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Man Dies in Custody Following Arrest at Wigan Hotel

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A 26-year-old man died in hospital days after being taken into police custody in Wigan, Greater Manchester. Ellis Rocks was arrested outside the Britannia Hotel on 31 July 2025 and was later found unresponsive in his cell. An independent investigation is now under way.

Ellis Rocks was taken into custody by officers from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) at approximately 8:35pm on 31 July. The arrest, which took place on Almond Brook Road, Standish, was reportedly made in connection with a suspected drug offence and an

outstanding warrant related to an assault case in London. Following his arrest, he was transported to a local custody suite where he remained overnight.

In the early hours of the following morning, 1 August, detention officers discovered Mr Rocks lying unconscious on the floor of his cell at around 2:30 am. Emergency services were immediately called, and he was transported to hospital. He experienced cardiac arrest en route. Despite medical efforts, he was pronounced dead at 7:20 am on 3 August 2025.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC), which oversees complaints and investigations involving police forces in England and Wales, has launched a full investigation. The IOPC confirmed it was first notified by GMP shortly after the incident and began an assessment before initiating a formal inquiry on 3 August at 10:18 am.

A spokesperson for the IOPC stated that investigators are currently reviewing available Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) footage from the custody suite, along with body-worn camera footage from attending officers. Preliminary statements have also been collected from those involved. The IOPC confirmed that Mr Rocks's family has been contacted, and regular updates will be provided to them throughout the investigation.

In a social media post, believed to be from Mr Rocks's mother, the family expressed their grief and called for answers. The message read, "My beautiful boy Ellis has sadly passed away. Nothing can fix this pain, and it's something that could have been avoided." The family also confirmed that they have appointed an independent investigator to examine the circumstances surrounding Mr Rocks's death.

Local media outlet *Wigan Today* reported that two officers involved in the case have been "served notices," a standard procedural step when the conduct of police personnel is under scrutiny. However, the IOPC clarified that the issuance of such notices does not imply guilt but indicates that the officers' actions are being reviewed as part of the investigation.

The investigation is still in its early stages, and Greater Manchester Police have made no further public statements. The IOPC has emphasised its commitment to conducting a thorough and independent inquiry, free from interference or external influence.

Deaths in police custody remain a serious and sensitive issue. Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), strict guidelines govern the treatment of individuals in custody, including health checks and welfare protocols. The outcome of the IOPC's

investigation will determine whether those procedures were followed appropriately in this instance.

Further updates will be issued once the IOPC completes its review of evidence and witness accounts. Until then, Mr Rocks's family and the public await answers regarding the events that led to his untimely death.