



Independent Custody Visitors

April 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 **April 2024**.

Sunderland – Southwick

One visit was 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.

Areas for improvement:

- **Exercise yard in need of cleaning due to debris and tree branches**
- **Some detainees not offered time in exercise yard even though they had been in custody for an extended period of time.**

Force Response :

- **Weather conditions can determine issues like this, staff complete daily checks to ensure clear and safe for detainees to use.**
- **Staff to be reminded to ensure exercise is offered and recorded at key times during a detainees stay in custody.**

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 visited a juvenile detainee, who was awaiting an AA and the child's mother had been made aware of their detention.

ICVs positively noted that where needed, detainees had been provided with advice in relation to support organisations.

ICVs positively noted the helpfulness of the escorting officer who offered all information and provided a timely response to all requests.

One detainee had specialist dietary needs which staff were aware of and addressing.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- In the majority of cases toilet roll had been provided however there was one visit where toilet roll had not been provided without the detainee requesting it.

Force Response:

- Notwithstanding this might have been an oversight in one case, given the amount of detainees passing through the suites, I note an improvement in ensuring toilet rolls are provided. Staff are regularly reminded of this.

Middle Engine Lane – North Tyneside

One visit was 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.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- Some detainee lockers open.
- Some out of date food removed and disposed of.

Force Response:

- Issue under discussion with estates to improve securing lockers.
- Thank you for removing old stock, regular checks will be conducted to ensure we monitor and rotate items to avoid this.