



Nottinghamshire

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner's response to the publication of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) A criminal use of police cells? The use of police custody as a place of safety for people with mental health needs.

The report can be found [here](#)

As per my statutory responsibility to prepare comments on any of HMIC's published reports, Section 55(5) of the 1996 Police Act, I have read through this joint review, and welcome the call for changes to ensure fewer people with mental disorders are detained in police custody.

The national review clearly highlights a number of issues associated with those people who are detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 for their own safety, and the associated strain and pressure that this places on the police service both nationally and locally.

In the Police and Crime Plan for Nottinghamshire I have identified that I will work with our partner agencies to identify a more effective way to provide the best possible care and support to people who find themselves in difficulty due to mental health issues.

Police custody should only be used as a place of safety on an exceptional basis or in exceptional circumstances but it is clear that its use is much more of a regular occurrence. I support the recommendations put forward by HMIC which will potentially go a long way to reducing the inappropriate use of police custody for those experiencing mental health issues in public and requiring specialist assessments and care. In Nottinghamshire we have been trialling a 'triage' approach working with specialist nurses, which has been extremely successful. Working in partnership with our Health specialists are key to ensuring we provide the appropriate care and support those individuals with mental health needs.

I am particularly pleased to see the recommendation highlighting the key role that the local Health and Wellbeing Boards should play in including Section 136 provision as part of their Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and establishing processes to oversee and quality assure the use of Section 136 locally. I have been working with our Community Safety Partners to include the Needs Assessment into my Joint Partnership Strategic Assessment for the Police and Crime Plan.

I have identified the importance to tackle the significant impact on policing and community safety in dealing with people with mental health and drug and alcohol issues. I will be working with the Chief Constable and our partners to ensure that we work closely and effectively to address the key issues raised in this review.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paddy Tipping'.

Paddy Tipping
Police and Crime Commissioner