



Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner




Bedfordshire Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

March 2026
Quarterly Bulletin



This Quarters Custody Data

 Luton

 Kempston

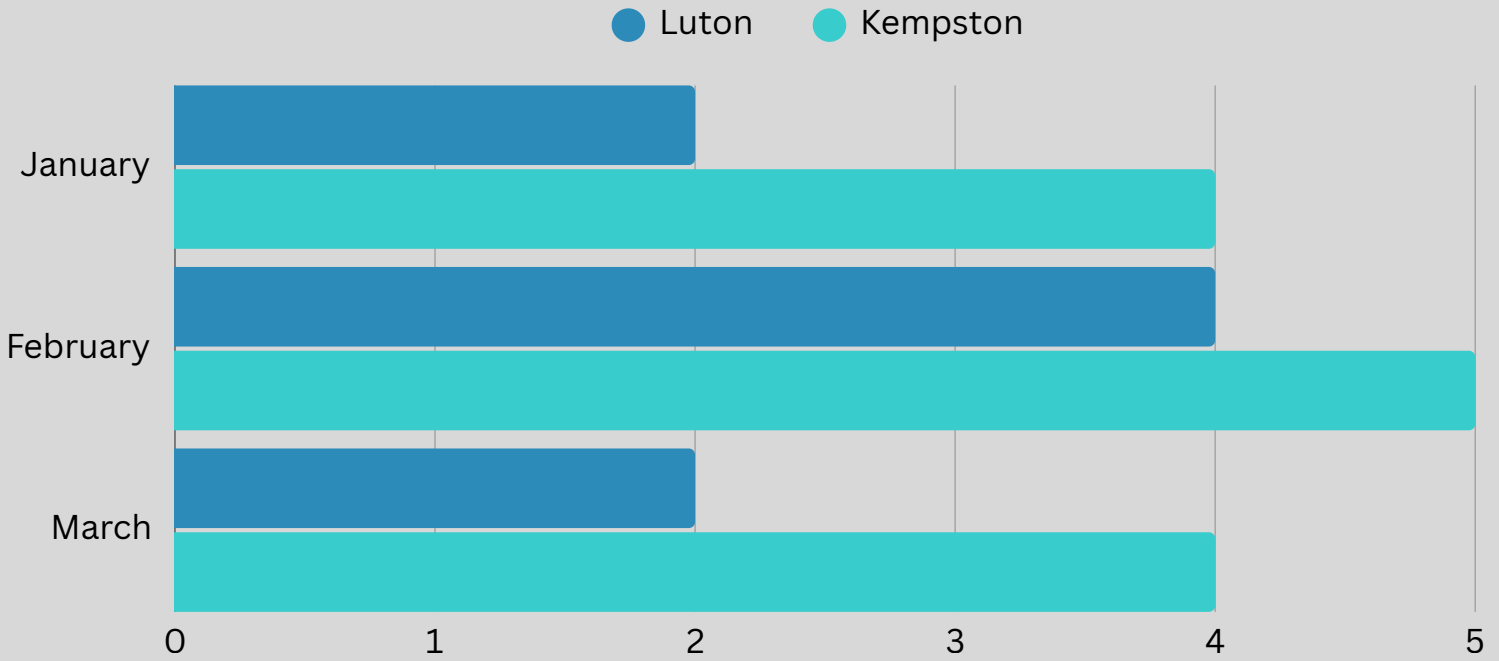


The chart above illustrates the total number of detainees held at Luton and Kempston custody suites during January, February and March 2026. Across this three-month period, Bedfordshire Police Custody recorded 2456 detainees in total. A breakdown by month is provided below.

