



Independent Custody Visitors

February 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 **February 2024**.

Sunderland – Southwick

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

Detainee food checked and all in good order.

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

Areas for improvement:

- Out of date drinks removed.
- Detainee footwear and clothes stored on floor outside cells.
- Toilet roll not provided to some detainees within cells without request.
- Reception poor for staff phablets

Force Response :

- Thank you for removing the out-of-date drinks, this will be raised with the officer responsible for stock and ensure we are using items before they expire.
- Staff will be reminded to use the detainee locker boxes adjoined to the cell and not leave personal items on the floor.
- Staff to be reminded, unless reason not to provide, detainees should be provided with a toilet roll on entry.
- The force IT unit is aware of some issues recently, this does not affect the safe detention environment within the suite.

Forth Banks - Newcastle

Four 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 apart from no Kosher food being in stock.

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

ICVs positively noted reading materials had been provided to some detainees.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- No Kosher food in stock
- No Small detainee clothing in stores
- Exercise Yard 1 in need of cleaning
- Staff unable to locate the suite wheelchair

Force Response:

- Officer allocated the task of purchasing some stock.
- The suite is now well stocked having recently received several awaited stores items recently.
- This has been carried out since these visits.
- A review is underway to determine where this is, a new one is being sourced.

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:

- Lockers open
- Detainee shoes and clothes on floors outside cells
- Out of date drinks disposed of.
- Reception poor for staff phablets

Force Response:

- **Staff will be reminded to use the detainee locker boxes adjoined to the cell and not leave personal items on the floor.**
- **Thank you for removing the out-of-date drinks, this will be raised with the officer responsible for stock and ensure we are using items before they expire.**
- **The force IT unit is aware of some issues recently, this does not affect the safe detention environment within the suite.**