
Independent Custody Visitors

Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner for Gloucestershire

Quarterly visit report
Qtr3 (Oct-Dec) 2018/19



Independent **C**ustody **V**isitors



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**Police and Crime
Commissioner**
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Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of visits carried out by the Independent Custody Visitors to Gloucestershire Constabulary Custody Suite (Compass House) in the period April to June 2018/19.

Background – how the scheme works

Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Schemes exist to provide assurance to local communities that they can have confidence in the way in which the police treat people who are held in their custody.

Ensuring effective management and oversight of the ICV Scheme is a statutory responsibility of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The ICV visiting process and procedure is governed by a Code of Practice which is issued by the Home Office.

The OPCC recruits volunteer ICVs to undertake the role and provides them with support and on-going training to ensure that they can discharge their role effectively.

The scheme plays an important part in maintaining police accountability to the local community and the aim of this annual report is to ensure that this information is available in the public domain.

ICVs are volunteers who visit our custody, in pairs, and speak to detainees who are being held in police custody. Visits are random and unannounced so that the police do not know when they will take place.

ICVs arrive at the custody suite and are given immediate access to the suite on production of their ID card.

They enter police cells and speak to individuals being held with their permission. Conversations with detainees focus on welfare needs and the provision of rights and entitlements under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE).

ICVs also review a detainee's custody record with their permission to ensure that the detainee has been treated appropriately.

ICVs are not concerned with the identity of the detainee or with the reason for their detention. Any issues raised are discussed as appropriate with custody staff. ICVs also inspect and comment on the general condition and facilities of the custody suite including the kitchen, medical room and showers.

ICVs look, listen, observe and report back to the OPCC on their findings. If the OPCC thinks there are issues that need attention – these will be raised with the Constabulary using the formal channels.

ICVs come from a variety of backgrounds and sections of the community. They must be over the age of 18 and live, study or work within Gloucestershire's policing borders.

Custody overview

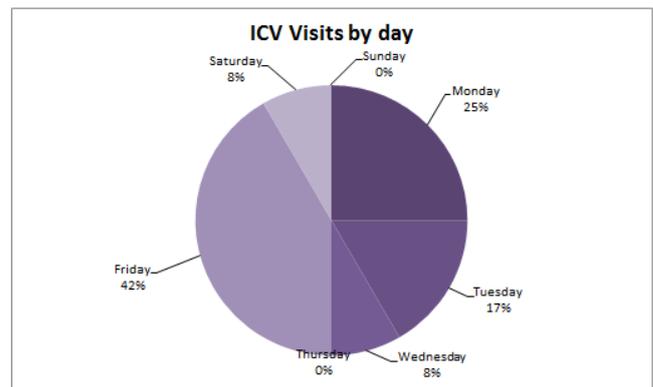
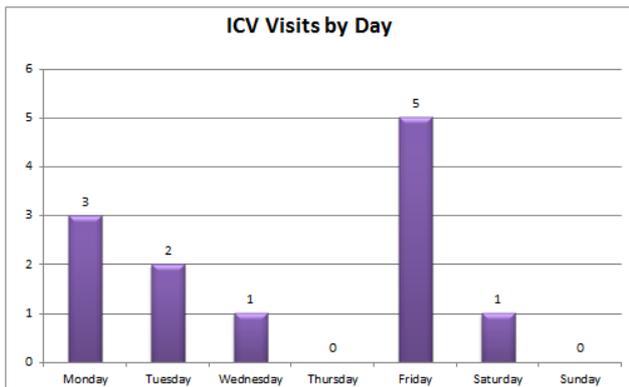
Total number of detainees through custody Qtr3	Number of ICV visits	Total number of detainees in custody at time of ICV visits	Total number of detainees unavailable	Number of detainees observed	Total number of detainees visited
1687	12	116	13	21	53

Five new ICVs have been recruited this quarter. Vetting is completed as is training and probation periods are underway. A number of other expression of interests have been received for new ICVs however the volunteers have decided to pause recruitment for a period to ensure visits remain regular for current ICVs.

