



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

## Report of Office of Police & Crime Commissioner

### Independent Custody Visitors findings – May 2015

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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 during May 2015 from the stations visited.

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#### Alnwick

All areas clean and tidy

#### **Area for Improvement:**

Food for detainees not available at present

#### Bedlington

All areas clean and tidy.

Well received by staff.

No issues identified.

#### Berwick

All well and staff pleasant and obliging.

No issues identified.

#### Hexham

All areas clean and tidy

#### **Area for Improvement:**

No blankets or towels in store cupboard

Leak in Cell 4

#### Millbank

Suite clean and tidy and staff helpful

**Areas for Improvement:**

M14, 15 and 16 out of use due to flooding

No lighting in cells 9, 23 and 24.

**Southwick**

Suite clean and tidy.

Helpful staff

**Areas for improvement:**

Three cells out of use – 14, 18 and 21

**North Tyneside**

Staff friendly and helpful

**Areas for improvement:**

Cell 30 – camera broken

Cell 34 – mattress seam coming away

Cell 16 – CCTV out of use

Number of pillows are damaged

Number of damaged mattresses

**Forth Banks**

Staff friendly, professional and co-operative with both detainees and ICV's

Clean and tidy suite

**Areas for Improvement**

Cells 41 – 50 closed for repairs

Cell 13 fire alarm not working

Cell 20 CCTV broken

Assistant Chief Constable Jo Farrell has responsibility for Northumbria Police Custody. Her responses to the issues identified by Independent Custody Visitors can be found below:

### Alnwick

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

Food for detainees not available at present – Food and drink now present

### Hexham

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

No blankets or towels in store cupboard Blankets and towels replaced

Leak in Cell 4 – reported for repair

### Millbank

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

M14, 15 and 16 out of use due to flooding - Cells back in use water pressure to the cells has been altered, M14, 15 and 16

No lighting in cells 9, 23 and 24 - Electrical faults all repaired lighting in cells 9, 23 and 24 now working

### Southwick

#### **Areas for improvement**

Three cells out of use – 14, 18 and 21- All three cells have been repaired and are back in use – 14, 18 and 21

### North Tyneside

#### **Areas for improvement**

Cell 30 – camera broken – Fixed

Cell 34 – mattress seam coming away – as below

Cell 16 – CCTV out of use - Fixed

Number of pillows are damaged – New Pillows ordered

Damaged mattress - replaced

### Forth Banks

#### **Areas for improvement**

Cells 41 – 50 closed for repairs - This was for a period of 36 hours to repair plaster work. This is now complete and cells were reopened after the 36 hour period.

Cell 13 fire alarm not working - fixed.

Cell 20 CCTV broken - fixed.

### **Issues Raised following introduction of PCC ICV Questionnaire**

Following the 2014 HMIC Inspection into Northumbria Police Custody, a number of recommendations were made by HMIC to improve the custody process and service offered to detainees.

Northumbria Police have produced an action plan to address the issues raised with added checks by officers that these recommendations are being delivered. The Commissioner requested that ICV's be part of this process to make sure that an independent check that the force are delivering on these recommendations is made.

The OPCC produced a checklist of questions with each question relating to a specific recommendation in the report. Any issues raised and the response from Northumbria Police, can be found below:

**No areas of concern were highlighted by Independent Custody Visitors following completion of the questionnaire during the month of May.**