

**ORIGINATOR: INDEPENDENT CUSTODY
VISITING SCHEME ADMINISTRATOR**

DECISION NUMBER: 24 - 2022

REASON FOR SUBMISSION: FOR DECISION

SUBMITTED TO: POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

**SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME – ANNUAL REPORT
2021/22**

SUMMARY:

1. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is required to operate an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme to ensure independent checks are made on the welfare of detainees in police custody and produce an Annual Report on the work of the scheme in line with the Home Office Code of Practice Guidelines.

2. This report summarises the work undertaken by the OPCC for Suffolk to support the operation of the Scheme in Suffolk between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 and attaches the Annual Report at Appendix A which will be published following consideration and approval by the PCC.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the PCC:

- (i) considers the activity and findings of Independent Custody Visitors during 2021/22 as detailed in the report;
- (ii) approves the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Annual Report Summary attached at Appendix A for publication.

DETAIL OF THE SUBMISSION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is required to operate an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme to ensure independent checks are made on the welfare of detainees in police custody and produce an Annual Report on the work of the scheme in line with the Home Office Code of Practice Guidelines. This report summarises the work undertaken by the OPCC for Suffolk to support the operation of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Suffolk between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. It also attaches the Annual Report at Appendix A which will be published following consideration and approval by the PCC and Chief Constable.
- 1.2 Throughout the year the OPCC Scheme Administrator has worked closely with custody colleagues locally, regionally across OPCCs and nationally with the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) to keep abreast of developments to support Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) in the safe delivery of their role.

2 PANEL MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Suffolk comprises two designated Panels to ensure that visits are undertaken at the Constabulary's operational custody facilities at Bury St Edmunds and Martlesham.
- 2.2 The total number of ICVs in Suffolk as at 31 March 2022 was 13. A break-down of the constitution of the Panels is outlined below:

Panel	No. of ICVs in post	Optimum no of ICVs
Bury St Edmunds	7	8-10
Martlesham	6	8-10

- 2.3 A recruitment campaign was launched in September 2021 which received good press coverage, including a local press article which featured an interview with three existing volunteers. There was a very good level of interest in the role with over 50 information packs sent out. This resulted in 25 applications being submitted. All applicants were interviewed online via Teams in early November 2021 and 11 applications were progressed to the next stage. As at 31 May 2022 six new appointments had been made, initial training completed and shadowing visits taking place. Further applications for Martlesham will be progressed in due course. To update on the above table, as at 30 June 2022 panel membership stood at 10 for Bury St Edmunds and 7 for Martlesham.
- 2.4 During the period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 there was one resignation from the Martlesham Panel and three resignations from the Bury St Edmunds Panel, all for personal reasons.

3 IMPACT OF COVID 19

- 3.1 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the monitoring arrangements have varied throughout this past year with a mixture of physical and telephone visits. Between 23 December 2020 and 11 April 2021 physical visiting was suspended and weekly calls were made to the Police Investigation Centres (PICs) to check on operational issues and detainees held. From 12 April 2021, as the national and local lockdown measures eased, ICVs returned to physical visiting.

4.3 Timing of visits and calls below.

0700 - 1000	20
1000 - 1300	22
1300 - 1600	15
1600 - 1900	22
1900 - 2200	21
2200 - 0700	2

