

Bedfordshire Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

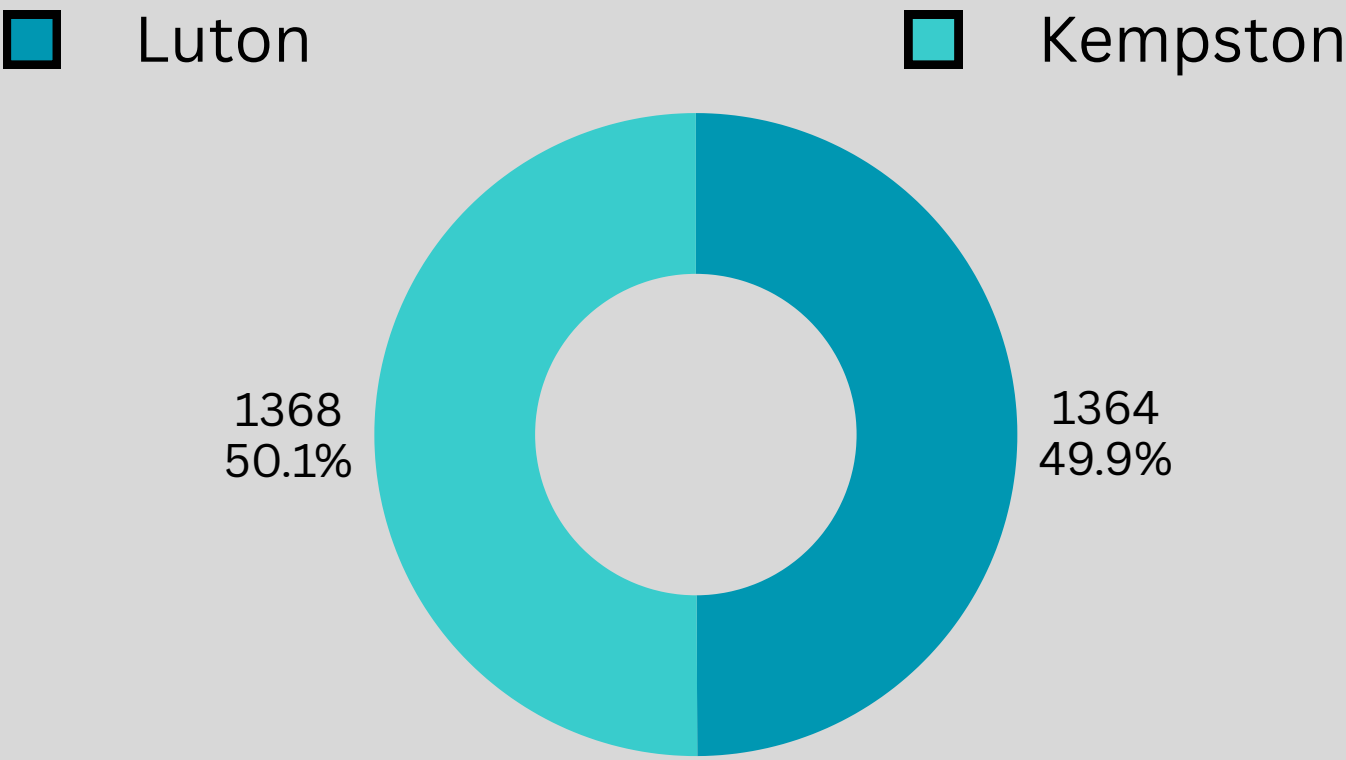
June 2026
Quarterly Bulletin



Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner



This Quarters Custody Data

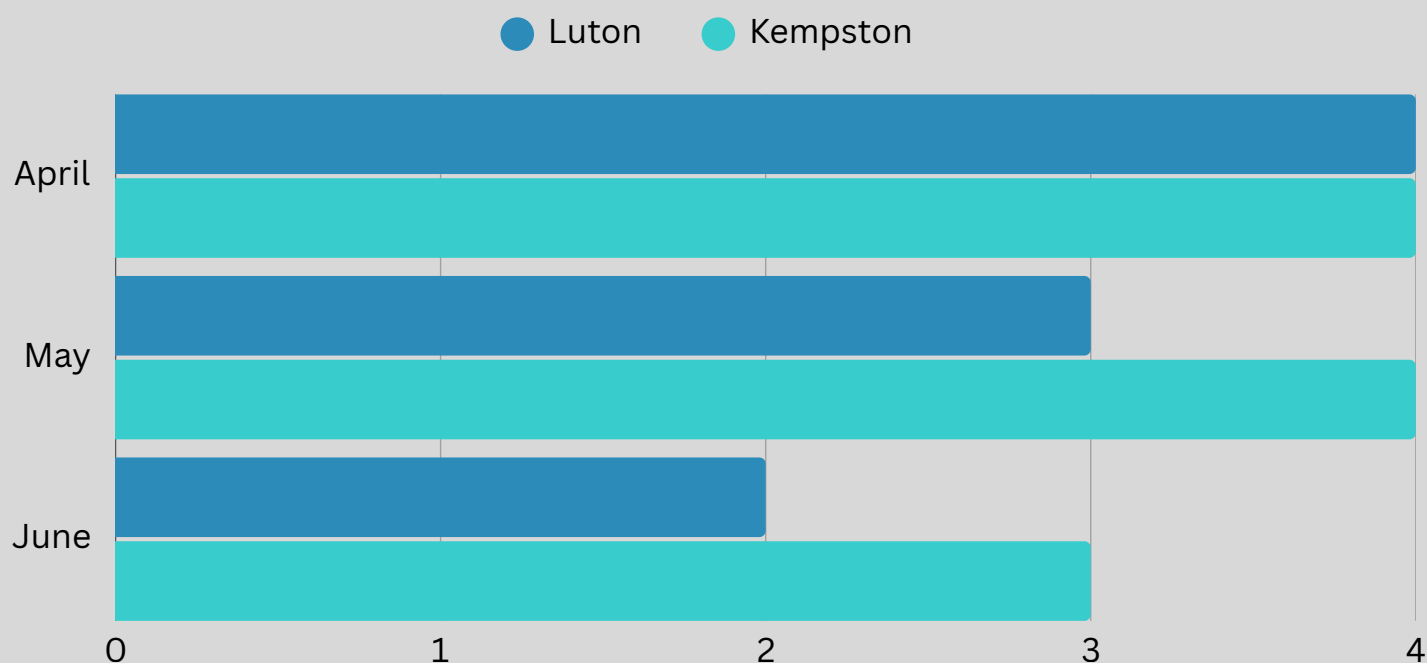


The chart above illustrates the total number of detainees held at Luton and Kempston custody suites during April, May and June 2026. Across this three-month period, Bedfordshire Police Custody recorded 2732 detainees in total. A breakdown by month is provided below.

Month	Luton	Kempston	Total
April	478	473	951
May	500	414	914
June	386	481	867

20

ICV visits to Bedfordshire Police Custody Suites



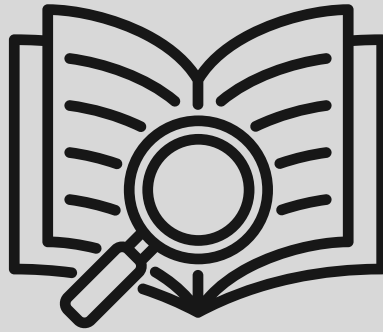
Total number of
detainees in
custody at time of
ICV visits:

159

Total detainees
spoken to and/or
observed by ICVs:

113

Feedback from visits



Heatwave Custody Suite Closures

Throughout the heatwave, in the Luton suite, temperatures reached 29 degrees in the cells. Custody made a decision to temporarily close the suite until temperatures drop to ensure detainee safety. All detainees were taken to Kempston suite and the suite was closed for around 1 week. Luton are now fitting new and upgraded air con however it'll mean that the suite is out of action again.

HCP Room

A HCP explained to the ICVs that sun beams through one of the windows and makes the room incredibly hot and unbearable, this was raised to the Inspector and subsequently a blind has been ordered by estates and fitted to make the room more comfortable (especially in current heatwaves) for both the detainees and the staff.

Need for more alternative language reading material, specifically Eastern European

A request has been sent out to the ICVs as well as an intranet post circulated to staff, specifically requesting for Eastern European reading material.

