?	X		
1.2.9	If a custody was committed to prison and required an interpreter; was the receiving prison notified to enable arrangements to be made to assist in their admission?	X		
	In summary, are all procedures for identifying those in custody fully complied with, are staff proactive in assessing their understanding, needs and whether they require further support in order to understand basic essential information?			X
	QUALITY INDICATOR 3: Cell Sharing Risk Assessment (CSRA)	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
1.3.1	Are custodies allocated a cell according to their legal status, classification, vulnerability, medical condition, sensory or physical impairment, risks and needs?		X	

1.3.2	Was the approach taken individualised and took into account the preference of the custody where possible?		X	
1.3.3	Are those under 21 years of age kept separate from adults?		X	
1.3.4	Are those under 18 years of age kept separate from all other custodies?		X	
1.3.5	Are females kept separate from males?		X	
1.3.6	Are remand or civil custodies held separately from convicted custodies so far as is reasonably practicable?		X	
1.3.7	Are custodies informed of their allocation courteously and able to communicate freely any needs or concerns they may have?		X	
	In summary, was a CSRA carried out on arrival, taking account of individual characteristic (including gender, vulnerability, security risk, state of mental health or personal medical condition) and then allocated to an appropriate cell?		X	
Standard 1 Summary				
	Every PER documented that the policy in respect of damaging or causing graffiti in cells had been delivered to everyone on arrival. During observations, it was very rarely communicated to custodies. It is not acceptable for CCU staff to add inaccurate information to any PER. It was clear that CCU managers were trying to ensure the risk assessment questions detailed in 1.2.2 were being asked by van crews en-route to the reception desk, as they had laminated the questions and distributed them to staff. In some cases, these questions were not being asked at all or only in part. This called into question the reliability of cell sharing risk assessments. Due to what was observable on the day of inspection, it was not possible to inspect this standard in full, specifically 1.2.8 and 1.2.9. However, staff were able to communicate the process they would follow where somebody was admitted from court or required interpretation services.			
Standard 1 Recommendations/Advisories/Good Practice				
1.1.5	Recommendation: PERS should only be updated with activities or information that have happened or been delivered.			
1.2.2	Recommendation: Risk assessment questions should be asked of every custody and the answers acted upon and documented on the relevant PER.			

STANDARD 2: DECENCY, DIGNITY, RESPECT AND EQUALITY

The custody areas should meet the basic requirements of decency and all custodies within the CCU are treated with dignity and respect, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

All custody areas should be of adequate size for the number of persons they are used to detain, well maintained, clean and hygienic and have adequate lighting. Each custody should have access to toilets, be provided with necessary toiletries, and offered a nutritious meal. These needs should be met in ways that promote each custody's sense of personal and cultural identity and self-respect.

The facilities management and the physical security aspects of the Criminal Appeal Courts, High Court of Justiciary, Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts throughout Scotland is the responsibility of SCTS. This includes the daily cleaning of court facilities, and the physical maintenance or repair of a court.

	QUALITY INDICATOR 1: Custody Area	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
2.1.1	Are cells of an adequate size for occupancy?		X	
2.1.2	Do cells have appropriate furnishing, adequate lighting, heating and ventilation for fresh air and meet all requirements for Health & Safety?		X	
2.1.3	Are accessible and safer cells fit-for-purpose and of sufficient number to be available when required?		X	
2.1.4	Is the maintenance of the CCU achieved through a structured programme where faults or defects are logged and dealt with efficiently?		X	
	In summary, are the custody areas appropriately equipped and constructed for their intended use and maintained to an appropriate standard?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 2: Hygiene	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
2.2.1	Are all parts of the CCU used by custodies kept clean at all times, well maintained and regularly painted?		X	
2.2.2	Does the service provider ensure appropriate cleaning records are maintained, audited and made available to support any reported complaint(s) or defects, or for review of maintenance, cleaning or hygiene standards?		X	
2.2.3	Are custodies encouraged to keep the CCU clean and tidy?		X	