- 4.4 When ICVs undertake visits during 'night-time' hours they often find that the detainees are sleeping and therefore there is less opportunity to speak with them. ICVs are encouraged to vary the times and days of their visits as much as possible.
- 4.5 For each of the visits or calls carried out throughout the year a report was provided to the OPCC detailing what the ICVs had observed or discussed with detainees and/or custody staff at the time of the visit or call. This provided a useful insight into the position in custody, Covid safety arrangements and detainee care. Whether attending in person, or making calls in to the facilities, ICVs were well assisted by custody staff and able to check on the rights and entitlements of detainees.
- 4.6 Regular ICVs panel meetings were held throughout the year by virtual means. These allowed ICVs to meet with the PIC Inspectors to discuss their reports and for the Constabulary to advise of action taken in respect of any queries they raised.
- 4.7 ICVs have focussed their role on the rights and entitlements of detainees, particularly checking how well detainees are made aware of these and whether they are proactively offered by the police. Overall findings are positive, but it is recognised that detainees may not always understand or remember what they can ask for and therefore needed to be reminded. Staffing levels also impact on what entitlements, such as showers or exercise, can be offered and the timing of this. ICVs were also made aware of any current issues such as delays in the supply of certain foods or clothing and given assurances around actions taken to address those in the short term.
- 4.8 Detainee dignity is another key focus for ICVs and where recently an issue was raised in respect of detainee privacy, whilst under observation on CCTV, those concerns were fed back to the Constabulary for consideration and an update will be discussed at the next panel meeting.
- 4.9 The lack of availability and provision of hospital beds for those held under the Mental Health Act remains a concern for ICVs and custody staff which is being considered by the Constabulary at Chief Officer level. ICVs will continue to review and report their observations on these issues, alongside any others that they pick up.
- 4.10 Throughout the year ICVs have regularly commented on the professionalism of staff in dealing with detainees and ICVs. There have also been several very positive comments, particularly about the care of vulnerable detainees, young people, and detainees in custody for the first time. The OPCC is satisfied that any issues raised by ICVs from their visits and calls were considered and addressed.
- 4.11 The OPCC received regular updates from the Chief Inspector for Custody on several areas of business: Covid procedures; partnership services; detainee numbers; staffing; supplies of personal protective equipment; facilities management and safer detention reporting. This information helped the OPCC to monitor the position during the period ICVs were not able to visit in person.

- supporting people in custody with mental health problems, learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ICVs found out more about how adjustments can be made for individual detainee care needs.

October's session focused on:

- Managing offenders, bail management, out of court disposals and restorative justice;
- the role of solicitors in police custody, including changes to ways of working through the Covid period, working virtually, legal aid developments, case progression and the impact on detainees and victims.

4.18 On 1 March 2022 Suffolk ICVs were invited to attend a Norfolk ICV Training event entitled 'Transforming the Lives of Women in the Criminal Justice System (CJS)'. The event heard from a woman with lived experience of police custody and from those working on the Norfolk Women's Strategy Group and the Wonder Plus project to help women in the criminal justice system. It was recognised that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to working with women in the CJS and that women often have complex individual needs. This was discussed further at the March round of panel meetings to reflect on female care locally.

4.19 On 11 May 2022 the PCC and Chief Inspector Nick Paling gave a presentation at the Suffolk Headway Neurological Services Conference on 'How we care for people with a disability in custody'.

5. IMPROVING APPROACHES IN CUSTODY

5.1 During the Covid-19 pandemic the ICVA team provided information and support to schemes to aide local decisions and practices. Throughout 2021/22 we have utilised the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) updates and 'bitesize' straight to ICV training modules to keep volunteers engaged and updated. As we move forward from the pandemic in 2022, ICVA has been proactive in working with Schemes nationally to drive improvements and offer suggestions for key areas of focus, as well as listening to what Schemes need from them to support their continued scrutiny work.

5.2 An ICVA online Scheme Managers conference took place on 24 November 2021. This provided a good opportunity to meet ICVA's new Chief Executive Officer, Ashley Bertie who had joined ICVA the previous month. There was a presentation from Craig Pinkney, Criminologist, Urban Youth Specialist, and Chief Executive of SOLVE: The Centre for Youth Violence and Conflict and a presentation from Tanayah Sam, an entrepreneur who had lived experience of police custody, both impactful presentations. Attendees also received an update on the Criminal Justice Alliance Race and Gender Report and ICVA's initial plans to address the recommendations in the report and produce an action plan.

5.3 The ICVA National Conference was held in person in London in April 2022. Attendees heard from Abimbola Johnson, a barrister who had been appointed as Chair of the Independent Scrutiny & Oversight Board on the Police Action Plan on Inclusion and Race who spoke of the importance of the panel and scrutiny in terms of race and policing overall. Inspector Tony Maggs, Inspector and Senior Policy Advisor to the College of Policing, spoke of custody design and how this can impact detainee dignity and on national custody training for operational staff. Marvin King joined the conference to discuss his personal experience of having been arrested and his thoughts on the black community and trust in policing. The Panel Co-ordinator for the Bury St Edmunds Panel attended and her feedback from the event, along with the links to the presentations, was shared with all ICVs.