Month	Luton	Kempston	Total
January	461	352	813
February	425	352	777
March	459	407	866

21

ICV visits to Bedfordshire Police Custody Suites



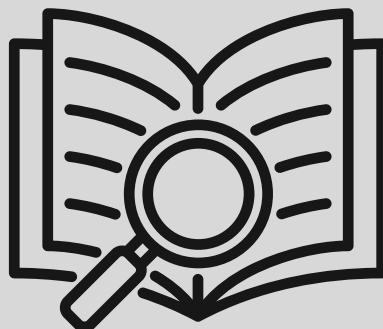
Total number of
detainees in
custody at time of
ICV visits:

148

Total detainees
spoken to and/or
observed by ICVs:

105

Feedback from visits



ICVs reported that custody was very busy on several visits over the quarter

Feedback indicates that custody suites have experienced increased demand over the last quarter, with custody officers reporting reduced staffing levels. It is acknowledged that the teams are currently operating with fewer staff than usual. The Office has been reassured that recruitment processes are underway to address these pressures.

Escorting officer very helpful and patient. Lots of clothes and blankets stock available. Detainees seemed well looked after and confirmed that they have been treated well.

ICVs consistently commend custody staff for their kindness, helpfulness, and patience during visits, and greatly appreciate that custody teams recognise and support the importance of the scheme.

Tomato soup out of date found in kitchen - now in bin

ICVs alerted custody to this finding. Stock takes are completed by custody routinely however ICVs also check stock levels and dates of food on each visit.

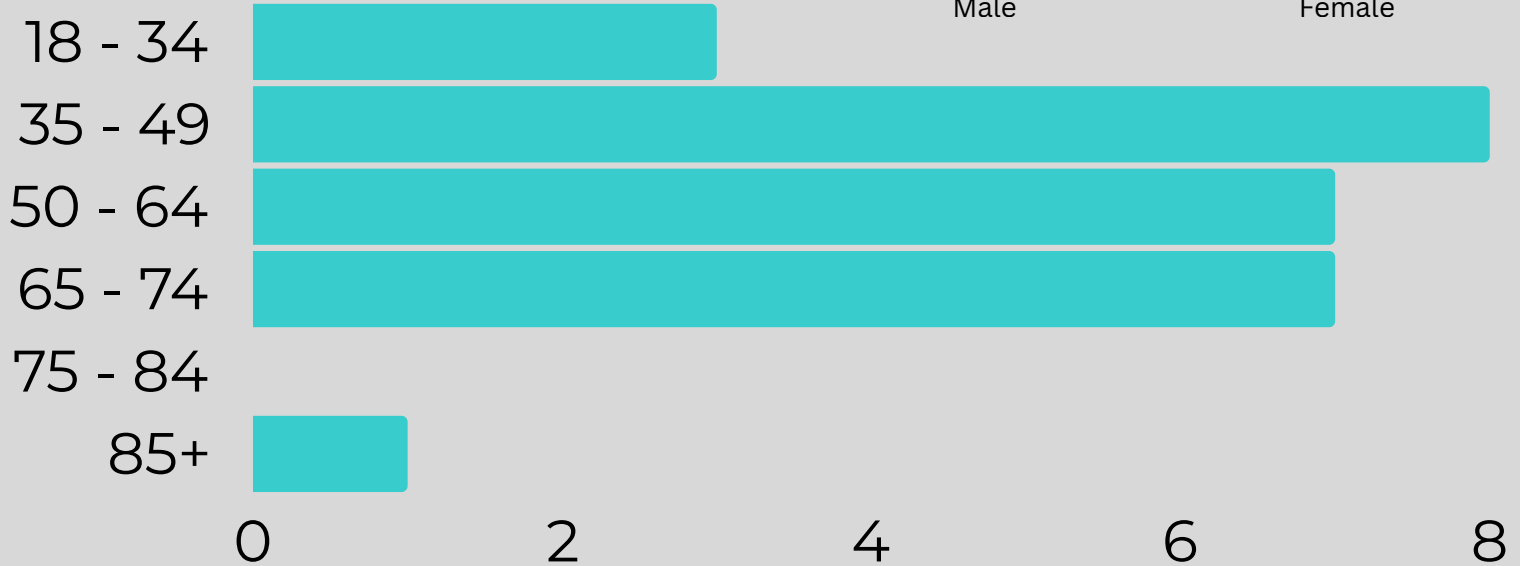
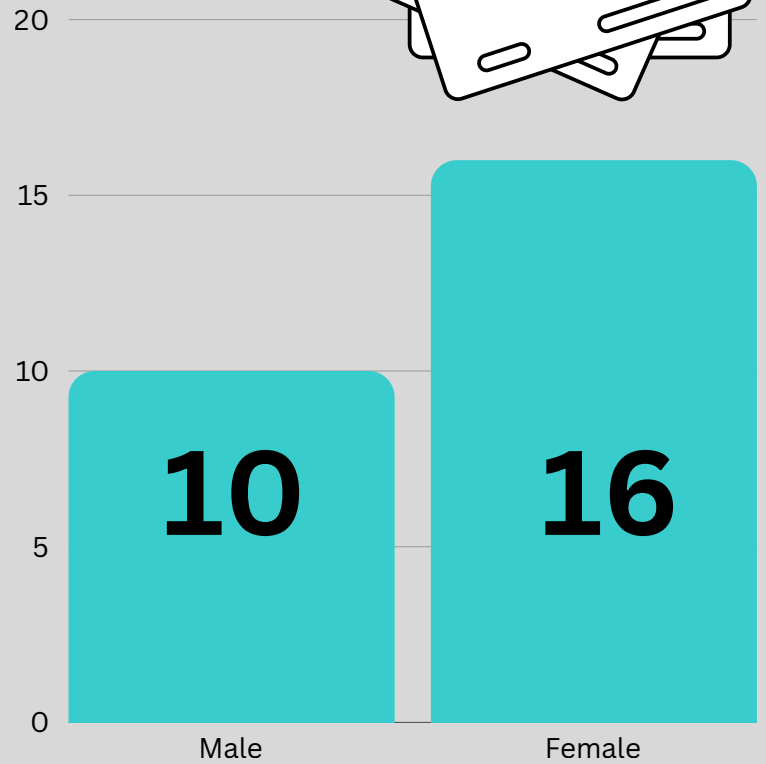
HMIC Inspection

