

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT



Independent Custody Visiting Annual Report 2024/2025

DONNA JONES

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT



@HantsPCC

@HantsICV

Contents

Welcome	Page 3
Overview of Custody in Hampshire & Isle of Wight	Page 4
What is Independent Custody Visiting?	Page 5
Detained Persons and Visit Statistics	Pages 6 – 8
ICV Report Feedback	Page 9
Panel Co-ordinator Reports	Pages 10 - 13
Achievements & Issues	Page 14
Key Developments	Page 15
Events	Page 16
Recruitment	Page 17
ICV Training	Page 18
Looking Forward 2025/2026	Page 19
Further Information	Page 20

WELCOME



I'm pleased to be able to share with you the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Independent Custody Visitor Scheme (ICV) annual report.

It gives a real insight into the conditions faced by people detained by Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary between April 2024 and March 2025. Over 28,000 people were held in police custody during this period, with more than 1,500 people seen by our ICVs. This report summarises the outcomes of those visits.

ICVs are volunteers who make regular, unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the rights, entitlements, wellbeing and dignity of those being held - providing protection and confidentiality.

These visits also promote transparency and accountability for the police, reassuring communities that anyone held in custody is being treated fairly and in accordance with statutory legislation and guidance. As your Police and Crime Commissioner, I have a statutory responsibility to ensure there is an effective ICV scheme in place and I report the activity and findings to the government through the Home Office.

I would like to thank the dedicated and professional ICVs without whom I couldn't discharge this legal function. 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 for your ongoing commitment.

Donna Jones

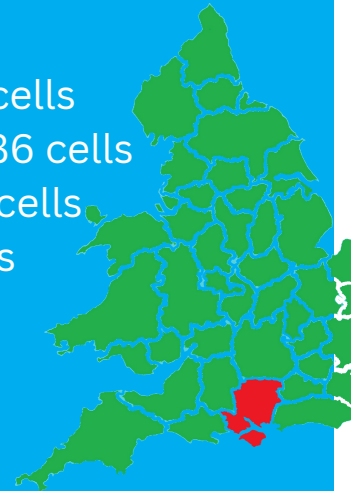
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire & the Isle of Wight

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), which has 36 cells
- Southampton Police Investigation Centre (WPIC), which has 36 cells
- Basingstoke Police Investigation Centre (NPIC), which has 36 cells
- Newport Police Station on the Isle of Wight, which has 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 Basingstoke, Portsmouth and Southampton. 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 roads, 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 have 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 crime and terrorism.



WHAT IS INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING?



Independent Custody Visiting is a well-established system whereby volunteers from the local community call at police custody suites in pairs, unannounced at any time, to check on the treatment of detainees, to ensure the conditions in which they are held are appropriate and that their rights and entitlements are being observed.



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.



The work of ICVs 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.

DID YOU KNOW?

