

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT



Independent Custody Visiting Annual Report 2023 / 2024

DONNA JONES

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT



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WELCOME



I'm pleased to be able to share with you the 2023/2024 annual report for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Independent Custody Visitor Scheme (ICV). Police and Crime Commissioners have a statutory responsibility to ensure there is an effective ICV scheme in place for their police force area. This report includes the number of visits conducted over the last year and the outcomes.

Independent Custody Visitors are volunteers. They make regular unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the rights, entitlements, wellbeing and dignity of those being held. This report, which covers April 2023 to March 2024, gives a real insight into the conditions for detained people during this period. Over 27,000 people were held across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, with more than 4,000 detainees seen by ICVs.

Independent Custody Visiting provides protection and confidentiality. It promotes transparency and accountability for the police. Furthermore, the scheme gives reassurance to communities across our two counties that anyone held in custody is being treated fairly and in accordance with statutory legislation and guidance. I have a duty to report the activity and findings to the government through the Home Office. This annual report is part of discharging my statutory duty as Police and Crime Commissioner.

I would like to thank the dedicated and professional ICV team without whom I couldn't discharge this role. Their compassion and desire to ensure detainees are treated fairly helps to improve the policing system. Over the last year the team's dedication and professionalism have been recognised with a national award. I'm hugely proud and grateful to every ICV, thank you.

Donna Jones

Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire & the Isle of Wight

OVERVIEW OF CUSTODY IN HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Constabulary has three mainland custody suites and a custody suite within Newport Police Station on the Isle of Wight. The custody suites are located at:

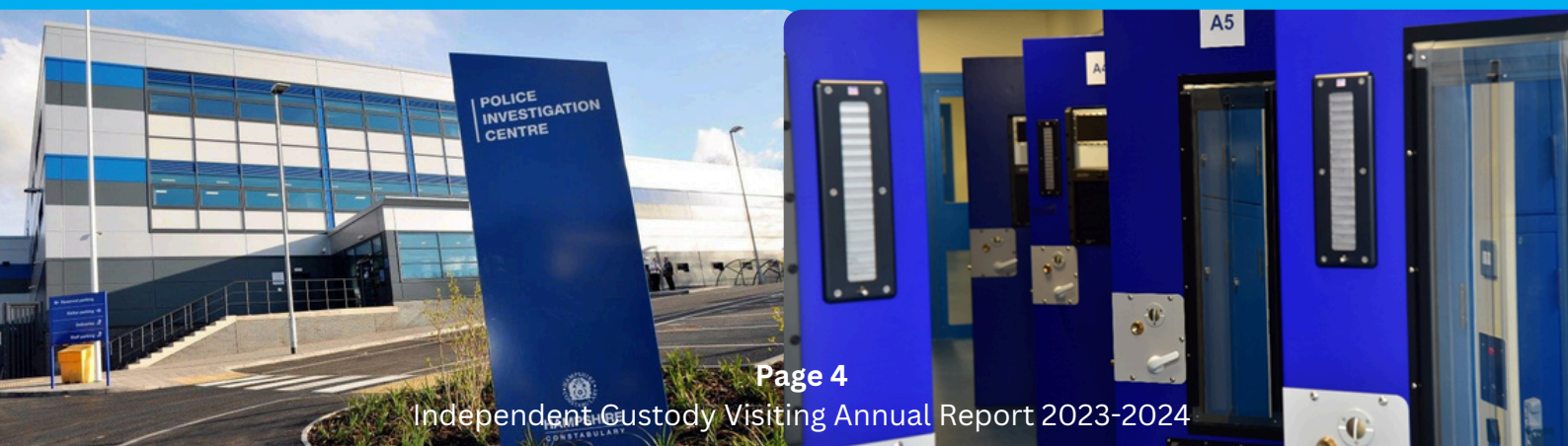
- Portsmouth Police Investigation Centre (EPIC) with 36 cells
- Southampton Police Investigation Centre (WPIC) with 36 cells
- Basingstoke Police Investigation Centre (NPIC) with 36 cells
- Newport Police Station on the Isle of Wight with 10 cells

In total, there are 118 custody cells across the two counties.



Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has a population in excess of two million people, with the three largest urban areas being Portsmouth, Southampton and Basingstoke. There is one county council - Hampshire - and three unitary authorities - Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight - as well as 11 district councils. There are two major ports, two national parks, two airports as well as major road, rail and ferry networks.

