

Operation Deerness - special investigation Newsletter

Issue 1 - May 2024



Welcome to issue 1 of the
Operation Deerness
newsletter.

We are sending this update because you made the time and effort to contact the Operation Deerness team regarding the special investigation into Medomsley Detention Centre.

If you do not wish to receive further communications please let us know and we will remove you from the contact list.

Firstly, we would like to thank everyone who has shown an interest in our investigation. We have been massively impacted by the courage of those who have got in touch with us. The personal testimonies of those who survived the Medomsley regime have been extremely moving, and we appreciate how difficult it must have been to revisit those memories. We know that some of you were talking about your experiences for the first time so we are very grateful.

On 28 February 2024 we held a press conference in Newcastle to announce that Operation Deerness had begun. Ombudsman Adrian Usher and Senior Investigator Richard Tucker encouraged anyone with information on the large-scale abuse that had happened at Medomsley Detention Centre to come forward. In response, around 40 people contacted us.

We subsequently undertook a programme of interviews in and around Newcastle in March and we spoke to over 20 survivors and witnesses.

We have now undertaken a review of 1800 documents and statements previously collected by Durham Police. We have identified areas of interest within these documents that we will pursue in the next phase of the investigation. The team are returning to the north east to conduct more interviews in the coming weeks and to complete further reviews of locally-held material.

We are continuing to publicise the investigation. Richard has been participating in local radio interviews that you may have heard. Members of Parliament in the region have also been contacted to share our details, and we are continuing to find other ways of letting people know that we are still seeking input and information.

So once again, we really appreciate your help. We know that while it is difficult topic for you, many of you remain keen to have your voices heard and to provide the information you have to allow us to build up the picture we want to reveal. Thank you.

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