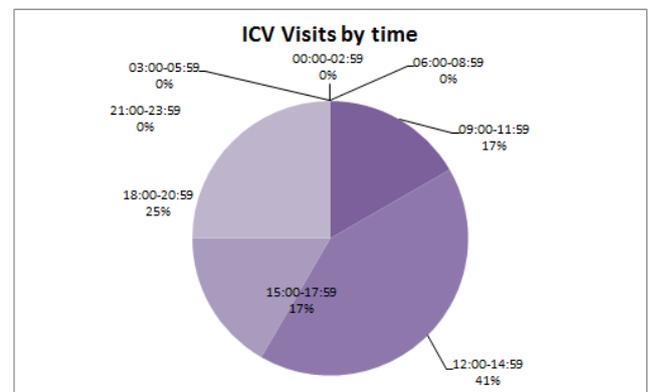
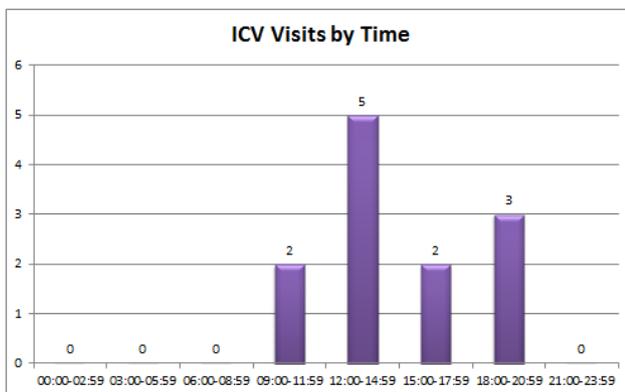
TACT trained and vetted ICVs have been invited to be involved in a table top exercise with the Constabulary. Feedback will available next update.

Visit statistics

Days of the week



Times of the day



Length of visit

Date of visit	Length of visit (hour : minute)
01/10/18	1:15
06/10/18	1:20
19/10/18	0:45
02/11/18	0:00
05/11/18	0:25
14/11/18	0:20
19/11/18	0:40
23/11/18	0:35
27/11/18	0:35
30/11/18	0:40
11/12/18	1:10
28/12/18	1:10
Average for quarter	0:44

Regularity of visits

Average of 1 visit every 7.58 days

Comments

The table below details the comments recorded at each ICV visit:

Date of visit	Comment
01/10/18	<p>For the record the PCC accompanied us on this visit. He was interested that detainees had no access to the time. Also, he was most helpful in Googling Arabic translation for a detainee. The Sergeant was most helpful as this was his first time with ICVs.</p> <p>It was brought to our attention by the Inspector that they had a detainee with suspected TB the other day and had no access to suitable cleaning solutions (bleach) and had to go to Asda to purchase this item.</p>
06/10/18	Random selection of detainees checked - custody staff very accommodating all unused cells clean and tidy
19/10/18	Arrived during staff handover, staff very busy due to high volume of people in custody. Staff all very helpful, no concerns to report.
02/11/18	<p>There was limited reading material, although we understand that staff have to be careful of staples for self-harm purposes.</p> <p>Kitchens were extremely clean.</p> <p>Tampons and pads available – good range.</p> <p>Food all within sell by, however the use by date was 2020!</p> <p>We would like to know if the Food Standards Agency checks the kitchen provision?</p> <p>We were surprised Custody Staff were unaware that Female Detainee research was being undertaken. There were no forms to use but the Custody Sergeant kindly photocopied some of the forms we brought with</p>