Both counties have large rural areas which makes policing more challenging and adds to the complexities of crime detection. The majority of residents live in towns, villages, and rural areas across the two counties. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has a complex mix of volume crime including violent crime, theft and public order offences. Alongside local issues, policing must be prepared for national threats including civil emergency, public disorder, serious organised



WHAT IS INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING?

The Police and Crime Commissioner has a statutory duty to maintain an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Independent Custody Visiting is a well established system whereby volunteers attend custody suites to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. The scheme offers protection and confidentiality to detainees and the police and provides reassurance to the wider community.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are volunteers who are members of the local community. Always working in pairs, they call at police custody suites unannounced at any time. With agreement, the visitors can speak to detainees about their treatment or conditions, and take up any issues of concern with custody staff. A report of their findings is made prior to leaving the suite. Their work provides the Police and Crime Commissioner (and in turn the local community) with assurance that anyone held in custody is treated fairly and has access to appropriate facilities.

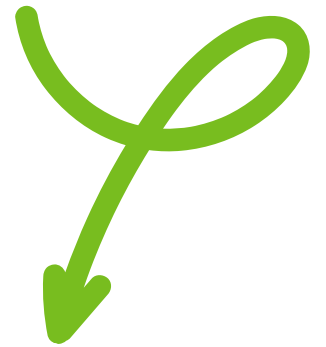


ICVs come from all sections of the community. They must be aged over 18, reside in Hampshire or on the Isle of Wight, and be a resident in the United Kingdom for at least three years prior to the date of application. No specific qualifications are required as full training and support is provided, however visitors should be good listeners, non-judgmental and unbiased.

ABOUT OUR HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT ICV SCHEME

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Scheme currently has 29 ICVs volunteering across the four custody suites as of April 2023. ICVs attend four quarterly panel meetings a year and receive regular training in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Each custody suite has a block police Inspector who attends the quarterly panel meetings to provide an update and to allow the volunteers to ask any questions. ICVs always visit in pairs and as well as checking on the welfare of detainees, they also inspect the cells and facilities within the custody suite for health and safety purposes.

ICVs can also inspect custody records where appropriate and if consent has been obtained from the detainee. If an ICV discovers an issue on their visit, this is raised to the Custody Sergeant present or the Custody Inspector if the matter is of a serious nature that requires urgent attention.



Once ICVs prepare their report, the paperwork is sent to the OPCC ICV Scheme Administrator who collates the information and reviews and addresses any issues reported.

DETAINED PERSONS AND VISIT STATS

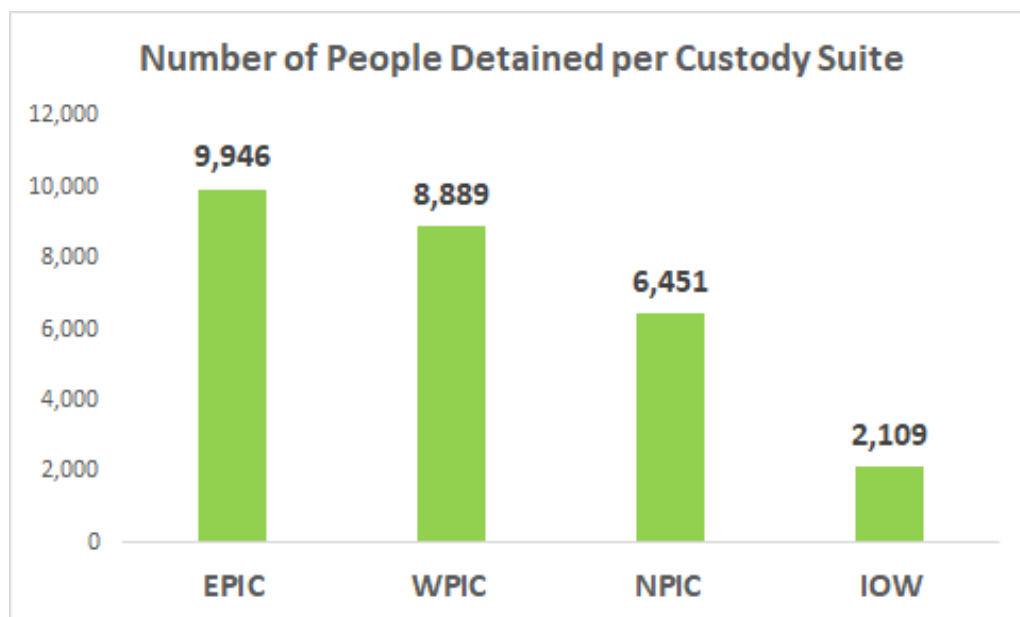


1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

27,395 people were detained in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