Custody worked with the office and ICVs to proactively arrange unannounced additional ICV visits ahead of the custody HMIC inspection, to gather timely feedback and strengthen assurance. We also provided ICVs with supplementary, inspection focused questions aligned to areas that HMIC were likely to review.

Recruitment



26
volunteers

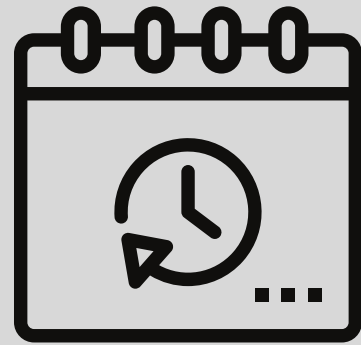


For 2026, increasing volunteer recruitment for the ICV scheme remains a key priority. Since the last bulletin, we are pleased to welcome five new ICVs and have successfully expanded our cohort of younger volunteers. We aim to continue this momentum throughout the year as we work towards our target of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

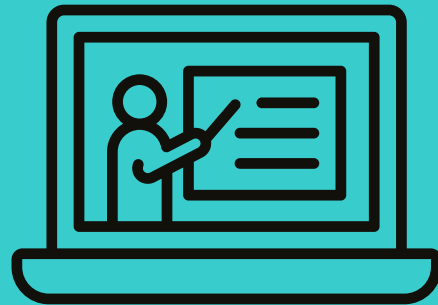
Dates for the Diary

ICV Panel Meetings 2026

- Wednesday 24th June
- Tuesday 15th September
- Monday 14th December



Training



At the March Panel Meeting, the Samaritans delivered a presentation to ICVs on the vital work they undertake visiting police custody suites and supporting detainees. They also provided a broader overview of their services.

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



Bedfordshire
Police & Crime
Commissioner

