



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – April 2016

The Police & Crime Commissioner, Vera Baird QC, would like to take this opportunity to thank Independent Custody Visitors for the work they have undertaken when visiting custody suites within the Northumbria Force area. The ICVs are valued members of the volunteer team. Below are the points raised during April 2016 from the stations visited.

Alnwick

Suite clean and tidy.
All food in date.

No issues identified.

Bedlington

Suite clean and tidy.

No issues identified.

Berwick

All well and clean and tidy.

No issues identified.

Hexham

Suite clean and tidy.

New set of blankets arrived in suite.

Southwick

Suite clean and tidy.

All cells with new washing facilities were closed due to potential ligature risk.

Notice regarding washing facilities for detainees needs to be in clear sight so that it can be easily seen.

UPDATE

**Cells reopened after consultation with estates no issues with ligature points
Additional signage has been put up**

Millbank

Clean and tidy station

Staff helpful and friendly.

No issues raised

North Tyneside

Custody suite clean and tidy.

Staff polite and helpful.

Areas for Improvement:

Number of cells in need of cleaning

Cell 21 – blockage in sink

Cell 36 – Cell out of use due to broken lock

Some detainees stated they had been offered shower facilities or toothbrushes having been in custody overnight.

Number of mattress seams in need of repair (Recurring issue) Number of cells in need of cleaning – cells cleaned daily

UPDATE

Cell 21 – blockage in sink – Repaired

Cell 36 – Cell out of use due to broken lock - Repaired

Some detainees stated they had been offered shower facilities or toothbrushes having been in custody overnight. Addressed with staff

Number of mattress seams in need of repair (Recurring issue). This issue is a recurring as mattresses' degrade and replaced asap.

Forth Banks

Staff friendly, professional and co-operative with both detainees and ICV's.

Cell 9 – toilet broken.

Staff handover observed by visitors which was detailed and well handled.

Clean and tidy suite

Issues Raised following introduction of PCC ICV Custody Suite Questionnaire

Following the 2014 HMIC Inspection into Northumbria Police Custody, a number of recommendations were made by HMIC to improve the custody process and service offered to detainees.

Northumbria Police have produced an action plan to address the issues raised with added checks by officers that these recommendations are being delivered. The Commissioner requested that ICV's be part of this process to make sure that an independent check that the force are delivering on these recommendations is made.

The OPCC produced a checklist of questions with each question relating to a specific recommendation in the report. During the month of April 2016 no issues of concern were highlighted by visitors in addition to the areas highlighted above.