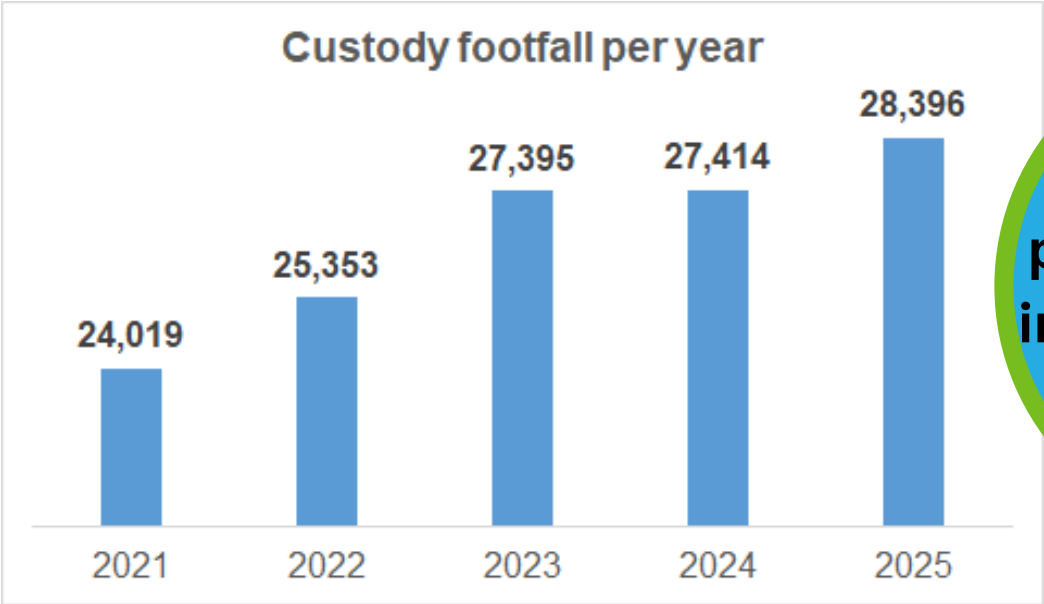
ICVs can also inspect custody records where appropriate and if consent has been obtained from the detainee. If an ICV discovers an issue on their visit, this is raised to the Custody Sergeant present or the Custody Inspector if the matter is of a serious nature that requires urgent attention.

There are currently 35 ICVs volunteering across the scheme. ICVs attend four quarterly panel meetings a year and receive regular training. 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.

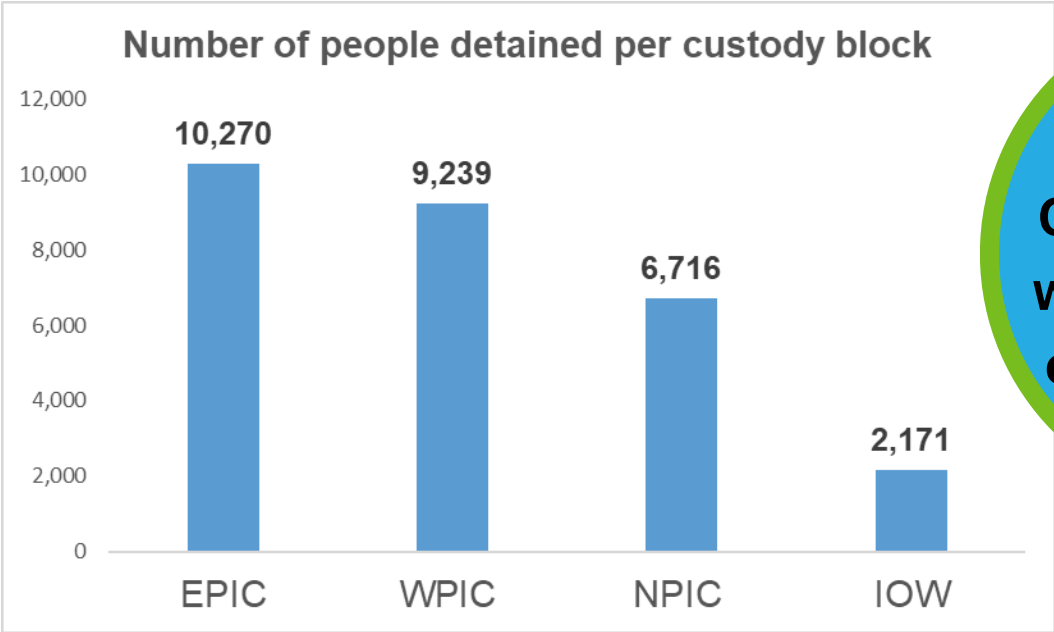
DETAINED PERSONS AND VISIT STATS



1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025



28,396
people detained
in Hampshire and
Isle of Wight



Portsmouth
Custody (EPIC)
was the busiest
custody suite



DETAINED PERSONS AND VISIT STATS



206



ICV visits undertaken.



1,020



Detainees interviewed by ICVs.



310



Number of detainee custody records checked.



345



Times ICVs took action on behalf of a detainee.