199
ICV visits
undertaken

4,157
detainees
seen by
ICVs



July was the busiest month for Newport with **206** detainees held



October was the busiest month for Southampton with **808** detainees held



March was the busiest month for both Basingstoke with **608** detainees and Portsmouth with **919** detainees held

DETAINED PERSONS AND VISIT STATS CONT.



Number of detainees visited by ICVs per quarter



Quarter 1 (April 23 – June 23)

217

Quarter 2 (July 23 – Sept 23)

767

Quarter 3 (Oct 23 – Dec 23)

1,159

Quarter 4 (Jan 24 – March 24)

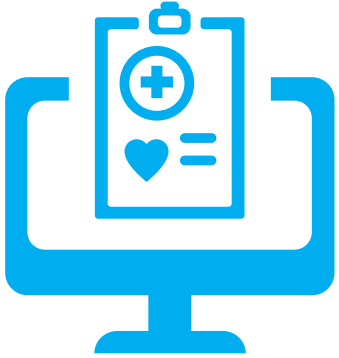
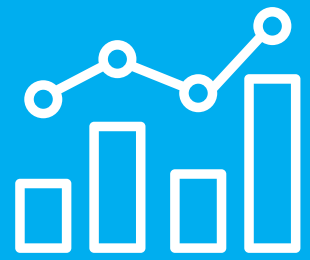
2,014

Number of detainees held in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Custody per month



Month	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total
EPIC	751	826	844	837	845	782	845	783	828	813	873	919	9946
WPIC	683	780	675	775	776	683	808	728	706	770	714	791	8889
NPIC	479	533	498	558	529	485	579	511	538	555	578	608	6451
IOW	133	149	173	206	193	181	167	160	174	194	181	198	2109

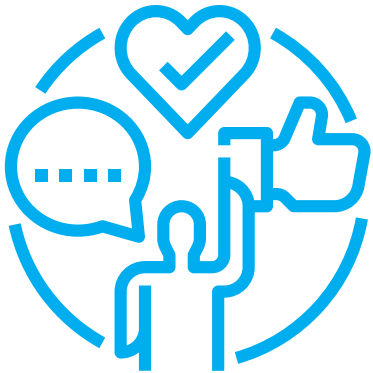
DETAINED PERSONS AND VISIT STATS CONT.



248



Number of detainee custody records checked



202



Number of times ICVs took action on behalf of a detainee



473



Number of times ICVs checked for signs of life of sleeping detainees

DID YOU KNOW?

ICVs can check a detainee's custody record with their consent. However if ICVs have a particular concern about a detainee whom they cannot interview they can assume consent and check the custody record without consent but must note the reason for doing so on the report form.



ICV REPORTS AND CONCERNS



ICVs raised concerns about low staffing levels in custody which can impact the welfare of detainees, as well as the ability of ICVs to carry out their visits.

If ICVs are unable to carry out their visits, the PCC is notified so that she can meet her statutory duty and hold the Chief Constable to account. ICVs continue to monitor waiting times within custody.

Detainee Comments:

"Staff are fantastic and faultless"

"really well looked after"

"The team have been great with me"

"best custody suite ever!"

ICVs continually report back on how detainees are being treated in custody.

ICVs dealt with a high number of requests from detainees throughout the year including requests for food and drink, use of the exercise yard and shower facilities, as well as requests to see health care professionals.

The majority of requests are dealt with by the Custody Officers at the time of the visit. All detainee requests and issues are reported back to the OPCC via the ICV report form.

