



Independent Custody Visitors

December 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 **December 2025**.

Sunderland – Southwick

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

Food stocks and kitchen checked.

ICVs positively noted that a wheelchair was on site.

Areas for improvement:

- **Detainee lockers open**
- **Out of date drinks removed**
- **Report of short staffing (03.12.25 – 5pm)**

Force Response:

We have acted and removed the out of date consumables and have conducted a further stock rotation. The minor maintenance issues raised (door locks and exterior lighting) are part of a rolling repair program or have now been fixed

Staff raised resourcing pressures however our suites were operating within our agreed levels and team supervisors have been asked to have discussions with staff direct at the suite highlighted to ensure all pressures are ID and support given

Forth Banks – Newcastle

Two visits were undertaken, the overall cleanliness of the suite 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 washing facilities and time in exercise yard.

Wheelchair available in suite.

Detainees confirmed that they had been provided with distraction items.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- **Several cells out of use for lock repairs**

Force Response:

The minor maintenance issues raised (door locks and exterior lighting) are part of a rolling repair program or have now been fixed

Middle Engine Lane – North Tyneside

Two 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.

Good clothing stocks.

Exercise yard checked and in order.

Wheelchair in suite.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

No issues identified during visits.

Bedlington - Northumberland

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

Food and stocks checked all in good order.

Clothing stocks checked.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- **Lights in the entrance to suite were not working**

Force Response:

The minor maintenance issues raised (door locks and exterior lighting) are part of a rolling repair program or have now been fixed