

Call for Evidence

**Operation Deerness, Medomsley Detention
Centre special investigation**

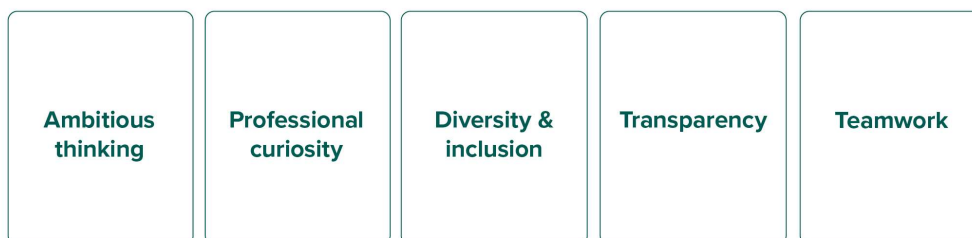
OUR VISION

To deliver high quality and timely independent investigations and work closely with partners to achieve tangible benefits for the safety and confidence of those in custody and under community supervision.

WHAT WE DO



WHAT WE VALUE



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Summary

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) is carrying out a special investigation into abuse that took place at Medomsley Detention Centre (Medomsley) between 1961 and 1987. We need to hear from organisations, authorities and departments who may hold information in relation to this abuse and the impact of this abuse on survivors.

We have therefore launched a call for evidence which will run until **9 September 2024**.

About the investigation

In October 2023, the previous government commissioned the PPO to carry out an independent investigation into what the authorities knew about the abuse at Medomsley, whether there were opportunities for the authorities to have taken action or intervened at that time, and what actions (if any) were taken by the authorities in such instances.

This is not a criminal re-investigation. The PPO is not commissioned to re-investigate the facts of the abuse at Medomsley, nor to re-investigate individual incidents. Any evidence of wrongdoing will be referred to the appropriate authority.

Call for Evidence

Issued 15 July 2024

The PPO has formally launched a call for evidence requesting information held by specific authorities regarding their interactions with staff and inmates from Medomsley between 1961 and 1987.

Medomsley was a detention facility that held boys and young men aged 17-21. Former inmates have since reported being subjected to abuse while detained at Medomsley. There have been three police investigations since the 1990s which have led to seven former members of staff being convicted of physical and sexual assault, as well as misconduct in a public office.

The following authorities and organisations may hold relevant information that can contribute to the investigation:

- Private prisons
- HM Prison and Probation Services
- Healthcare
- Educational establishments such as schools
- Social services
- Police (*though we have been given access to Durham police's material, other police forces nationally may hold information relating to victims and/or perpetrators*)
- Local and central Government
- Charities such as NSPCC, Barnardo's, Samaritans
- Churches and other places of religion and worship
- Inspectorates

Scope of the information required

The PPO would like to obtain copies of any original documentation relating to:

- 1) Details of any contact (whether formal or informal) between members of your organisation and inmates or staff at Medomsley between 1961 and 1987 (hereafter referred to as “the relevant period”)
- 2) Details of any attendances at Medomsley by members of your organisation during the relevant period and the purpose of those attendances
- 3) Details of any former inmates of Medomsley, who may have disclosed abuse to your organisation, including details of the abuse disclosed and of the person receiving the disclosure
- 4) Details of any processes (formal/informal) which were in place for members of your organisation to raise or report concerns regarding the treatment of inmates by staff at Medomsley during the relevant period
- 5) Any information held by your organisation in relation to any of the following persons:
 - i. Neville Husband
 - ii. Leslie Johnston (also known as Johnson)
 - iii. Christopher Onslow
 - iv. Brian Johnson Greenwell
 - v. John McGee
 - vi. Kevin Blakely
 - vii. Alan Richard Bramley
 - viii. Anyone identified by your organisation with links to the above-named individuals

If you are unable to provide us with any information on any of the above points, please provide us with an explanation as to why information is unavailable so that we can accurately reflect this in our report.

Our Terms of Reference states that the PPO has unfettered access to all relevant material, held both in hard copy and electronically, that is required for the purpose of the investigation, so we are appealing for anyone within the list above to contact us.

How to provide evidence

Information should be submitted with the subject line 'Call for Evidence' to:
ppomedomsleyinvestigation@ppo.gov.uk

The investigation team will be reaching out directly to relevant authorities with a supporting letter and a private survey link. If you have not received this and believe you should have, please contact ppomedomsleyinvestigation@ppo.gov.uk

Why should I or my organisation provide information?

Ombudsman Adrian Usher said: “Your engagement is key to building the thoroughness and effectiveness of our investigation to ensure it does not happen again.”

Richard Tucker, Senior Investigator leading the investigation stated it is crucial that anyone with relevant information contacts our investigation team.

“This is a crucial opportunity to share important information which will inform our learning and give victims and survivors justice.”

What if I have information, but am not part of the list above?

Anyone, such as survivors, witnesses or staff that worked at Medomsley with any other information are encouraged to come forward to a safe space. Our investigation team has already reviewed almost 2500 victim and witness statements, and we have spoken with over 30 survivors and witnesses already.

Please contact ppomedomsleyinvestigation@ppo.gov.uk if you would like to reach out to us. You can also contact us anonymously via this link where you can find links to support too.

We are grateful for your assistance and engagement.

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman

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