2.2.4	Is any graffiti or damage caused challenged, recorded and reported immediately to the appropriate authorities, i.e. SCTS or Police Scotland?		X	
2.2.5	If an SPS prisoner's behaviour requires them to be placed on report does the service provider do this?		X	
2.2.6	Are hygiene regulations and infection control standards observed and do SCTS have a process in place to deal with any incidents?		X	
	In summary, are good levels of cleanliness and hygiene observed throughout the custody areas ensuring procedures for the control of infection and biohazard incidents are followed?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 3: Toilets	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
2.3.1	Does the service provider ensure that male and female custodies have access to toileting and washing facilities, offering adequate privacy, enabling them to maintain a reasonable standard of personal cleanliness and hygiene?		X	
2.3.2	Is there disabled access to toilets?			X
2.3.3	Are soap, toilet paper and hand towels available?		X	
2.3.4	Are personal hygiene products readily available, if not are signs providing information on how to access such products displayed?		X	
2.3.5	Are proper disposal arrangements for sanitary items available. Where possible is there a female CCU member of staff available to deal with such requests?		X	
	In summary, do all custodies have access to suitable toileting facilities on request?			X
	QUALITY INDICATOR 4: Meals	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
2.4.1	Is there a range of good quality nutritional food available that meets the needs of those with special dietary requirements, including those arising from cultural or religious beliefs?		X	
2.4.2	Are hot drinks (tea and coffee) provided on arrival at the CCU and at each mealtime whilst within the court custody suites?		X	

2.4.3	Do custodies have access to water at least every 2.5 hours or on request, and is this recorded on the PER or the IT system?		X	
2.4.4	Are meals provided to any custody in court or in transit during the afternoon who are considered likely to be returned to prison after 17:00?		X	
2.4.5	When the service provider is required to provide a lunch and an evening meal, is one of them hot?		X	
2.4.6	Is the provision for hand washing/sanitation provided immediately prior to mealtimes?		X	
2.4.7	Are food hygiene rules respected and observed?		X	
	In summary, are all meals provided to custodies well presented, nutritious, varied, conform to dietary, religious, cultural or medical requirements and are served at the appropriate temperature?		X	
Standard 2 Summary				
	The material condition of the cells had improved since the last inspection. GEOAmeY was clearly documenting on the PERs that a policy regarding damage to property or graffiti is communicated to all custodies on arrival, however, recommendation 1.1.5 indicated that this was not consistent. Individuals reported that certain areas of the CCU contained cells that were colder than others. This was raised with SCTS and GEOAmeY staff during the inspection, who agreed to monitor the situation and take action if required. In 2022, HMIPS found that people with disabilities should have access to suitable toilet facilities. This recommendation remains outstanding and all disabled individuals continue to be accommodated within Glasgow CCU, where appropriate toileting facilities are not available, rather than being placed elsewhere in the court building where accessibility standards could be met. Cell 53 was currently used as a toilet for them however it was not equipped to the required standards. Sandwiches, crisps and a biscuit were provided for lunch. Sandwiches were freshly made in the court's public restaurant on request from the CCU. This ensured good quality and allowed the provision of specific requests to meet any dietary requirements. This was good practice.			
Standard 2 Recommendations/Advisories/Good Practice				
2.3.2	Recommendation: Cell 53 should have reasonable adjustments made to enable it to be used for those with mobility challenges.			

2.4.1	Good Practice: Freshly prepared food ensured a good standard of quality and enabled dietary requirements and individual preferences to be accommodated.
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STANDARD 3: PERSONAL SAFETY

All reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of custodies while in the CCU.

All appropriate steps are taken to minimise the levels of harm to which custodies are exposed. Appropriate steps are taken to protect custodies from harm from others or themselves. Where violence or accidents do occur, the circumstances are thoroughly investigated and appropriate management action taken.

