

# OpenVoiceNews U.K.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

## Cannabis Farm Worth £96k Found in North Shields Police Raid

July 23, 2025

— Categories: Crime



A cannabis operation valued at up to £96,000 was uncovered after police raided a home in North Shields and discovered hundreds of plants being cultivated by a Vietnamese national living in illegal and degrading conditions.

Vu Nguyen, 33, was found inside the property on Wallsend Road, where he had been maintaining approximately 400 cannabis plants. Newcastle Crown Court was told that Nguyen had entered the United Kingdom illegally, arriving “on the back of a lorry” five years

ago. He had been living in the home without identification, support, or understanding of his location.

## Squalid Setup

Officers executed the raid in March, forcing entry into the property and discovering cannabis plants growing in three ground-floor rooms and the loft. The entire house had been converted into a drug operation, with lights, ventilation systems, and other cultivation equipment packed into every available space. Police estimated the potential yield between 10.2 kilograms and 32.4 kilograms, with a street value ranging from £21,000 to £96,000.

Nguyen was found inside, sleeping on a mattress in the kitchen, surrounded by the drug operation. Prosecutor Nicoletta Alistari explained, “He said he had entered the UK five years ago on the back of a lorry. He said he was looking after the plants and was given food in return. He said he was frightened to leave as he didn’t know where he was. He had no documents or belongings.”

Neighbours confirmed seeing Nguyen at the address for around a year but noted he never left. “He didn’t leave the address and would get food parcels delivered in by taxi drivers every two months or so,” Ms Alistari added.

Nguyen admitted to producing cannabis and was sentenced to eight months in prison. Judge Robert Adams described the conditions inside the property as “miserable.” They said it was likely Nguyen would be deported following his sentence, though that would be a decision for the Home Office.

Nguyen’s solicitor, Shaun Routledge, pointed out the poor living standards his client endured. “He was living in squalid conditions in the kitchen, with the rest of the house absolutely rammed with someone else’s cannabis,” he said. The court also heard that Nguyen had a wife and child in Vietnam and was eager to return.

The case sheds light on the increasing use of vulnerable individuals, often undocumented migrants, by criminal gangs running illegal cannabis farms across the U.K. While no evidence was presented that Nguyen had been trafficked or coerced, his account mirrors patterns seen in other exploitation cases, where people are promised jobs but end up trapped in the drug trade.

Nguyen remains in custody, and further investigations into who organised the cannabis operation are ongoing. No additional arrests have yet been made.