



Independent Custody Visitors

July 2025

Below are some of the highlights, issues and other newsworthy information raised during visits or by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner during **July 2025**.

Sunderland – Southwick

Two visits were made to Southwick Custody Suite, the suite was found to be clean and tidy. Staff were also friendly and helpful.

ICVs positively noted that detainees where appropriate had been offered washing facilities and time in exercise yard.

ICVs noted that detainees had been offered contact with support organisations and requests for female hygiene products were actioned.

Areas for improvement:

- Out of date tea and coffee disposed of.

Force Response:

Thank you and great to hear of the two positive visits.

Will ask staff to ensure rotation of stock to minimize out of date wastage.

Forth Banks – Newcastle

Three visits were undertaken, the overall cleanliness of the suite and exercise areas was good, and all staff were polite and helpful.

All detainee food checked and in good order.

ICVs positively noted that detainees had been provided with newspapers/books and some had requested distraction items during the visit.

ICVs positively noted that detainee religious items had been stored with courtesy and respect.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- Cell 47 lock broken
- Exercise yard in need of cleaning.
- Staff highlighted that they were understaffed (Visit on 24th July 2025, 5:30pm)

Force Response:

- Cell 47 lock was repaired and was returned to service
- Noted and will ask for it to be reviewed if still requires further cleaning.
- July and August are peak holiday periods and the force work hard to maintain staffing levels, Custody supervision has the necessary tools to resolve demand issues, and the custody estate is set up operates to cover the cell requirements for the force if anyone suite is under demand pressures.

Middle Engine Lane – North Tyneside

Three visits were undertaken, the overall cleanliness of the suite and exercise areas was good, and all staff were polite and helpful.

Food and stocks checked and all in good order.

ICVs positively noted that detainees requested distraction items which were available.

ICVs positively noted that a wheelchair was on site.

ICVs highlighted that where appropriate female hygiene packs had been offered.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- No areas of concern identified.

Force Response: Thank you for the positive visits. Will feed back to the staff to praise their efforts

Bedlington - Northumberland

One visit was undertaken, the overall cleanliness of the suite and exercise areas was good, and all staff were polite and helpful.

Stocks checked and good supply.

Wheelchair on site

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- **Detainee drinks taken out of sleeves therefore use by dates could not be checked by ICV's.**

Force Response:

- **Issue noted and will remind staff to ensure we always able to identify the expiry date of products used in the suites, not just Bedlington.**