552



Times ICVs checked for signs of life of sleeping detainees.

DETAINED PERSONS AND VISIT STATS



Number of
detainee
welfare checks
by ICVs per
quarter.

Quarter 1 (April 24 – June 24)	383
Quarter 2 (July 24 – Sept 24)	371
Quarter 3 (Oct 24– Dec 24)	399
Quarter 4 (Jan 25 – March 25)	418
TOTAL	1,571

Amount of time
ICVs spent
checking on
detainee welfare.

Quarter	Hours/Minutes
Q1 Apr 24-Jun 24	64h 41mins
Q2 Jul 24-Sept 24	69h 10mins
Q3 Oct 24-Dec 24	71h 18mins
Q4 Jan 25-Mar 25	65h 20mins
Total	205hrs 9mins



ICV REPORT FEEDBACK



ICVs report back on how detained persons (DP) are being treated in custody.

Detainee Comments:

First time detainee "Staff have been wonderful"

Female detainee "Female Staff have been very supportive"

"Custody Sgt was sound"

"I have been well looked after"

"Officers have been wonderful"

"I have been treated well, far from traumatic"

"Sandwiches are dry and horrible"

ICVs regularly compliment the professionalism and kindness of custody staff.

ICV Comments:

"Custody Suite busy due to prison lockout, custody officer under great pressure but provided detailed feedback and good service"

"No delays we were well received by custody staff and they were very cooperative"

Custody Sgt "gave us an exceptional helpful visit"

PANEL CO-ORDINATOR REPORT



North Panel - visit Basingstoke PIC

Panel: Currently consists of 11 members. Three new members recently joined and all completed their probationary periods. A new Deputy Panel Co-ordinator was appointed in August.

Achievements: The quota of visits has been met.

Challenges: There were no recruitment issues or missed visits from the panel and ICVs are building good professional relationships with custody staff.

Issues: Delays of over an hour between booking in and authorisation are questioned but are always due to the number of detainees being booked in at that time.

Improvements: Completion of the forms needs to be thorough with more detail where possible.

Panel Co-ordinator's comments: It is good to have the team up to 11 members as this builds up resilience for sickness cover and unexpected changes to availability.



PANEL CO-ORDINATOR REPORT



IOW Panel - visit Newport Custody

Panel: Consists of 8 members.

Achievements: Recruitment and retention of new members has been more positive in the reporting period and, a part from Quarter one the panel has achieved its full quota of visits.

Challenges: Achieving full quota of visits in quarter one was a challenge. Night visits and late evening visits remain a challenge to achieve each quarter.

Issues: No main issues noted apart from concern regarding the welfare of a child who was waiting over an hour to be authorised which was looked into and the reason for the wait was a drink drive detainee who took priority. Request to remove sausage and mash meals due to being inedible has been made.

Improvements: Maintenance issues in the suite are better dealt with e.g. fixing lights and water heater in the kitchen. Food storage has since moved out of a hot kitchen and remains very organised.

Panel Co-ordinator's comments: "Staff are always very helpful during visits and members are assisted throughout the visit".



PANEL CO-ORDINATOR REPORT



SW Panel - visit Southampton PIC

Panel: A full team of 10 members with one retirement and one new member.

Achievements: Our team has fully met its annual quota of 52 visits and the quality of our visit reports has been of a consistently high standard.

Challenges: The panel continue to enjoy good relationships with custody teams and our visits generally go smoothly. On the rare occasions when delays to admission or the provision of an escorting officer have occurred, these have been reviewed and, where appropriate, lessons learned.

Issues: Most common issues are long delays before authorisation of detention and detainees not being informed of the outcome of sleeping reviews at the first opportunity.

Improvements: Plans to introduce mobile phones for Detention Officers (DOs) are due to be rolled out imminently, which has the potential to ease pressure on DOs and enable them to work more efficiently. Measures to improve the treatment of women and girls in custody have been introduced but are not yet fully embedded in practice. Triaging of people arriving in custody will help reduce delays to authorisation of vulnerable detainees, but is not yet fully embedded.

