



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

Independent Custody Visitors findings – January 2015

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 between January 2015 from the stations visited.

Alnwick

No issues raised. All areas clean and tidy

Bedlington

All areas clean and tidy.

Well received by staff.

Berwick

No issues raised.

Hexham

No issues raised

Etal Lane

Suite clean and tidy

Area for improvement:

Shower being used as a storage area

Millbank

Suite clean and tidy

All officers were helpful, professional and polite throughout visits with both detainees and ICV's.

Area for Improvement:

M12 light broken

M19 Buzzer broken

No heating in cells F1, Det 2, M1, 4, 7, 9 13

Forth Banks

All staff polite and helpful

Officers addressing detainees concerns immediately

Suite clean and tidy

Areas for Improvement:

Previous CV3 forms of visits need to be correctly stored and easily accessible for visitors

Detainees held overnight should be offered exercise and washing facilities

North Tyneside

Staff friendly and helpful

Areas for improvement

Medical room, drug arrest referral room and visitor room doors open

IR9 machine not working

Assistant Chief Constable Jo Farrell responses to issues raised:

Etal Lane

Area for improvement:

Shower being used as a storage area - This has been reviewed on the 18/2/15 and there is nothing being stored in the shower areas. Area command support staff have been reminded that Etal Lane is a resilience suite and is not to be used as a storage facility.

Millbank

Areas for improvement:

Area for Improvement:

M12 light broken

M19 Buzzer broken

No heating in cells F1, Det 2, M1, 4, 7, 9 13

Millbank was closed for the fitting of new equipment for the electronic custody records.

During the closure all maintenance work was completed including the above defects which were identified and reported as defects by custody staff.

Forth Banks

Areas for improvement:

Previous CV3 forms of visits need to be correctly stored and easily accessible for visitors. The filing system has been reviewed and amended and is now housed in the hub for easy access.

Detainees held overnight should be offered exercise and washing facilities - Insp Murray has held performance meeting with all of the shifts over the last two weeks. During that meeting a reminder was given to staff that anyone held for over 24 hours should be offered shower and exercise. In addition any keepers will be asked in the evening if they want a shower that night or the next morning before court so that we can wake and offer shower facilities before 7am as GeoAmy arrive just before 8am.

North Tyneside

Areas for improvement

Medical room, drug arrest referral room and visitor room doors open - Reminder sent to North Custody staff that rooms should be kept shut and secured when not in use.

IR9 machine not working. Fingerprint and interview room 9 machine is now working.

Issues Raised following introduction of PCC ICV Questionnaire

Alnwick

- No patient information leaflets available in medical room or suite.

Leaflets are printed depending on the issues that are relevant at the time. The leaflets are available on the force system and linked to the NHS.

- Staff unaware of when last emergency evacuation was carried out.
This is a local suite. It would be opened by local staff for single detainees for a limited time. Alnwick was used for 61 detainees in 2014.

Bedlington

- No relevant patient information leaflets available in medical room or suite.

Leaflets are printed depending on the issues that are relevant at the time. The leaflets are available on the force system and linked to the NHS.

- Issues with CCTV system due to delay of 6 seconds on transmitted images.

This has now been repaired. Custody staff had already submitted a defect report.

- Some detainees after being held overnight reported of not been offered washing/exercise facilities.

Reminder sent to all North Custody staff that detainees who are held for more than 24 hours should be offered the facilities of showers and exercise. In addition any keepers should be asked in the evening if they want a shower that night or the next morning before court so that we can wake and offer shower facilities before 7am as GeoAmy arrive just before 8am.

- Telephone calls between detainee and solicitor are not in private. All calls undertaken at charge desk.

There is no facility at Bedlington for private telephone calls.

North Tyneside Area Command

- Posters stating rights and entitlements in different languages not displayed in suite.

These posters do not exist. The posters were produced by legal aid and are no longer available. The poster that are displayed at the reception points in custody are the language line indicators which can then be used to print of the appropriate version of the rights and entitlements from the custody intranet site.

- Some detainees held overnight not offered time in exercise yard.

Reminder sent to all North Custody staff those detainees who are held for more that 24 hours should be offered the facilities of showers and exercise. In

addition any remanded for court should be asked in the evening if they want a shower that night or the next morning before court so that we can wake and offer shower facilities before 7am as GeoAmy arrive just before 8am.

- Some detainees reported not been offered food or drinks

Reminder sent to staff that detainees should be offered food and drink at recognised meal times and then, drinks should be offered in between meals.

This is a fundamental right. A check of the custody record showed that the detainee requesting food had been offered food and drink at 9.32 am which was declined. They were released at 1110am.

Forth Banks

- Detainees not offered information relating to support organisations.

Detainees are generally offered this information either at the point they leave when the exit risk assessment is undertaken. We are running a referral scheme for all females who come into custody as well as a referral scheme for arrests is linked to drink. This is generally offered at the point finger prints and photographs are taken. The custody staff have access to a range of web based support material which is printed on demand.

- Detainees not offered washing/exercise facilities after being held overnight.
As above
- Some detainees have commented on how well they have been supported and care provided by custody staff.
Noted.

Millbank

- No issues of concern raised.

Southwick

- No reading materials for detainees

Reading material has been obtained and stored.

- Some detainees held overnight not offered washing or exercise facilities

Reminder sent to all North Custody staff those detainees who are held for more than 24 hours should be offered the facilities of showers and exercise. In addition any remanded for court should be asked in the evening if they want

a shower that night or the next morning before court so that we can wake and offer shower facilities before 7am as GeoAmy arrive just before 8am.