	QUALITY INDICATOR 1: Safety	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.1.1	Are any custodies being treated under the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) Suicide Prevention Strategy (Talk to Me) treated with care, compassion and understanding by staff?		X	
3.1.2	Are staff appropriately trained and proactive in recognising and responding to signs that indicate a custody may be at risk of suicide or self-harm?		X	
3.1.3	Are all staff aware of the SPS Suicide Prevention Strategy?		X	
3.1.4	Do staff deal with each custody on an individual basis?		X	
3.1.5	Are all computer systems, paperwork and PER forms kept up to date in respect of custody safety?		X	
3.1.6	Is information shared between the CCU, Police Scotland, Social Work, health provider and the receiving prison to ensure that the best care is provided for those who are in a risk category?		X	
	In summary, has the provider put in place thorough and compassionate practices to identify and care for those identified as being at risk of suicide or self-harm?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 2: Health and Safety	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.2.1	Are checks (Alpha checks) carried out before custodies arrive and after the CCU is closed?		X	
3.2.2	Are Health and Safety roles allocated in the CCU and staff aware of what these roles are to ensure statutory compliance?		X	

3.2.3	Is all documentation kept up-to-date and do CCU staff meet regularly to discuss Health and Safety matters?		X	
3.2.4	Are regular Health and Safety inspections carried out with actions clearly identified and allocated?		X	
	In summary, are the requirements of Health and Safety legislation observed throughout the custody areas and security checks carried out regularly and thoroughly?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 3: Risk Assessments	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.3.1	Does the CCU have a complete set of risk assessments that are regularly reviewed and updated?		X	
3.3.2	Are the risk assessments accessible to all staff?		X	
3.3.3	Is the cell sharing risk assessment (CSRA) and Handcuff Risk Assessment (HRA) outcomes clearly recorded on the PER?			X
3.3.4	Does the CCU have in place a system that ensures the appropriate separation of custodies at all times, including during transit for example, where two people are involved in the same domestic abuse case they should not travel in the same transport to court, from a police station or prison?		X	
	In summary, do all activities take place according to recorded safe systems of work which are easily accessible and based on appropriately completed risk assessments?			X
	QUALITY INDICATOR 4: Risk Management	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.4.1	Do the CCU staff use their interpersonal skills to build and maintain relationships to ensure that any aggression or violence is minimised and do not encourage any escalation of such behaviour?		X	
3.4.2	Where risks are identified do staff react quickly to resolve any issues?		X	
	In summary, does the attitude, behaviour and approach of staff contribute to the lowering of risk of aggression and violence, and are reasonable steps taken to minimise situations that are known to increase such behaviour. Where such		X	

	situations are unavoidable are appropriate levels of supervision maintained?			
	QUALITY INDICATOR 5: Vulnerability	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.5.1	Do CCU staff take an individualised, considered and compassionate approach when dealing with those identified as being vulnerable or having a heightened risk of harm or abuse from others?		X	
3.5.2	Are CCU staff sensitive to any change in a custody's circumstances and act accordingly to meet any identified risks, for example, when their status has changed from remand to convicted?		X	
3.5.3	Where additional needs are identified, is there a process in place for a custody to be provided with assistance, for example foreign language translation or other communication challenges?		X	
	In summary, is particular care taken of any custody whose appearance, behaviour, background or circumstances leave them at heightened risk of harm or abuse from others?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 6: Investigations	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.6.1	Is there is an understanding of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour by CCU staff and is it challenged and that those found responsible dealt with?		X	
3.6.2	Are custodies and staff both encouraged and supported to report incidents and do they have confidence to do so?		X	
	In summary, are all allegations or incidents of mistreatment, intimidation, hate, bullying, harassment or violence recorded and investigated by a person of sufficient independence with any findings being acted upon by management?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 7: Contingencies	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
3.7.1	Is there an up-to-date suite of contingency plans that are readily available to all staff and are tested annually?		X	