ICV Comments:

"Custody Suite was calm and quiet. Detention Officer was most helpful and professional"

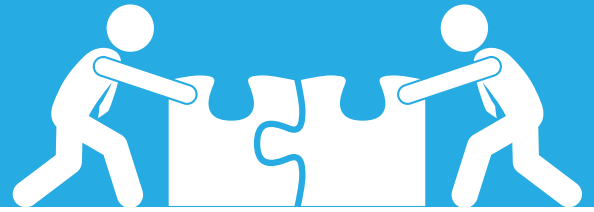
"Detention Officer was very patient and helpful"

"Escorting Officer was very helpful and proactive"

"Calm and well run suite, the Detention Officer was attentive and helpful"

ICVs regularly compliment the professionalism and kindness of custody staff.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND ISSUES



ICV Detainee Report

ICVs reported back that they were spending quite a bit of time in custody waiting to be escorted around by a custody officer and that they also spent long periods of time collecting detainee data for their report form.

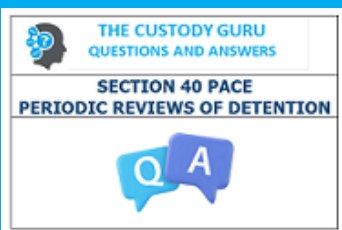
To increase the efficiency of ICVs time in custody an ICV Detainee Report has been produced which contains all the detainee information ICVs need to complete the detainee part of the report form. The report is printed as soon as ICVs enter custody. Feedback so far has been very positive and has made ICV time more efficient.



ICV Translation Sheets

Translation sheets of ICV interview questions were made available in all custody suites. These have been used on a number of occasions where English is not the first language of the detainee.

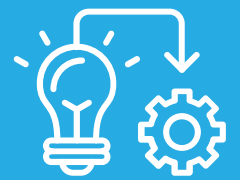
The translation sheets are available in 29 languages and whilst they rely on detainees being able to read, interpreters can be called when necessary.



Custody Clock Briefing

As a result of ICV visits and their subsequent feedback to the Central Custody Team, a Question and Answer briefing on 'Section 40 PACE periodic reviews of detention' was produced and circulated to custody staff.

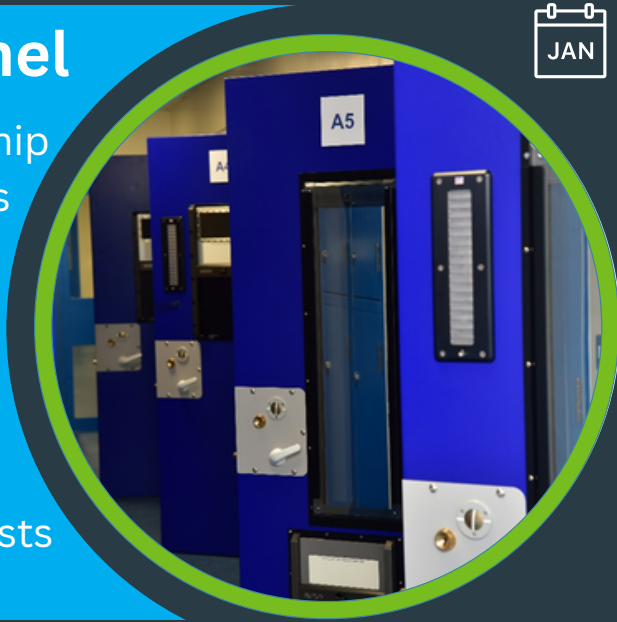
KEY DEVELOPMENTS



Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel



The first panel was held in January. Its membership includes ICVs, who alongside other local partners report on the detention and custody process, and review and advise on matters relating to disproportionality. The findings of the panel are shared, including individual feedback to officers. Feedback highlights positive areas of work, and also identifies areas for improvement, and suggests areas for further training.



HMICFRS Custody Inspection



Custody was inspected by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Service in February 2024. Police custody inspections assess how well the police are fulfilling their responsibilities for the safe detention and respectful treatment of those detained in police custody.



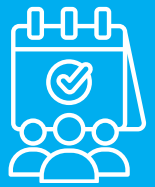
Custody Software Update



All custody suites in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight received a custody record software update at the beginning of March 2024. ICVs reported that custody staff needed time to adjust to the new update, and as a result there were delays in authorising detention of some detainees.



EVENTS



The ICV Scheme received the ICVA silver status. The scheme has been assessed as having a good standard of custody visiting. Deputy PCC Terry Norton and OPCC Partnerships Manager Karen Dawes received the certificate from ICVA.

Congratulations to Southampton ICV Pauline Shorney, winner of the Police and Crime Commissioner Independent Custody Visitor of the Year Award.



Congratulations to Portsmouth ICV Richard Fife, on receiving his 5 year Long Service Certificate from David Wiseman Panel Co-ordinator.