- 6.2 Due to the nature of the role, recruitment is ongoing as required and the OPCC recognise the need to recruit some additional volunteers in the 2022/23 period. The OPCC will try to improve the diversity of the panels to better reflect the community of Suffolk through that recruitment process. Continuous training is also essential so we will continue to utilise the ICVA training materials as well as provide local training inputs.
- 6.3 A Suffolk and Norfolk joint training and information session has been planned for 6 October 2022 which will include an update on police custody, a session on drug testing procedures in custody, an update on offender management and information on the role of Appropriate Adults in police custody.
- 6.4 The next ICVA Regional Meeting will take place on 20 September 2022.
- 6.5 A Joint Suffolk and Norfolk ICV Panel Co-ordinators meeting with the Chief Inspector for custody has been arranged for September 2022.
- 6.6 In 2019 ICVA introduced the ICVA Quality Assurance Framework to help schemes to reflect on how they comply with the Code of Practice, celebrate areas of strength, promote custody visiting and the achievements schemes have made and drive performance and increase sharing of good practice. Suffolk achieved the 'Code Compliant' award in 2019 which demonstrated that the scheme met the statutory requirements and necessary volunteer standards. The new 'QAF2' was launched in April 2022 and work will be carried out over the next 18 months to reflect on the present position.
- 6.7 On 10 May 2022 it was announced that draft legislation would be brought forward to reform the Mental Health Act aiming to provide greater control for people over their treatment, more dignity in care and reduce the use of hospital care for autistic people and those with learning disabilities. We await more information on this in due course to see how this might impact on police custody.

7. BUDGET POSITION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The budget spend for 2021/22 was £2,041. This represents an underspend of £2,459 against the budget of £4,500. The underspend is a consequence of reduced travel and training costs, which is usually the biggest proportion of the budget spend. Physical visiting was restricted for a period of the year with training and meetings taking place virtually.

- 7.2 Costs are broken down as follows:

Annual subscription to ICVA	£1,000
Mileage claims	£823
Printing, postal costs and other incidentals	£217

- 7.3 The budget for 2022/23 will remain at £4,500.
- 7.4 The financial implications in respect of the production and design of the ICV Annual Report is expected to be minimal given that the design has been undertaken in-house and the document will be made available electronically.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 8.1 None.



Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Annual Report 2021-22

Police Investigation Centre



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Introduction by Tim Passmore Police & Crime Commissioner for Suffolk

This report provides an overview of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Suffolk and details what the custody visitors have been doing between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are volunteers from our local community who visit the two Police Investigation Centres (PICs) in the county to check on the welfare of detained persons and the conditions in which they are held. They help me to fulfil my responsibility to ensure that policing in Suffolk is carried out fairly, in accordance with relevant legislation and Home Office guidance, and with respect for the human rights of all those coming into contact with the police. I am very grateful to the ICVs in Suffolk for their dedication and commitment in undertaking this important role. I would also thank the Constabulary for their co-operation and facilitating the successful operation of the Scheme.



ICVs continue to give me reassurance that, in Suffolk, the treatment of detained persons is fair and in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (referred to as PACE) and the Safer Detention Guidelines.

A handwritten signature of Tim Passmore in black ink. The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first name 'Tim' and the last name 'Passmore' clearly legible.

Comment from Suffolk's Chief Constable

One of the most significant actions my officers can take is to deprive someone of their liberty. Their treatment within one of our PICs is, quite rightly, subject of scrutiny by the ICVs.

Suffolk Constabulary prides itself on how we interact with our communities. Transparency surrounding such a sensitive part of our business is welcomed, it helps ensure that we are fully aware of our levels of service and contributes to identifying ways in which we can continue to improve.



Steve Jupp, Chief Constable



Comment from Chief Inspector Nick Paling Head of Custody for Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies

Norfolk and Suffolk have six PICs across the two counties and I have been incredibly proud to lead this core critical department. I took command of this position in September 2020 following a long career in local policing which I will be returning back to in the Summer of 2022.

My time in charge has been throughout the Covid pandemic. A highlight of mine, is the way we operated through the challenge of Covid, tweaking our processes, meaning we never had to close a PIC as a result of an outbreak. This has allowed for Suffolk Constabulary to continue to discharge its core duties of arresting those who cause harm to the community.



Throughout my time as the Head of Custody I have had a very healthy relationship with the PCC's office, especially from the feedback the excellent cohort of Independent Custody Visitors provide. Like my team, ICVs were committed throughout the pandemic and found new and alternative ways to continue their visits. This enabled the independent scrutiny to continue on our department which is so important to us all.

Another example of the ICVs continued commitment to Custody is their role in the quarterly Independent Scrutiny Panel which is run by my department. This panel which set up locally, has received praise across the UK and is now being replicated within other forces. We should all be proud of this! Suffolk is lucky to have such a committed team of ICVs, and it has been a pleasure to work with you all.

