



Independent Custody Visitors

February 2026

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 **February 2026**.

Sunderland – Southwick

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

Food stocks and kitchen checked.

Areas for improvement:

No issues raised

Forth Banks – Newcastle

One visit was 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 inhalers for detainees were onsite

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- Following the introduction of the new force IT System, staff were experiencing issues resulting an increase in delays of booking detainees in.

Force Response:

It is recognised that there were some initial delays whilst staff became familiar with the new system. Additional support has been in place to support staff and delays have decreased.

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.

Exercise yard checked and in order.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- **ICVs reported cells being cold, multiple blankets (4) being issued to detainees in some cases.**
- **6 Instant Oats pots out of date and disposed of.**

Force Response:

The cells are checked on a daily basis and any issues escalated. Any technical issues are escalated appropriately.

A reminder has been sent to all Custody colleagues regarding food dates.