3.7.2	Do any plans include how to manage any major or minor incidents of disorder including plans for evacuation, high levels of sickness or absence amongst staff?		X	
3.7.3	Is there a back-up facility in place to ensure any data held on IT systems can be retrieved?		X	
	In summary, is there an appropriate set of readily available contingency plans for managing emergencies and unpredictable events and are staff adequately trained in the roles they adopt in implementing the plans?		X	
Standard 3 Summary				
	Females in the CCU were accommodated separately from the main unit in a designated “partitioned area.” This arrangement appeared effective, with female staff providing health, wellbeing and trauma-informed support. It was positive to note that a previous HMIPS recommendation on staffing levels and emergency communication arrangements had been implemented, enhancing the safety of all in the event of an incident. Handcuff Risk Assessments (HRAs) were correctly recorded as being carried out on Personal Escort Records (PERs) by GEOAmeY staff. However, no supporting narrative was provided to allow scrutiny of the assessments or decisions on whether handcuffs were necessary. This, and findings from other inspections, indicate that the default position for GEOAmeY staff is to apply handcuffs. HRAs are intended to be “dynamic” and conducted by escorting officers at the time, rather than guided by a set list of questions. However, this approach limits the ability to evaluate the quality of assessments or identify unnecessary use of restraints. HMIPS is addressing this national issue separately with GEOAmeY.			
Standard 3 Recommendations/Advisories/Good Practice				
	None			

STANDARD 4: EFFECTIVE, COURTEOUS AND HUMANE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY

The implementation of security and supervisory duties is balanced by courteous and humane treatment of custodies in the CCU.

Procedures relating to perimeter, entry and exit security, and the personal safety, searching, supervision and escorting of custodies are implemented effectively. The level of security and supervision is proportionate to the risks presented at any given time.

	QUALITY INDICATOR 1: Duties	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
4.1.1	Do CCU staff discharge their duties courteously and in a respectful manner while maintaining an acceptable level of authority?		X	
4.1.2	Do CCU staff work as a team evidencing good communication?		X	
	In summary, do court custody staff discharge supervisory and security duties courteously and in doing so respect the individuals given circumstances?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 2: Movements and Transfers	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
4.2.1	Are there clearly defined procedures in place for any movement within the CCU including to the courtroom or release and is such movement implemented effectively and courteously?			X
4.2.2	Are all movements to and from escort vehicles carried out in a safe and controlled manner, with only one custody entering the CCU at a time?		X	
4.2.3	Are CCU staff seen to be carrying out assessments to manage those at risk or likely to be detrimental to the good running of the unit?		X	
4.2.4	Are mechanical restraints such as handcuffs and escort chains only used where risk assessments deem them appropriate?		X	
4.2.5	Do all custodies depart the CCU to a place of detention within two hours of receipt of the court documentation (excluding Glasgow Sheriff Court where a 90-minute timescale applies for a custody being escorted to HMP Barlinnie)?		X	

4.2.6	Was the CCU clear of all custodies within 30 minutes of the receipt of the final court documentation for that day?	X		
4.2.7	Do the CCU staff ensure the accurate recording of all discharge, bail or other disposals?		X	
4.2.8	Are instructions from the Court included within the custody or court records and the PER, and any additional release conditions confirmed before the custody is released?		X	
4.2.9	Do the CCU staff ensure that all custodies are liberated/released as soon as practicable and no later than one hour from the completed court documentation?		X	
4.2.10	Were all custodies adequately clothed and provided with food and a drink, fit to travel, have their property, cash and valuables returned to them and be supplied with sufficient funds to travel if required?		X	
	In summary, are the systems and procedures for the movement, transfer and release of custodies implemented effectively and courteously?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 3: Visitors	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
4.3.1	Is there a structured and systematic approach to physical security that clearly identifies risk and responds to it effectively, including access for visitors to the CCU?		X	
4.3.2	Is there adequate accommodation to facilitate such visitors?		X	
4.3.3	When dealing with all people who visit the CCU do staff always behave in courteous and professional manner?		X	
4.3.4	Do staff understand their roles in terms of security?		X	
	In summary, are the systems and procedures for access and egress of visitors to the CCU implemented effectively and courteously. Is there adequate accommodation to facilitate such visitors?		X	