Organisation of the ICV Scheme in Suffolk

As at 31 March 2022, there were 13 ICVs participating in the Scheme across the county, 7 on the Bury St Edmunds Panel and 6 on the Martlesham Panel.

The following table provides a summary of the custody visitors by gender, age and ethnicity:

Suffolk ICVs		Bury St Edmunds	Martlesham	Total
Gender	Male	1	2	3
	Female	6	4	10
Age	18-29	1	1	2
	30-39	1	0	1
	40-49	1	0	1
	50-59	1	0	1
	60-69	0	2	2
	70+	3	3	6
Ethnicity	White British			12
	Asian - Indian			1

During the period 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 four volunteers left the Scheme, all for personal reasons.

Details of Visits

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the monitoring arrangements have varied throughout this past year with a mixture of physical and telephone visits. Between 23 December 2020 and 11 April 2021 physical visiting was suspended and weekly calls were made to the PICs to check on detainees held and the operation of the PICs.

From 12 April 2021, as the national and local lockdown measures eased, ICVs returned to physical visiting. Arrangements remained in place for the ICV Panel Co-ordinators to be contacted if there were any suspected or confirmed Covid cases at the PICs and guidelines stipulated that physical visiting would not take place in those periods. That process worked well.

There was a short temporary suspension of physical visits for the Bury St Edmunds panel between 23 November 2021 and 30 November 2021 as there were several Covid cases at the Bury St Edmunds PIC. Due to an increased number of Covid cases in early December the decision was made to suspend visiting at Bury St Edmunds and Martlesham between 14 December 2021 and 14 February 2022. During this time weekly calls to the PICs were made and ICVs spoke with a police Sergeant or Inspector to check on the welfare of the detainees held at that time.

Since 14 February 2022 weekly physical visiting has taken place, unless notifications of specific positive/suspected positive cases were made. ICVs have been provided with regular updates on the Covid position and guidance around Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements, which are now 'optional/personal choice' for ICVs.

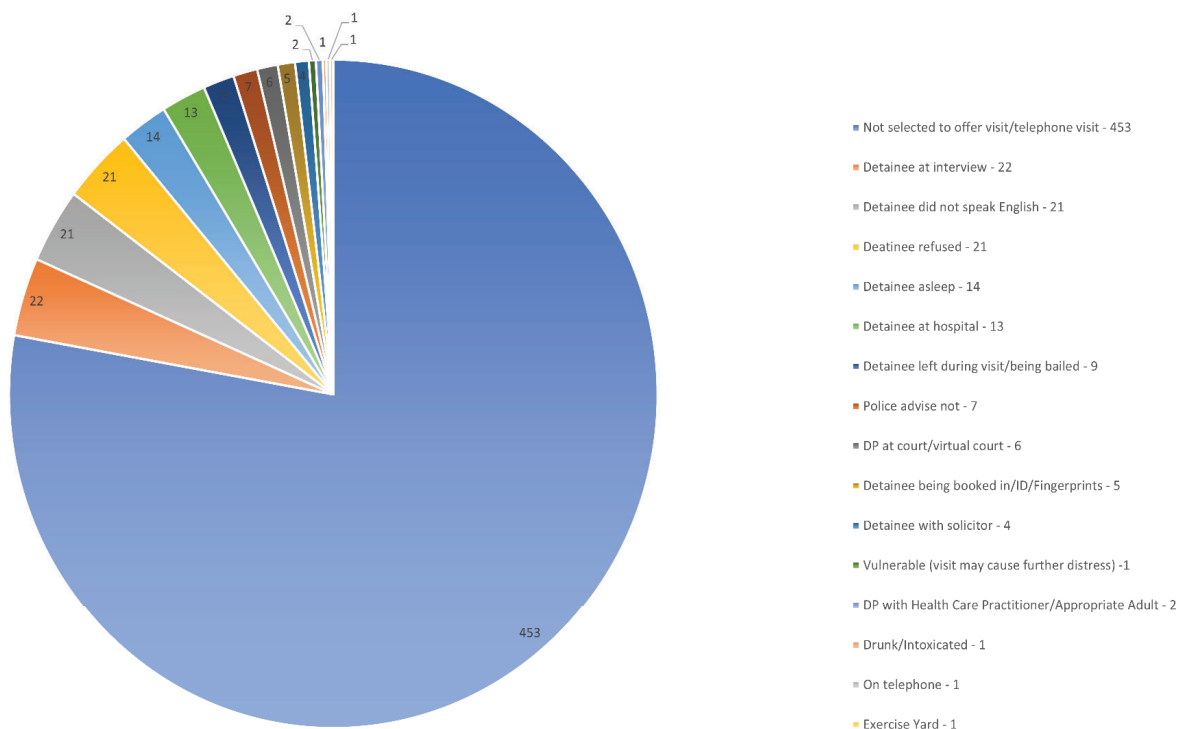
Between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022, a total of 79 visits or calls were made by ICVs to the PICs. 746 persons were detained in custody at the time visits/calls were conducted and 164 of the detainees were visited or spoken to. The overall throughput for the PICs located in Suffolk for the year was 9,304 (an increase when compared to 8,780 the previous year). Whilst offered a visit, there is no obligation for a detained person to speak with ICVs.

