



Independent Custody Visitors

June 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 **June 2026**.

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.

Food stocks and kitchen checked.

Wheelchair on site.

Hygiene packs checked and all in order.

Areas for improvement:

- Cell 23 broken lock
- Cell 21 broken toilet
- Debris on roof of exercise yard
- 25th June 2026 Visit - Kitchen checked and 14 sleeves black leaf tea out of date from May 2026.

Force Response:

The issue with the broken lock for Cell 23 was reported in May and it has taken some time for this to be repaired but the cell is now fully functional. The broken toilet within cell 21 was picked up in the daily checks and has now been repaired.

There is an issue with birds at Southwick and the exercise yard is checked regularly and debris reported for removal.

It is disappointing when out of date food is found. This has been removed and all colleagues advised of the need to ensure stock is rotated in accordance with dates.

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 detainees had been offered distraction items.

Two wheelchairs onsite.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- Cell 7 broken sink
- Cell 47 camera out of order
- Yard 1 chipped and peeling paint
- Lids not used to cover detainee drinks in kitchen.
- Detainee lockers unlocked

Force Response:

The issues with Cell 7 and Cell 47 were reported in May and it has taken some time to get these repaired. Cell 7 is now fully operational. Whilst the camera in cell 47 has been fixed, there is another maintenance issue identified which has been referred for repair. The exercise yard has also been repaired.

All colleagues have been reminded that the top maxpacks for detainee drinks must have a lid on it to prevent items falling into the cups.

Middle Engine Lane – North Tyneside

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

Food and stocks checked and all in good order.

Wheelchair on site.

Areas for Improvement or points raised:

- Cell 11 damaged hatch
- Cell 19 chipped glass in door
- Exercise yard 3 needs cleaning
- No Xlarge jumpers low stock of medium joggers and tops
- No menopause packs in suite.
- 23.06.26 (5:13pm) suite checked but no detainees visited due to staff shortages.

Force Response:

All cells are checked on a daily basis and any maintenance issues are referred for repair. Both cells 11 and 19 are repaired and the exercise yard has been cleaned. Where stock levels are low, orders are placed and in cases where stock runs out, other suites are approached for until stock arrives, An order was placed for all sizes of the detainee clothing and menopause packs. A communication has been issued to remind colleagues to approach other suites for stock.

With respect to 23 June 2026 there were limited colleagues available due to detainee safety and colleague breaks. This is a rare occurrence but the detainee safety must come first.