



HMIPS

HM Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
INSPECTING AND MONITORING

NEWS RELEASE
INSPECTION OF COURT CUSTODY PROVISION, HAMILTON SHERIFF COURT
ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2018

Inspectors found the CCU to be a well-run facility with staff that were clearly well motivated, well led and working well as a team. The staff discharged their duties courteously and in a respectful manner, whilst maintaining an acceptable level of authority.

The admission process observed was sound. Although the CCU did not have a safer cell, staff utilised the cell closest to their desk and observations indicated it was used appropriately.

Although staff were constantly on hand to assist and care for those in the CCU, the fabric of the holding cells did little to encourage interaction between staff and prisoners and would benefit from some upgrading, redecoration and modernisation. Despite the cleanliness, some areas were in need of painting and any graffiti on the walls and ceilings should be removed promptly. Some cells had blind spots where staff could not fully view the activities of prisoners.

There was Close Circuit Television (CCTV) throughout the CCU, however only one cell had CCTV fitted. Although well positioned to be seen by staff, observations indicated that it was not actively monitored and did not have recording and playback provision. This could be a useful resource for vulnerable people if upgraded.

The movement of prisoners from the CCU to some off the courtrooms required the prisoner to walk through public areas. This was not conducive to ensuring the separation of prisoners and members of the public, and as such may impact upon the security and safety of CCU staff, prisoners and the public. Inspectors noted however that the CCU staff conducted dynamic risk assessments prior to entering these areas, with a Police Scotland presence minimising the risk.

On reviewing access and egress to the CCU from the drop off and pick up area, it was not fit for purpose for those with reduced mobility, as there were three stairs leading up to the entrance with no ramp. Those in wheel chairs were required to enter and exit through the public areas, posing an unnecessary risk. In addition, the only disabled toilet was located in the court reception area.

Refreshments were readily available for all those in custody, as well as meals catering to all dietary needs.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland, Wendy Sinclair-Gieben, was appointed in July 2018.
2. This report identifies what was found during the inspection on 3 September 2018.
3. On publication the report can be found at www.prisonsofscotland.gov.uk
4. For further information please contact Kerry Love, Business Manager, at Kerry.Love@gov.scot or on 0131 244 8484.