Panel Co-ordinator's comments: "I am proud of the commitment and dedication of the members of the SW Panel, who continue to give generously their time to recognise good practice and identify issues and areas for improvement".



PANEL CO-ORDINATOR REPORT



SE Panel - visit Portsmouth PIC

Panel: We have minimal numbers on the panel currently. One recruit has been waiting several months for security clearance for training to start.

Achievements: A new rota format has been introduced on the panel to mitigate against visits being conducted at the same time each week. The rota continues to work very well, with almost all visits taking place in their allotted time periods.

Challenges: Relationships with custody staff/officers are very good. Generally staff appreciate the purpose of our visits and are as helpful as they can be. Pressure on staff can be an issue when levels are at a minimum.

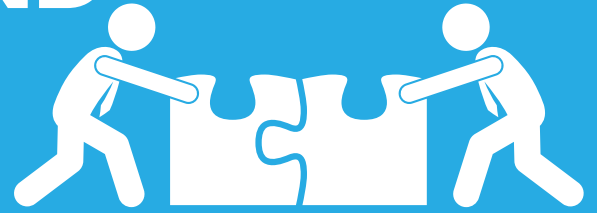
Issues: Delays in authorisation of detainees with no reason logged on custody record remains an issue.

Improvements: Ideally more space for storage of religious materials. In spite of the recent improvement it ought to be made easier to monitor reasons for delay in detention authorisation; staffing levels ideally should take into account the time needed for accurate and complete recording of reasons. Matters concerning staffing levels or handover account by far for most authorisation delays.

Panel Co-ordinator's comments: "I have the impression of conscientious, hard-working staff who often have to contend with difficult situations as exemplified in the visit reports, especially when staffing is minimal".



ACHIEVEMENTS AND ISSUES



ICVs continued to raise concerns about low staffing levels in custody which can impact on 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.

ICVs instigated the moving of a distressed child detainee to a quieter cell due to a noisy DP in the cell opposite.

ICVs used a translation sheet to interview a distressed Portuguese detainee to ensure their rights had been given to him. The detainee said staff had treated him with respect.

ICVs informed custody staff of a distressed detainee that needed a grandchild to be picked up from school.



DID YOU KNOW?

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.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS



Supreme Court Ruling on Gender Rights

In response to the UK Supreme Court decision in relation to the scope of the Equality Act on sex and gender, draft interim guidance has been published by the National Police Chiefs' Council on searches of members of the transgender community, as well as searches carried out by transgender police officers and staff in custody.



Cross Panel Visits

A series of cross panel visits have been instigated throughout the year. ICVs have visited other custody blocks with a member from the panel that visits that custody suite. Following each visit a brief report covering good practice observed is completed and shared between panels.



VISIT

Video Books - Children in Custody

Video Books have been introduced into custody, for any child or young person, but specifically for those who are experiencing their first time in custody. The video book gives an introduction to custody, the roles of staff, their individual rights and entitlements. It also has a virtual tour of custody.



Distraction Items in Custody

A range of distraction items are now available in custody including fidget spinners and foam footballs to support detainees to regulate their behaviour while in custody and reduce feelings of stress, anxiety and anger.



EVENTS



Congratulations to Basingstoke ICV Panel Co-ordinator, Nicki Barry, on receiving her 5 year Long Service Certificate from Police and Crime Commissioner Donna Jones.



Congratulations to Isle of Wight ICV and Panel Co-ordinator, Saskia Taylor, on winning ICV of the year award at the commissioner's award ceremony.



Congratulations to Portsmouth ICV Richard Pooley on receiving a certificate of recognition at the award ceremony.



To recognise the work ICVs do, ICVA put on an online thank you event to mark Volunteers Week. The event included sessions from ICVA Chair, HMICFRS and the National Police Chiefs Council.

RECRUITMENT



During 2024/2025 five new ICVs have joined the scheme after an extensive recruitment drive. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight has 35 active ICVs visiting custody on a regular basis.