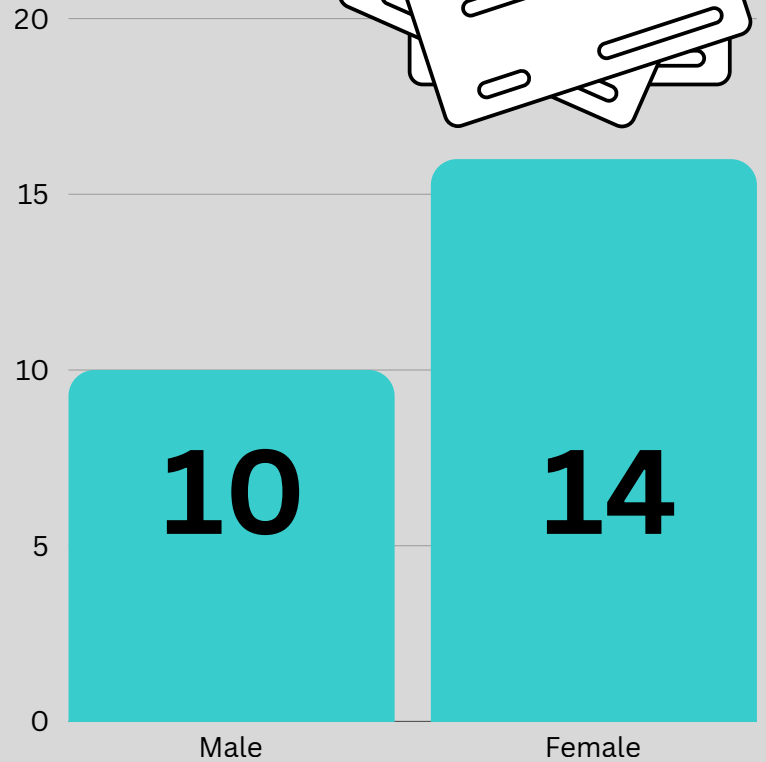
Cell temperature was good, considering heat, custody switched off heating two days before, to avoid overheating cells

Positive feedback was shared with Custody Teams. In line with the feedback above, custody operations were managed effectively throughout the periods of extreme heat, with suites being closed where necessary to maintain safety and welfare standards.

Recruitment



24
volunteers



For 2026, increasing volunteer recruitment for the ICV scheme remains a key priority. Since the last bulletin, we are pleased to welcome five new ICVs and have successfully expanded our cohort of younger volunteers. We aim to continue this momentum throughout the year as we work towards our target of 30 volunteers.

Shadowing Custody Shifts



ICVs have been offered the opportunity to shadow a custody shift, either during the day or at night. This valuable experience provides greater insight into custody processes from the staff perspective, helping ICVs to further develop their understanding of the custody environment and the procedures they observe in their voluntary role. It also offers an excellent opportunity to ask questions and gain a deeper appreciation of day-to-day custody operations.

The Custody Shadowing Scheme has received extremely positive feedback from participating ICVs, with some comments shared below.

If you are an ICV and would like to take part in a custody shadowing shift, please contact the Scheme Manager, who will be happy to arrange this for you.

“It was an eye opening and beneficial experience that has left me with the knowledge that I otherwise would not have when carrying out ICV visits”

“Their willingness to engage and help increase my awareness and understanding of custody procedures and processes was greatly appreciated”

Dates for the Diary

ICV Panel Meetings 2026

- Tuesday 15th September
- Monday 14th December



Training



At the June Panel Meeting, Op NOVA, which provides practical and emotional support to UK Armed Forces veterans who are in contact with or at risk of entering the justice system in England, presented to the ICVs to explain about the service they provide.

In addition, the first Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) online e-learning module has been shared with all volunteers, focusing on religion in custody. All ICVs are encouraged to complete this to ensure we remain up to date with evolving practice and guidance.



CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

SCAN ME



Bedfordshire Independent Custody Visiting Scheme



Can you spare some time for your local community?

WHO ARE WE?

- We are members of the local community who visit police custody suites unannounced to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are being held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed.

WHO CAN BE A VISITOR?

- Subject to certain exceptions anyone can apply to be an ICV. Visitors must be more than 18 years old, have been a resident in the UK for at least three years prior to the date of application and currently reside, work or study in Bedfordshire.



Interested in joining us or would you like to find out more information?

Contact us:
PCC@beds.police.uk



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