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>us. We were able to speak with a couple of CDO's and LDO's and found them to be very informative and helpful.</p>
05/11/48	<p>All things in order as custody officer said supplies were up to date.</p> <p>Sergeant mentioned that the signature pads keep breaking down, so an issue that needs to be looked at.</p>
14/11/18	<p>Custody staff were helpful and got us into the custody suite very quickly. Several members of staff showed us the hygiene stores and told us what they were able to offer to female detainees.</p> <p>Sergeant was able to hear most of the conversations we had with detainees, difficult for them to be far enough away to not hear what is being said.</p> <p>2 detainees were on recall- we were unsure as to whether or not we should see them so conducted a check on them both.</p>
19/11/18	<p>We asked if there was anything they wanted to highlight and there was nothing as all in order.</p> <p>However the inspector came and spoke to us about a cell which had a normal chair which could have been used as a weapon and he showed us a chair that was very heavy that can be used as an alternative for detainees with mobility issues.</p> <p>Staff were extremely helpful, patient and courteous and accommodating.</p>
23/11/18	No comment
27/11/18	<p>Custody suite very busy due to staff shortage and shift change Inspector came over from HQ to assist us A number of detainees arrived at the same time all needing interpreters Computer system very slow which caused delays</p>
30/11/18	All in order.
11/12/18	<p>Most detainees required blankets as it's a cold night. Plenty in the store. Towels plentiful. Food all in date and readily stocked.</p> <p>Exercise yards and cells all clean. Cells out of use were: 34 / 35.</p> <p>Religious texts and equipment stored appropriately and checked for integrity.</p> <p>Due to shift handover the start of the visit was delayed. This was not an issue as we were allowed access to the suite to wait until someone was available.</p> <p>Staff helpful and were receptive to requests to stand out of sight of detainees during visit.</p>
28/12/18	<p>Visual checks on empty cells all appeared clean</p> <p>Cells 24, 28, 36, 43 and 47: cells are currently out of use due to tile grout</p>

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>needing repair as a potential hazard – been reported and custody staff reported generally repairs are carried out in a timely fashion</p> <p>Staffing issues discussed: Sgt reported that 9 CDO staff have given notice and will be leaving in the next 2 months – company are reported as not to be recruiting until these staff leave – this will impact on staffing levels in custody suite – usually 6 CDO’s per shift this will reduce to 4 CDO’s per shift and will ultimately impact on police staff who will have to fill in the gaps until recruitment of new CDO’s - as the clearance process takes a significant time this could cause further issues for Police staff</p>

The table below details comments made about detainees during visits:

Date of visit	Comment
01/10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At interview • Spoke very little English, quite agitated, requires gluten free food and water, also requested an interpreter. Given the lack of English we were satisfied that he was being well looked after and Custody Sargent checked his records. • First time in custody, was on medication but staff were aware of this. Had been in custody 18.00 yesterday, his case had gone to CPS but now feels he need Legal advice. Also, requested a cup of tea and update as to what will happen next. • Been in custody since 18.00 yesterday, waiting to be charged had been in custody before so understood the procedures. Wanted update but later observed being released. • Sleeping when first seen then very confused, requested medication and stated that she was leaking. Wanted to use her mobile but told this would not be allowed. Asked to see custody record advised that her calls were on block. Had been in custody before. She had been seen by nurse about her leak which was due to a wound which she came in with. • Observed via hatch, satisfied he was breathing and opened eyes and advised he was on lie down and advised was being checked regularly.
06/10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting Legal representation has medication for sleeping – detainee reported that more information on what is going to happen would be useful. • Detainee reported “ the custody staff have been good as gold” Has had medication, spoken to solicitor and awaiting an update • Visual check carried out through hatch • Visual check carried out through hatch • Has had food and drink awaiting duty solicitor - detainee reported that he was aware of 36 hour rule • Detainee asleep – visual check through the hatch • Detainee reported being worse for wear when brought into custody so cannot remember whether or not he had been given his rights – he requested a drink as he had just woken up • Detainee report having mental health issues and needing her medication - she was drunk when arrested and could not remember if she had been read her rights, offered a phone call or offered legal