More detail in respect of visits and calls to the Bury St Edmunds and Martlesham Centres is provided below:

Panel	Number of visits	Number of calls	Number of detainees held	Number of detainees available to visit	Number of detainees visited	Number of detainees spoken to (phone visits)	Number of detainees not seen*
Bury St Edmunds	39	12	354	93	83	2	271
Martlesham	40	11	392	97	81	4	311
Total	79	23	746	190	164	6	582

**Note: There are a number of reasons why detained persons are not visited. For example, the detainee might refuse the visit or the police may advise against it for health and safety reasons. The category 'not visited' is broken down in the chart below 7 to show the reasons detained persons were not visited during the period. 78% of the detainees not seen were 'not selected by ICVs' themselves as they will have selected a sample to speak to whilst undertaking the telephone calls or may have focused their time in custody on more in-depth interviews with fewer detainees and scrutiny of their custody records, rather than brief interviews with all detainees held at the time of the visit.*

Breakdown of reasons detainees not visited – Total 582 not seen:



The pie chart on page 6 reflects the fact that the ICVs were working remotely and therefore there was less direct contact with detainees this year than in previous years.

Breakdown of visit/calls days and times:

Day of the Week		Time	
Monday	18		
Tuesday	16	0700 - 1000	20
Wednesday	14	1000 - 1300	22
Thursday	20	1300 - 1600	15
Friday	12	1600 - 1900	22
Saturday	10	1900 - 2200	21
Sunday	12	2200 - 0700	2

ICVs are encouraged to vary the times and days of their visits as much as possible.

Detained Persons Statistics-1 April 2021-31 March 2022

Overall Number of Detainees

Police Investigation Centre

Bury St Edmunds

Martlesham

Total

Detainee Numbers

4243

5061

9304

Ethnicity of Detainees

White - North European

Black

White - South European

Asian

Middle Eastern

Chinese, Japanese or South East Asian

Unknown

Detainee Numbers

7463

813

473

177

55

17

306

Gender of Detainees

Female

Male

Unspecified/blank

Detainee Numbers

1468

7812

24

Age Range of Detainees

11-20

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-60

61-70

71-80

81-90

Unknown/blank

Detainee Numbers

1360

2730

2671

1505

734

228

59

16

1

Findings of Independent Custody Visitors

For each of the visits or calls carried out throughout the year a report was provided to the OPCC detailing what the ICVs had observed or discussed with detainees and/or custody staff at the time of the visit or call. This provided a useful insight into the position in custody, Covid safety arrangements and detainee care. Whether attending in person, or making calls in to the facilities, ICVs were well assisted by custody staff and able to check on the rights and entitlements of detainees.

The updates provided by the PIC Inspectors and the information provided by the Chief Inspector were extremely useful. We were assured that measures were quickly put in place in relation to Covid procedures and the continuation of partnership services, legal services and medical services. The regular information provided on detainee numbers, staffing, supplies of personal protective equipment, facilities management and safer detention reporting was also essential for the OPCC to monitor the position throughout the period ICVs were not visiting in person.

Given the custody facilities in Suffolk and Norfolk were built in 2011 there were big advantages in terms of the space available for social distancing and the technological systems in place to enable remote monitoring of detainees.

Regular ICVs panel meetings were held throughout the year by virtual means. These allowed ICVs to meet with the PIC Inspectors to discuss their reports period and for the Constabulary to advise of action taken in respect of any queries they raised.



