



**VERA BAIRD**<sup>QC</sup>  
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

## **Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner**

### **Independent Custody Visitors findings – July 2014.**

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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 in July from the stations visited.

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#### **Alnwick**

No issues raised. All areas clean and tidy

#### **Bedlington**

All areas clean and tidy.

Well received by staff.

Cell M6 out of order due to broken camera

On one particular visit the suite was busy with detainees waiting a long period to see doctor/solicitor, receive showers or exercise.

#### **Areas for improvement:**

**Cell M6 out of order due to broken camera**

**All detainees who have been in custody for an extended period should have their requests for exercise or showers granted if possible.**

#### **Berwick**

No issues raised. Suite in order.

#### **Etal Lane**

Suite clean and tidy

Shower areas clean and tidy.

All officers were helpful and polite throughout visits.

All issues raised by detainees were immediately addressed by staff

**Area for improvement:**

**M11 – out of use**

**Detainees held overnight had not been offered access to washing or shower facilities**

**Gateshead**

Staff very friendly and welcoming.

Good relationship between staff and detainees

**Areas for improvement**

**Detainees not being offered shower/washing facilities after being detained over 24 hours**

**Millbank**

No issues raised. Very clean and staff helpful.

**Gillbridge**

No issues

Staff helpful and suite clean and tidy

**Washington**

No issues raised.

**North Tyneside**

Staff friendly

Suite clean and tidy.

**Areas for improvement**

**Visitors waited ten minutes for access to the suite. Access should be immediate.**

**Exercise Yard Out of use due to ligature point.**

**Cell 20 – Screw missing from light switch panel which could be used as a ligature point**

**Cell 30 – Door coming away from frame.**

**Cell 37 – Window broken**

**Interview room 7 – recording machine broken**

**CAMIC Room 1 – out of order**

## **Assistant Chief Constable Winton Keenan responses to issues raised:**

### **Bedlington**

#### **Areas for improvement:**

##### **Cell M6 out of order due to broken camera**

This was already identified on the daily maintenance checked, reported and CCTV repaired within 48 hours.

**All detainees who have been in custody for an extended period should have their requests for exercise or showers granted if possible.**

ICV team attended on 23/07/14 the evening that F1 was very busy with numerous detainees with mental health and self harm issues who required to be seen by the FME. One detainee was constant supervision etc staff were praised by the ICV's in relation to their professionalism in dealing with a very challenging environment. During that period it was not possible to facilitate showers. Detainees who were at court the following day were able to have showers in the morning prior to Court.

### **Etal Lane**

#### **Area for improvement:**

##### **M11 – out of use**

Repaired and in use

##### **Detainees held overnight had not been offered access to washing or shower facilities**

The detainee was seen between 1900-2045hrs at that time he had not been offered shower facilities however was offered and accepted a shower/shave prior to court the following morning.

### **Gateshead**

#### **Areas for improvement**

##### **Detainees not being offered shower/washing facilities after being detained over 24 hours**

The detainee had been assessed by FME as requiring 8 hrs period of rest. After this period he was allowed to wash. Prior to attending court he was offered a shower which was declined however did have a shave.

### **North Tyneside**

#### **Areas for improvement**

**Visitors waited ten minutes for access to the suite. Access should be immediate.**

All staff will on duty on this occasion will be spoken to in relation to providing immediate access to ICV teams.

**Exercise Yard Out of use due to ligature point.**

This was identified by custody staff on the daily audit check. It has been reported to estates for repair. There is another exercise yard available which is used.

**Cell 20 – Screw missing from light switch panel which could be used as a ligature point**

This was identified by custody staff during daily audits/checks and subsequently repaired

**Cell 30 – Door coming away from frame.**

Identified as by custody/estates inspections and will repaired during formal closure of the suite in October.

**Cell 37 – Window broken**

Identified as by custody/estates inspections cracked due to significant temperature changes. Will repaired during formal closure of the suite in October.

**Interview room 7 – recording machine broken**

This was identified by custody staff and has been repaired.

**CAMIC Room 1 – out of order**

This was identified by custody staff and has been repaired.