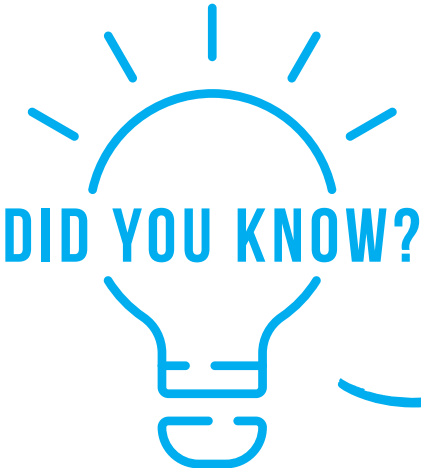
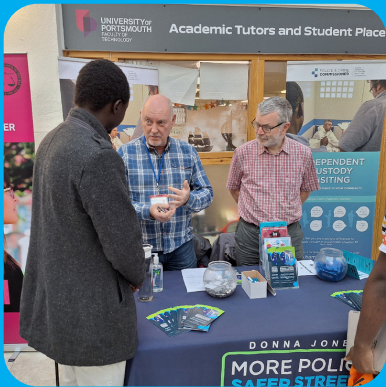
The scheme is promoted throughout the year with the aim of increasing public awareness so that the local community can understand the incredible work of our Independent Custody Visitors.

We continue to advertise for volunteers through social media platforms, universities, colleges, voluntary organisations and volunteer fairs.



ICVs from the Isle of Wight attended the Isle of Wight Court Open day to help promote the scheme to members of the public and recruit new volunteers to the scheme. The day was extremely successful and really well received.

ICVs David Wiseman and David Brown from the Portsmouth Panel attended the University of Portsmouth Law fair promoting the scheme and recruitment drive.



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.

ICV TRAINING



Each year in consultation with ICVs a training programme is produced as part of continuous on-going professional development. In 2024-2025 ICVs received the following training:

JUL



Chairing Meetings: After receiving feedback from panel co-ordinators about how to effectively chair panel meetings, a training session was delivered covering how to manage meetings and responsibilities of the chair.

SEP



The annual seminar: It's a chance for ICVs to hear from the PCC, Head of Central Custody, ICVA on the latest developments. This year's key speakers covered PACE Code C, Drug Testing on Arrest, veterans in custody and new custody intervention service for 18-25 year olds.

SEP



PACE refresher training: As part of the seminar ICVs receive PACE Refresher Training to update their knowledge and increase confidence in an essential part of their role.

OCT



Safeguarding Training: In the October round of panel meetings ICVs received training from the OPCC Safeguarding leads on why safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, recognising types of abuse and how to respond to it.

FEB



Vulnerability in custody: The training gave ICVs an in depth look at how custody officers take an individual approach to detainees to best manage their welfare and improve the detainees overall custody experience.

ICVA Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)

ICVA's QAF is used for schemes to benchmark progress and achievements and to further enhance engagement with the PCC and local community. The scheme will be aiming to achieve the gold standard.



Recruitment

It is important that our scheme is representative of the local community. We will continue to work towards improving diversity within the scheme.



Women & Girls in Custody

As a result of the Baird Inquiry recommendations around female detainee welfare, additional measures were introduced by Force Custody to support women and girls. ICVs were asked to scrutinise the measures and a pro forma was produced to help monitor the implementation of the measures. ICVs continue to monitor their implementation.

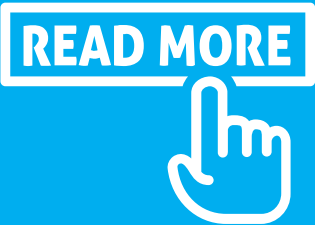


ICVA - Digital Visiting APP

The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) are developing a national digital visiting app for ICVs as outlined in their digital transformation strategy. We look forward to supporting ICVA with the new strategy.



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.





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 contact the:

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



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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