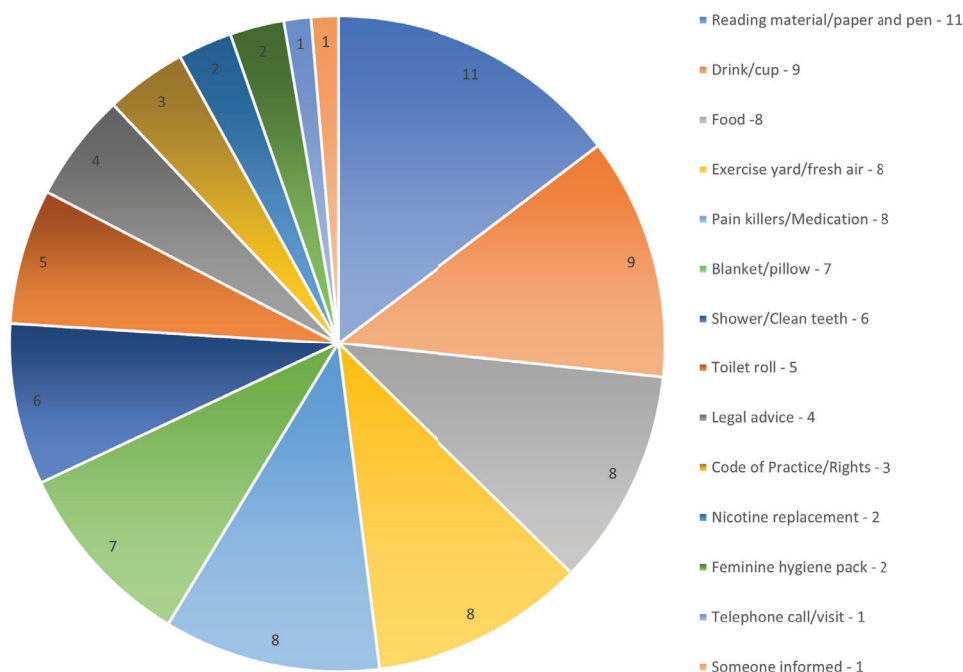
ICVs have focussed their role on the rights and entitlements of detainees, particularly looking how well detainees are made aware of these and whether they are proactively offered to detainees, rather than detainees having to request them. Overall findings are positive, but it is recognised that detainees may not always understand or remember what they can ask for and therefore needed to be reminded. Staffing levels also impact on what entitlements, such as showers or exercise, can be offered and the timing of this. ICVs were also made aware of any current issues such as delays in the supply of certain foods or clothing.

Detainee dignity is another key focus for ICVs and where recently an issue was raised in respect of detainee privacy, whilst under observation on CCTV, those concerns were fed back to the Constabulary for consideration and an update will be discussed at the next panel meeting. The lack of availability and provision of hospital beds for those held under the Mental Health Act also remains a concern for ICVs and custody staff which is being considered by the Constabulary at Chief Officer level. ICVs will continue to review and report their observations on these issues, alongside any others that they pick up.

Throughout the year ICVs have regularly commented on the professionalism of staff in dealing with detainees and ICVs. There have also been a number of very positive comments, particularly about the care of vulnerable detainees, young people and detainees in custody

for the first time. The OPCC is satisfied that any issues raised by ICVs from their visits and calls were considered and addressed.

As a result of their conversations with detainees the following matters were raised with custody staff and subsequently dealt with:



The Scheme Administrators for Suffolk and Norfolk have worked closely throughout the year with the joint custody function and met with the Chief Inspector on a quarterly basis to discuss custody developments and issues arising from the safer detention and adverse incident reporting. Monthly ICV visiting statistics and findings are also shared with the Chief Inspector so that significant or strategic issues can be addressed.

On 23 June 2021 ICVs from Suffolk were invited to an online information session on the Appropriate Adult Service provided by Anglia Care Trust in Suffolk.

On 15 July 2021 ICVs from Suffolk and Norfolk attended a virtual training and information session supported by the Joint Head of Custody, Chief Inspector Nick Paling. Attendees received an overview of police custody, the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) custody inspection process and local audit and scrutiny work as well as presentations on the Liaison and Diversion Service and supporting people in custody with mental health problems, learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

On 6 October 2021 ICVs from Suffolk and Norfolk attended a virtual training and information session supported by Chief Inspector Nick Paling who provided an update on custody. Attendees heard about managing offenders, bail management, out of court disposals and restorative justice as well as about the role of solicitors in police custody.