	QUALITY INDICATOR 4: Security	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
4.4.1	Is there a structured and systematic approach to physical security that clearly identifies risk and responds to it effectively, including the access of people, mail, goods and vehicles to the CCU?		X	
4.4.2	Where court-based CCTV cameras are fitted, are they used to supervise and monitor the movement of custodies, and are they in good working order?			X
4.4.3	Is recorded material made available for assessment and investigation and stored as per contract guidelines?		X	
	In summary, are the systems and procedures for monitoring the movement and activities of individuals inside the CCU implemented effectively, and accurately recorded on the appropriate system?			X
	QUALITY INDICATOR 5: Searching & Property	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
4.5.1	Are all searches carried out in strict conformity with the relevant legislation?		X	
4.5.2	Are all searches carried out with proper regard for the individual's privacy and dignity, for instance, the custody must never be fully naked at any time, and any search must be carried out by staff of the same gender?		X	
4.5.3	Were custodies seen to be thoroughly rubbed down and searched when entering the CCU and any handheld detectors utilised where an Archway Metal Detector is not available?		X	
4.5.4	Is all property checked on entering the CCU?		X	
4.5.5	Do CCU staff ensure that any property, cash and valuables belonging to a custody correctly recorded and accounted for?		X	
4.5.6	Is there a process in place in the event of mishandling of property or loss.		X	
4.5.7	Are facilities lockfast and adequate for storing the amount of property required securely and not accessible other than by CCU staff?		X	

4.5.8	Are all custodies personal property, valuables and cash released appropriately?		X	
	In summary, is the law concerning the searching of a custody and their property in the custody areas implemented thoroughly?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 6: Use of Force	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
4.6.1	Is the use of force or restraint proportionate to the risk posed and no more than was necessary for the situation?		X	
4.6.2	In the event of a planned or unplanned use of force or restraint, was the procedure followed meticulously, and all accompanying paperwork filled out to a high standard including the PER, was this supervised by a senior member of staff?		X	
4.6.3	If a planned removal took place was it video recorded?		X	
4.6.4	If physical force was applied, was the custody medically examined by a healthcare professional as soon as practicable, no later than within one hour?		X	
4.6.5	Are reviews of all cases involving use of force or restraint regularly undertaken to observe and analyse any trends that may be appearing?		X	
4.6.6	Are CCU management and staff able to talk through the process for the use of force or restraint and how it should be documented?		X	
	In summary, were physical force and restraints only used when necessary, and strictly in accordance with the law and the service provider's' control and restraint guidance?		X	
	Standard 4 Summary			
	Three CCTV cameras were functioning but not transmitting images to monitors in the CCU. SCTS were aware of this and repairs were pending. GEOAme staff escorting custodies to courtrooms located on higher levels required to use a lift from the CCU. In many instances, custodies were escorted by a single member of staff, resulting in periods where staff had no access to an alarm or radio and were not monitored by colleagues via CCTV. This was assessed as a risk, as any member of staff experiencing difficulty would be unable to raise an alarm or call for assistance.			

	There was dedicated control and restraint equipment held in the CCU that was shared by the Glasgow High Court. The last unplanned use of force was a minor incident in December 2025, and the last planned use of force was in November 2025. All paperwork and statements were found to be well written, contained the required information and the correct procedures had been followed. Due to court running times on the day of inspection, it was not possible to inspect the timing of the final court documentation of the day (4.2.6).
Standard 4 Recommendations/Advisories/Good Practice	
4.2.1	Recommendation: The area approaching and within the lift should have CCTV coverage for custody movements.

STANDARD 5: RESPECT, AUTONOMY AND PROTECTION AGAINST MISTREATMENT

Staff treat all custodies respectfully. A custody's right to statutory protections and the complaints processes are also respected.

Staff engage with custodies respectfully, positively and constructively. Custodies are kept informed about the progress of their court case and are treated humanely and with understanding.

