



NORTHUMBRIA  
**POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**

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## **Independent Custody Visitors**

### **January 2024**

Below are some of the highlights, issues and other newsworthy information raised during visits or by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner during **January 2024**.

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### **Sunderland - Southwick**

Two visits were made to Southwick Custody Suite, the suite was found to be clean and tidy. Staff were also friendly and helpful.

ICVs positively noted that detainees had been provided with toilet roll without asking on all occasions.

Detainee food checked and all in good order.

ICVs positively noted that detainees had been provided with reading materials.

ICVs positively noted that where needed detainees had seen the nurse.

ICVs positively noted DO9775 who was very helpful and informative on their visit.

### **Areas for improvement:**

- Some detainees complained of high temperatures in suite.
- Detainee lockers open.

### **Force Response :**

The heating has been an issue since the refurb and a recent water leak also impacted on the effective running of the suite, these have all now been addressed so should be resolved.

The suite is subject to daily checks, and these are monitored, so a reminder will be sent to ensure staff as securing these lockers.

### **Forth Banks - Newcastle**

Two visits were undertaken, the overall cleanliness of the suite and exercise areas was good, and all staff were polite and helpful.

All detainee food checked and in good order.

ICVs positively noted that where needed, detainees had received contact with the Mental Health Nurse based within custody.

Exercise yards checked and all in order.

#### **Areas for Improvement or points raised:**

- Fire hose between cells 39-40 out of order.
- Telephone room 2 out of service.
- Detainee microwave in kitchen requires cleaning

#### **Force Response:**

There was an issue with the hose but has since been repaired. This issue has provided some insight into the required planned maintenance that we were previously un-aware of and so can now factor it in to prevent a further failure of the kit.

This was due to a detainee smashing the handset, the parts were on order for a while, but it has since been repaired and back in service.

I will ensure this has been done, the cleaners in the suite have a rolling programme of deep cleaning so this would have been required since the visits.

### **Middle Engine Lane – North Tyneside**

Three visits were undertaken, the overall cleanliness of the suite and exercise areas was good, and all staff were polite and helpful.

ICVs positively noted well stocked detainee meals and clothing.

Exercise Yard checked and all in order.

ICVs positively noted that female hygiene packs had been provided where needed.

#### **Areas for Improvement or points raised:**

- Out of date detainee drinks disposed of
- Lockers open

**Force Response:**

Thank you for highlighting the expired drinks, it is unusual for a main suite to have expired food or drink given the turn over. The quarterly inspection process reviews expire dates so I will ensure it reflects the point.

Staff are regularly reminded regarding the lockers and they form part of the daily checks. Another reminder and monitoring will be conducted.