On 1 March 2022 Suffolk ICVs were invited to attend a Norfolk ICV Training event entitled 'Transforming the Lives of Women in the Criminal Justice System (CJS)'. The event heard from a woman with lived experience of police custody and from those working on the Norfolk Women's Strategy Group and the Wonder Plus project to help women in the criminal justice system.

Developments during 2021/22

Some of the key developments in custody in 2021/22 were:

National Police Chiefs' Council and Crown Prosecution Service - Provision of Legal Advice

In April 2020 the National Police Chiefs' Council and Crown Prosecution Service compiled a joint protocol that allowed for legal advice to be provided remotely subject to certain conditions. One key condition being that informed consent must be sought from the detainee and, if they had one, their Appropriate Adult. Temporary changes to PACE (Revision of Codes C and E) were applied. From 4 October 2021 the interview protocol was updated to support the return to legal advice being provided in person at a police station for all detainees, with the use of remote advice only an option in strictly limited and rare circumstances. This was something ICVs were asked to monitor, and no issues were raised locally.

Criminal Justice Alliance Report - Just Visiting

In December 2021 the Criminal Justice Alliance (CJA) issued its 'Just Visiting' report which explores the effectiveness of independent custody visitors at monitoring race and gender equality in police custody. There were 30 recommendations contained in the report aimed at the Home Office, PCCs, ICVA and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary. One of the recommendations for PCCs was to 'ensure custody visitors are routinely collecting data on detainees' race and gender on their visiting report forms'. The Independent Custody visiting Report Form was updated in April 2022 to capture detainee ethnicity data, gender data was already captured. Further consideration will be given to how best to utilise the additional data collected by ICVs and to the other recommendations for PCCs in due course.

Suffolk Headway Neurological Services Conference - 11 May 2022

On 11 May 2022 the PCC and Chief Inspector Nick Paling gave a presentation at the Suffolk Headway Neurological Services Conference on 'How we care for people with a disability in custody'.



Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorates Report - Impact of Covid

In May 2022 the Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorates (CJJI) released their progress report into the impact of Covid. The detail on policing covers recovery from the pandemic and signs of progress as seen from the inspectorates. In terms of police custody one key finding was that court video-link facilities in custody suites, which allow cases to be heard virtually, were still being used if a detainee is suspected or confirmed as having Covid-19 but could also be beneficial if a detainee had a disability. It was recognised that the virtual court process enabled certain cases to progress much more quickly, reducing the overall time in police detention. The virtual courts within the PICs in Suffolk and Norfolk are in the process of being withdrawn so ICVs have been asked to review and report on any impact they observe that this has on DPs, staff and custody processes.

HMICFRS Expectations for Police Custody

In June 2022 the fourth version of Expectations for Police Custody report, which set out the inspection criteria for assessing the treatment of and conditions for detainees in police custody, was published. Consideration will be given to the position locally along with the Constabulary.

Just for Kids Law - Ending the Overnight Detention of Children in Custody

In June 2022 Just for Kids Law released a report entitled 'Ending the overnight detention of children in custody' which recognises that there has been improvement in the numbers of children held in custody overnight but outlines the vulnerability of children and states that significant reforms are still required to establish a 'rights-based approach to youth justice'. A key recommendation for ICVA is to assess and report on the effectiveness of custody staff efforts to reduce the number of children who are detained in police custody overnight, including treatment and condition of those children, as well as make recommendations for improving their welfare. ICVs locally have been asked to continue reporting on children in custody in terms of positive treatment, causes for concern and recommendations for improvement.

Independent Scrutiny

In June 2018 ICVs from Suffolk and Norfolk were invited to join an Independent Strip Search Scrutiny Panel to review the Constabularies' recording of Strip and Search powers and consider any disproportionality issues. Since that time significant improvements in the quality of the information have been achieved. The role of the panel was expanded in 2020 to include the review of the issue of rip-proof clothing and use of force in custody as well as strip search. Quarterly scrutiny meetings will continue throughout 2022, with the next meeting to be held on 20 July.

Detainees and the Terrorism Act

Anyone arrested under the Terrorism Act (TACT) may be detained for up to 14 days and there are provisions within the PIC estate for anyone arrested locally. An Eastern Region pool of ICVs for visiting TACT detainees is in place. ICVs are selected by the local area, undergo additional vetting and are trained on a regional basis. All ICVs visiting TACT detainees report nationally to the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation (IRTL).

Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA)

The ICVA team has been providing support to schemes and sharing information to aide local decisions and practices. Throughout the last year we have utilised the ICVA updates and 'bitesize' straight to ICV training modules to keep volunteers engaged and updated. As we move forward from the pandemic in 2022, ICVA has been proactive in working with Schemes nationally to drive improvements and offer suggestions for key areas of focus, as well as listening to what Schemes need from them to support their continued scrutiny work.

An ICVA online Scheme Managers conference took place on 24 November 2021. Attendees met ICVA's new Chief Executive Officer, Ashley Bertie, and heard from a Criminologist, Urban Youth Specialist, and Chief Executive of SOLVE: The Centre for Youth Violence and Conflict, as well as an entrepreneur who had lived experience of police custody. There was also an update on the CJA Report and ICVA's plans to produce an action plan.

The ICVA National Conference was held in person in London in April 2022. Attendees heard from the Independent Scrutiny & Oversight Board on the Police Action Plan on Inclusion and Race, from the College of Policing about custody design and from a person with lived experience of custody. One Suffolk ICV attended and her feedback, alongside links to the presentations, was shared with all ICVs

Looking forward

The return to physical visiting more consistently in early 2022 and introduction of 'Living with Covid' measures, alongside recruitment of new ICVs, has provided fresh opportunity to reflect on the focus of the ICV Scheme and, what can be done to improve ICV processes to ensure that scrutiny is as effective as possible. We will continue to work closely with the Constabulary in this regard.

Due to the nature of the role, recruitment is ongoing as required and the OPCC recognise the need to recruit some additional volunteers in the 2022/23 period. The OPCC will try to improve the diversity of the panels to better reflect the community of Suffolk through that recruitment process.

Continuous training is also essential so we will continue to utilise the ICVA training materials as well as provide local training inputs. A Suffolk and Norfolk joint training and information session has been planned for 6 October 2022 which will include an update on police custody, a session on drug testing procedures in custody, an update on offender management and information on the role of Appropriate Adults in police custody.

In 2019 ICVA introduced the ICVA Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) to help schemes to reflect on how they comply with the Code of Practice, celebrate areas of strength, promote custody visiting and the achievements schemes have made and drive performance and increase sharing of good practice. Suffolk achieved the 'Code Compliant' award in 2019 which demonstrated that the scheme met the statutory requirements and necessary volunteer standards. The new QAF2 was launched in April 2022 and work will be carried out over the next 18 months to reflect on the present position.

On 10 May 2022 it was announced that draft legislation would be brought forward to reform the Mental Health Act aiming to provide greater control for people over their treatment, more dignity in care and reduce the use of hospital care for autistic people and those with learning disabilities. We await more information on this in due course to see how this might impact on police custody.

Conclusion

Custody Visiting continues to be essential in providing independent scrutiny of the treatment of detained persons and the conditions in which they are held. As well as the mutual level of assurance it offers, the Scheme helps to build partnerships between the police and the communities they serve, and raise public confidence generally.

If you are interested in becoming an Independent Custody Visitor or would like more information please contact:

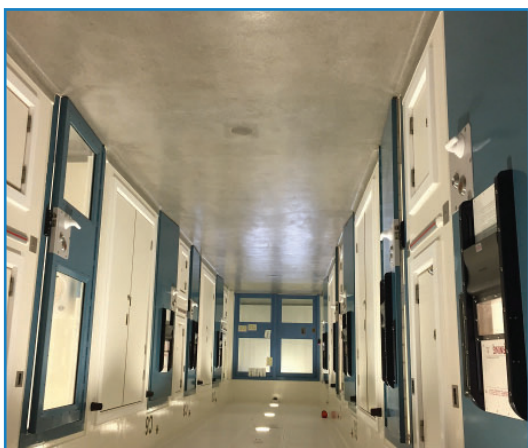
The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Administrator,
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk,
Police Headquarters,
Martlesham Heath,
Ipswich
IP5 3QS
Telephone: (01473) 782774 or E-mail: spcc@suffolk.pnn.police.uk

For more information on the role of ICVs and that of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk visit www.suffolk-pcc.gov.uk.

For more information regarding the role of the Independent Custody Visiting Association visit www.icva.org.uk or more information on the National Preventative Mechanism visit www.nationalpreventivemechanism.org.uk.

If you require the information in this Annual Report in any other format, please contact us.





contact us:
www.suffolk-pcc.gov.uk