



**HMIPS**

HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland  
INSPECTING AND MONITORING

### **News Release**

## **Independent Prison Monitoring Annual Reports 2024-2025**

In our tenth year of operation, our Independent Prison Monitor (IPM) Annual Reports 2024 to 2025 comprise findings from more than 120 IPMs across all nine HMIPS standards. In the reporting year, IPMs undertook nearly 1,200 visits in the 17 prisons in Scotland, contributing over 4,000 monitoring hours in their voluntary capacity. IPMs have also responded to over 1,600 prisoner requests relating to issues they were encountering in their lives in prison. Through these weekly visits to every prison in Scotland, IPMs provide a regular insight into the day to day running of each establishment, engaging with prisoners and staff and filing reports on standards for the attention of HM Chief Inspector.

The role of independent prison monitoring is a critical aspect of ensuring people deprived of their liberty are not subject to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. They are people from outwith the prison world who bring to their visits the “ordinary” person’s view about what constitutes “normal” and for that they are extraordinary. HMIPS are proud of the work of all volunteer IPMs, past and present. The reassurance of their presence remains an important component of a fair and transparent prison system in Scotland.

While each of the 17 prisons has their individual good practices and challenges, the monitoring findings highlight some clear and consistent themes across most establishments, which require action at a national level by the Scottish Prison Service and the Scottish Government. These include:

- Ongoing concerns about overcrowding across the prison estate, which affects every aspect of prison life, from access to health appointments to time in the fresh air and not least of which includes having to share your small personal living space with a stranger.
- Many prisons house multiple prisoner populations, all of whom require separate accommodation and regimes, adding to an already complex role.
- Concerns about drugs and drug-taking within prisons and the harm this causes.
- The numbers of prisoners being segregated for long periods and outside of designated Separation and Reintegration Units.
- Ongoing barriers to prisoners’ progression through their sentence, towards open conditions and parole, and a lack of access to rehabilitative programmes.
- The concerning number of deaths that have occurred in Scottish Prisons in the last year.

As outlined in the individual establishment reports, IPMs have also noted good, innovative practice and many examples of compassionate, respectful interactions between staff and prisoners throughout the year. Despite issues raised and reported, the positive steps taken and encouraging observations are also reflected.”

### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland, Sara Snell was appointed in February 2025.
2. On publication the reports can be found at [www.prisoninspectoratescotland.gov.uk](http://www.prisoninspectoratescotland.gov.uk)
3. For further information please contact Kerry Love, at [Kerry.Love@gov.scot](mailto:Kerry.Love@gov.scot) or on 07939 980452.

END