PCC Donna Jones brought together ICVs for a celebratory lunch to mark Volunteers' Week.



ICV Jennifer Charles promoting the scheme and recruitment drive at a Community Safety event held at Basingstoke Council Offices.

RECRUITMENT



During 2023/2024 extensive recruitment was conducted and 10 new ICVs have joined the scheme.

Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has 29 active ICVs visiting custody on a regular basis.

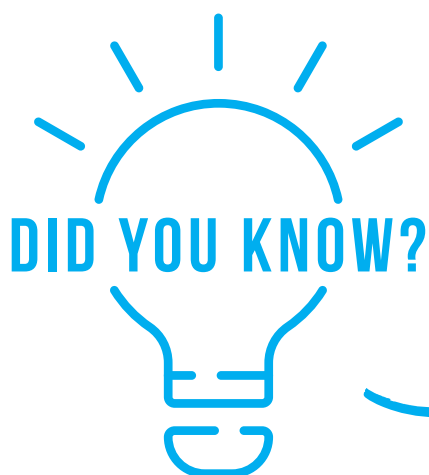
Panel	New ICVs	Total No of ICVs
EPIC	3	8
WPIC	2	8
NPIC	0	7
IOW	1	6

We also aim to increase the awareness of our scheme so that the local community can understand the incredible work of our volunteers. In the past year we have:

- Attended a Portsmouth Volunteer Fair
- Advertised through the PCC and office social media platforms
- Attended a Community Safety Event in Basingstoke to boost recruitment
- Held a talk at U3A in Havant to promote the scheme and recruitment

Next year we will:

- Continue to advertise for volunteers through social media platforms, contact universities, colleges and continue to use the Council for Voluntary Service and volunteers fairs.
- Work with OPCC partners to raise awareness of the scheme.



We ensure that our volunteers are not out of pocket when attending visits and panel meetings, and have a process for claiming back mileage incurred.



Training is important to us and all new ICVs attend a mandatory one day initial induction training session. The training session gives them the tools and confidence to understand the concepts and processes of Independent Custody Visiting so that they become effective ICVs.

Throughout the year ICVs have continued to receive training via quarterly panel meetings using the Independent Custody Visitor Association (ICVA) bitesize material.

ICVs also have the opportunity to attend the ICVA annual conference which provides up to date information and talks from guest speakers.

In the past year, training has been completed on the following subject areas:

- PACE Code C Refresher Training
- Data Protection Awareness
- Detainee Vulnerability
- Initial Induction training



Did you know that ICVA has a dedicated page of resources on its website enabling ICVs to complete bite-size training modules? Training can be completed remotely with links to additional learning.

READ MORE



LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024/25



HMICFRS Custody Inspection Report

Following the publishing of the custody inspection report by HMICFRS, ICVs will review the key findings, recommendations and scrutinise any action plans produced as a response to the inspection.



ICVA Quality Assurance Framework

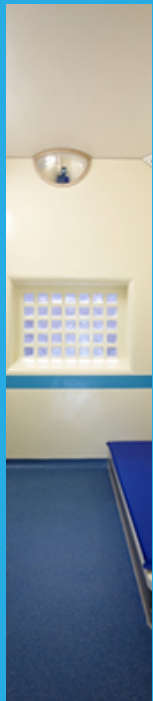
The ICVA's QAF is used for schemes to benchmark progress and achievements and to further enhance engagement with the PCC and local community. Work will continue through 2024 to promote our compliance.



Recruitment

It is important that our scheme is representative of the local community. We will continue to work towards improving diversity within the scheme. We will continue to engage with our current ICVs for feedback and recommendations. More recruitment will be undertaken to bolster both the North Panel and the Isle of Wight Panel.





If you would like more information about becoming an Independent Custody Visitor in Hampshire or the Isle of Wight , or for general information regarding the scheme, please use the contact details below.

ICV Scheme Manager
OPCC, The Long Barn, Dean Estate,
Wickham Road, Fareham, PO17 5BN



01962 871595



opcc@hampshire.police.uk

<https://www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk/get-involved/independent-custody-visiting>

You can also keep up to date with the PCC and her offices day to day work via the newsletter by scanning the QR code or on social media



@DonnaJonesPCC
@opcchant



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If you need to contact the
police please either call 999
if it is an emergency

or dial 101 if it is a
non-emergency

