



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest

15 May 2012

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### **POLICE CUSTODY IN REDBRIDGE - DISAPPOINTING**

Police custody provision in Redbridge was disappointing and some aspects of its health care provision required urgent attention, said Nick Hardwick, Chief Inspector of Prisons, and Dru Sharpling, HM Inspector of Constabulary, publishing the report of an unannounced inspection.

The inspection was part of a national programme of joint inspections of police custody. It covered the custody suite in Ilford, operating 24 hours a day, and the standby custody suite at Barkingside which was used as an overspill facility and for specific operations conducted by Redbridge and other Metropolitan Police Service officers.

Inspectors were concerned to find that:

- some aspects of strategic oversight needed to be improved and further work was needed on quality assurance processes;
- there was a lack of meaningful monitoring of the use of force;
- interactions with detainees were mixed, some were poor and there was limited attention paid to diversity;
- the quality of handovers between shifts and pre-release risk assessments was poor;
- some basic hygiene needs were provided only when requested and not as a matter of course;

- detainees were not told how to make a complaint and the arrangements for taking complaints were poor;
- there were limited options to provide appropriate adults for juveniles and vulnerable adults if relatives or friends were not available;
- clinical governance arrangements for forensic medical examiners (FMEs) were inadequate; and
- substance misuse services, medicines management and the state of medical rooms were poor.

However, inspectors were pleased to find that:

- the facilities were well maintained and there were no ligature points, although there was some graffiti at Barkingside;
- there was good partnership working, with active engagement with relevant criminal justice and health partners;
- an appropriate balance was maintained between progressing cases and the rights of individuals and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) was adhered to; and
- legal advice was readily available.

Nick Hardwick and Dru Sharpling said:

“Overall, custody provision in Redbridge was disappointing. This report sets out a number of recommendations that we hope will assist the MPS and the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime to improve facilities. We expect an action plan to be provided in due course.”

ENDS

**Notes to Editors:**

1. A copy of the full report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 16 May 2012 at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/inspectorate-reports/hmi-prisons/police-cell>

2. HM Inspectorate of Prisons is an independent inspectorate, inspecting places of detention to report on conditions and treatment, and promote positive outcomes for those detained and the public.
3. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces and authorities to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects and regulates all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the British Transport Police and HMRC.
4. This joint inspection was carried out from 30 January- 2 February 2012.
5. The Metropolitan Police Authority was replaced by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPC) on 16 January 2012.
6. Please contact Jane Parsons (HMIP Press Office) on 020 7035 2123 or 07880 787452 or Ruth Allman (HMIC Press Office) on 020 3513 0600 if you would like more information or to request an interview.