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Green Party calls for investigation following claims of child inmates kept in solitary confinement



Green Party

22 February 2017

The Green Party has demanded the Government investigate allegations of young offenders being held in solitary confinement in British prisons [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“It was already clear our prison system was reaching crisis point but these stories reveal a new level of callous disregard for the human rights of some of the youngest and most vulnerable offenders.

“Being kept in solitary confinement for even just short periods of time causes severe distress and has lasting impact. I fail to see how the Ministry of Justice can possibly think this treatment will result in positive outcomes. These young offenders need to be rehabilitated, not punished further using one of the most cruel and unhelpful methods possible. We urgently need an investigation into these allegations.”

Notes:

1. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-prisons-child-inmates-solitary-confinement-un-torture-rules-young-offenders-institutes-break-jail-a7591781.html>

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[Press release: New charity investigation: Capricorn Animal Rescue and Sanctuary](#)

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into [Capricorn Animal Rescue and Sanctuary \(inc Aston, Hawarden Animal Aid\), registered charity number 1048511](#). The inquiry was opened on 9 February 2017.

The charity takes animals into care that have no homes, are injured or neglected, and aims to rehouse the animals or release them back into the wild once they are fully recovered and treated.

After receiving a number of complaints from the public as well as significant media and parliamentary interest about the charity in 2016, the Commission initially provided regulatory advice and guidance to the trustees on how to improve the charity's governance.

The Commission monitored the charity's compliance with this guidance and visited the charity in October 2016 and subsequently inspected the charity's books and records. Our engagement established that there were clear and on-going serious regulatory issues relating to the administration of the charity by the trustees. These included inadequate financial controls, failure to safeguard and properly account for the charity's assets, potential unauthorised trustee benefit and the trustees' failure to act on regulatory advice.

The inquiry will examine:

- the administration, governance and management of the charity
- whether there has been any unauthorised benefit to the trustees of the charity
- whether the trustees have properly exercised their duties and responsibilities under charity law in the administration of the charity and in particular their duty to account for the charity's funds

In order to protect the assets of the charity, the Commission has taken steps to freeze the charity's bank accounts under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011.

The Commission is aware that the charity has been the subject of concerns from members of the public relating to the welfare of animals in the charity's care; this does not fall within the Commission's remit and concerns on this matter should be directed to the RSPCA. Their 24-hour cruelty and advice line can be reached at 0300 1234 999.

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. [Reports of previous inquiries](#) by the Commission are available on GOV.UK.

The charity's details can be viewed on the Commission's [online charity search tool](#).

Ends

PR 10/17

Notes to editors

1. [The Charity Commission](#) is the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work, see our [annual report](#).
2. Search for charities on our [online register](#).
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.
4. The Commission's decision to announce the opening of a statutory inquiry is based on whether it is in the public interest to do so and with consideration of our objective to increase public trust and confidence in charities.
5. An order was made on Monday 20 February under section 76(3)(d) of the Charities Act 2011 to freeze the account(s) of the charity.

[Ebbw Vale Enterprise Zone expands to include three new sites](#)

The new sites – Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate, Waun y Pound Industrial Estate and Victoria/Festival Park – are already home to a large employment

cluster with private and publicly owned developable land and ready to occupy units available.

They now join five other strategic sites within the Zone that include Bryn Serth, Rassau Industrial Estate, The Works, Tredegar Business Park and Rhyd-y-Blew which has the additional benefit of Enhanced Capital Allowances.

These five sites have 83.5 acres of privately and publicly owned developable land available as well as ready-to-let industrial units.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“Elevating the status of these sites to be included in the Enterprise Zone will help raise their profile, make them a more attractive proposition for potential investors while also offering prime strategic locations for starts ups and businesses looking to expand.

“Ebbw Vale is already home to a number of world-leading manufacturing companies, some of which are based on these sites that have the space and capability to accommodate a wide range of manufacturing companies whether they are looking for new development sites or units that are ready for immediate occupation.”

Key companies already located on these new sites range from PCI Pharma Services, a Welsh Government Anchor Company to Tenneco Walker.

[Press release: Ofsted launches new social care common inspection framework](#)

A range of children’s social care settings will be subject to the same [social care common inspection framework \(SCCIF\)](#) from 1 April 2017, Ofsted announced today.

Last year Ofsted published a [consultation on the principles for children’s social care inspections](#), with a new common inspection framework and proposals for a new approach to the inspection of local authority children’s services. The online consultation received more than 200 responses, the vast majority of which supported the proposals. Ofsted also piloted the SCCIF and held face-to-face meetings with many interested people and groups.

From 1 April, the following three principles will link all our inspections of

children's social care providers:

- to focus on the things that matter most to children's lives
- to be consistent in our expectations of providers
- to prioritise our work where improvement is needed most

At present there are several variations in the inspection guidance for social care providers across the range of settings, and differences in the criteria used by Ofsted to make judgements on each type of service.

The experiences and progress of children are central to the new SCCIF. The framework will support inspectors to focus on the difference the provider makes to the lives of children and other service users.

The SCCIF does not mean a one-size-fits-all approach to inspection. The framework is tailored to reflect and address each distinct type of children's social care provider. These are:

- children's homes, including secure children's homes
- independent fostering agencies
- voluntary adoption agencies
- residential family centres
- residential holiday schemes for disabled children
- boarding schools and residential special schools
- the residential provision of further education colleges

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman, said:

Ofsted and social care professionals have a shared goal: to give all children the best possible chance in life. The intention of our three principles is exactly this. I am pleased that sector leaders and providers responded so positively to our consultation on the framework, and we will continue to engage with them as we implement and evaluate it.

Eleanor Schooling, Ofsted National Director of Social Care, said:

The SCCIF is an important step forward in Ofsted setting out clearly and consistently what we think matters most to children's lives wherever they live or receive help.

For the first time, we are setting out the same expectations for all social care establishments and agencies while still recognising the unique work that they do. We think this not only makes it clearer and more consistent for providers but also sets out how our inspections will consistently focus on the difference providers are making to children's lives.

Ofsted also sets out its future plans for the inspection of local authority

children's services. These plans will be subject to piloting over the coming months, ready for implementation in January 2018. This will introduce proportionate inspections every three years, with a graded judgement, and focused visits between inspections to evaluate strengths and weaknesses and support local authorities to deliver good and better services.

The [social care common inspection framework and response to consultation document are available to download](#). There is further information in '[The social care common inspection framework: questions and answers](#)'.