

Inspection Report Published: A re-inspection of Napier Barracks March 2022

News story

This re-inspection reviewed the improvements the Home Office had made to the management and operation of Napier Barracks following the ICIBI/HMIP inspection of February 2021.



Publishing the report, David Neal said:

I welcome the publication of this report on the ICIBI's second inspection of Napier Barracks. This re-inspection examined the improvements to which the Home Office committed in its response to the report on the first inspection (with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons) of Napier Barracks and Penally Camp in February 2021.

The re-inspection found that the management and oversight of Napier have improved, with strong working relationships in place between the Home Office, the provider, and its subcontractors. The more positive atmosphere at the site reflects the work undertaken to improve the facilities and activities, and the introduction of a 90-day maximum duration of stay which gives residents more certainty over the time they will spend at Napier. There was also evidence of increased engagement with non-governmental organisations and community groups, all of which contribute to the positive mental and physical wellbeing of residents. This engagement is not expensive – it is largely a matter of coordination which harnesses the goodwill of the local community. The effect undoubtedly contributes to a better atmosphere in the camp and

introduces humanity and kindness into what can otherwise be a dispiriting waiting game.

I was disappointed that work had not been undertaken to improve the poor condition of the shared dormitories, with those accommodated there reporting a lack of privacy, unacceptable noise levels, and disruption to sleep. I am concerned that a timescale has not been set for the completion of any improvements despite Home Office plans to increase the number of residents accommodated on the site.

This inspection observed conditions at Napier Barracks that should have been in place over a year ago. The agility of the Home Office to respond to a dynamic situation, with staff with the appropriate level of skills and experience to ensure that contractors are delivering what they are paid to deliver, is key to the welfare of residents.

I am still looking for evidence that the Home Office has introduced a template for the standing up of future sites that incorporates the lessons learned from Napier. Considering the numbers of people involved and the amount of money being spent, there should be a 'playbook' that captures lessons learned and best practice from tactical experience on the ground and recommendations made to improve the service. The lack of Home Office engagement with the local community prior to the establishment of an accommodation centre at Linton-on-Ouse suggests that it still has some way to go.

I made 4 recommendations in this report. The Home Office has accepted 3 of them and partially accepted 1. I am pleased that work is already under way to implement them.

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