	QUALITY INDICATOR 1: Respect and Rights	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
5.1.1	Do the CCU staff regularly keep the custodies informed of any progress of their court case and the process for liberation or transfer to a prison, including timescales?		X	
5.1.2	When asked at any time were custodies able to confirm that they are aware of the progress of their court case?		X	
5.1.3	Are solicitors meeting rooms adequate and provide confidentiality whilst being easily monitored by staff?		X	
5.1.4	Did all sensitive conversations, including identification, take place in a location away from the hearing of others. This includes assessing risk at the point of admission to the CCU?		X	
5.1.5	Do staff ensure all custodies rights to confidentiality are in place?		X	
5.1.6	Do staff ensure all custodies rights to statutory protection are in place if required due to offence types or potential enemies?		X	
	In summary, the use of disrespectful language or behaviour is not tolerated from staff or those in custody, are relationships between staff and custodies respectful?		X	
	QUALITY INDICATOR 2: – Complaints	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
5.2.1	Are complaint forms readily available for custodies?		X	
5.2.2	Are notices visible explaining how to complain and to whom and is this information readily available to those where English is not their first language?		X	

5.2.3	Do CCU staff ensure that any person wishing to make a complaint is assisted when necessary?		X	
	In summary, does the complaints process work well?		X	
Standard 5 Summary				
	Staff engaged well with individuals and kept them informed of the progress of their cases. Solicitors meeting rooms were fully operational and were sufficient in number to meet the high volume of daily visits required. Solicitors were complimentary of GEOAmey staff on how they were facilitated during their visits.			
Standard 5 Recommendations/Advisories/Good Practice				
	None			

STANDARD 6: HEALTH, WELLBEING AND MEDICAL TREATMENT

All reasonable steps are taken to ensure the health and wellbeing of custodies while in the CCU, and appropriate and timeous medical treatment is available when required.

Where it is necessary to do so, custodies should receive treatment that takes account of all relevant NHS standards, guidelines and evidence-based treatments.

	QUALITY INDICATOR 1: – Health	Unable to Inspect	Yes	No
6.1.1	Do any custodies reporting illness, a medical complaint or injury have their concerns recorded on their PER (This includes where use of C&R techniques, restraint or physical force have been applied)?		X	
6.1.2	Do custodies have access to healthcare or medical treatment where required, within one hour?		X	
6.1.3	If medical care cannot be provided within one hour, do the CCU staff ensure appropriate care is provided until the medical provider attends?		X	
6.1.4	Is there at least one staff member trained in emergency first aid on duty in the CCU at any given time?		X	
6.1.5	Has access to the nearest defibrillator been identified?		X	
6.1.6	Is all prescribed medication accurately documented on PER forms and are staff aware of procedures for dispensing?		X	
6.1.7	Is any prescribed medication in the possession of a custody available as per prescription instructions?		X	
6.1.8	Is the CCU appropriately equipped for the prevention and control of infection?		X	
	In summary, is any treatment provided in custody undertaken by an appropriately qualified professional and meets accepted standards and timescales?		X	
Standard 6 Summary				
	GEOAmey had introduced an effective arrival process in which all individuals are asked about illness or the need to see a nurse. Glasgow CCU provided nursing cover from 10:00 until 12:00 on Mondays and 11:00 until 12:00 on			

	other weekdays, enabling self-referral or referral by GEOAmev staff. Nursing staff reported improved clarity and structure in care delivery. The management of life-saving medication or equipment found on arrival, such as epinephrine auto-injectors, had also improved following the introduction of a secure, accessible storage facility.
	Standard 6 Recommendations/Advisories/Good Practice
	None

Glossary

CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CCU	Court Custody Unit
CCV	Court Custody Van
CSRA	Cell Sharing Risk Assessment
Custody	A person held in the CCU who is not a prisoner
HMIPS	HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
HRA	Handcuff Risk Assessment
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
PPE	Personal protective Equipment
PER	Prisoner Escort Record
Prisoner	Person in the care of a prison
SCTS	Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service
SPS	Scottish Prison Service



HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland is a member of the UK's National Preventive Mechanism, a group of organisations that independently monitor all places of detention to meet the requirements of international human rights law.

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