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>advice – detainee asked if she could be informed what was happening as she needed her meds and needed to see her husband who had stage 4 cancer – Sanitary . Further enquiries with the custody sgt about the medication he reported that she was being released imminently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual check carried out • Visual check carried out through hatch
<p>19/10/18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Been in custody before, was satisfied with treatment and expressed no concerns. • Observed breathing through hatch, satisfied that there were no concerns. • Observed breathing through hatch, satisfied that there were no concerns. • Been in custody before, was satisfied with treatment and expressed no concerns. • At interview • At interview • Unable to talk due to her being interviewed at time of visit. • Been in custody before, requested food and another blanket as her is cold. Otherwise is satisfied with treatment. • Engaged well, no concerns with treatment. • Seemed comfortable, has been in custody before, says that he has already discussed his medication with staff. • At interview • Was laying on the floor close to the door with mattress and blanket. Says that he would not like to talk as he was tired and wanted to sleep. Seemed comfortable. • Has been in custody before and seems comfortable with next steps. Says that he has informed staff of medication needs, however has asked if we will remind them as he needs them by 16:00.
<p>02/11/18</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This 16 yr old detainee suffers from asthma but doesn't currently require an inhaler. She participated in the Female Detainee Questionnaire. She requested reading material. She claims that she wasn't asked if she required legal representation, however she didn't require any. • This detainee was undergoing finger printing. She has a fractured hand, sustained from a previous custody stay when she allegedly punched the cell door. Her mother was in attendance and we saw her in the corridor prior to release. We did not engage with her. This detainee is 14yrs old. • Suffers from depression but currently not medicated. On antibiotics for UTI. We were unable to see this detainee as she was in interview. • We were advised not to see this detainee by the Custody Sergeant as he is currently presenting as 'very angry' and is still under the influence of drugs. Staff are allowing him to 'sleep off' the effects. He has seen the Doctor and is due for a review at 4pm. • This detainee was asleep. We observed her through the hatch and she had eaten and there was evidence of liquid refreshment. She had a blanket. She arrived at 10am and is due for a Doctor review at 15.30.

Date of visit	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This detainee suffers from depression and anxiety for which he takes medication. However, he hadn't taken his meds for 'several days'. He is thought to be concealing drugs and was taken to hospital for a scan, on his return he has been allowed to sleep (have a lie down) and is currently having constant observation. He arrived at 14.45 on Thursday (yesterday).
05/11/48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Came in this morning. Read his rights, waiting for solicitor. Mum could not come due to young siblings, YST person going to come. Had a drink. Waiting for solicitor and appropriate adult. Had food and drink. Waiting for an appropriate adult. Had a drink and requested food. Seen breathing through hatch and on half an hour rousal. Seen breathing through hatch. Asleep seen through hatch. Asleep seen through hatch Advised by custody staff that not advisable to visit as violent.
14/11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On recall Sergeant was informed that he had requested legal advice and not heard back. On recall- here for 2 days and requires medication if he is staying any longer. Sergeant was made aware of this. Sergeant made aware of legal and family contact requests.
19/11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Had drink, food later, was comfortable and looked after and polite. Survey carried out. Concerned about a 78 year old guy at home, officers had carried out a visit and had informed him. Requested books and magazines to read. Also wanted to have a shower. Came in at around 1.00pm. On medication has had drink and food. Came in around 5.00pm, so was ok at the moment with needing anything. Came in at around 2.00am last night. On medication was seen to be shivering and made the sergeant aware of this on the visit. He had been seen by the nurse and was not hungry. At first he did not know how long he had been in the suite. He said he was scared. We talked about eating and drinking and he then came around to wanting something. He was cold and asked for another blanket. We noted from the outside before the door was opened that she was pulling her hair out and was complaining about the noise of the alarm from inside the cell. Once the door was opened she was very agitated and clearly intoxicated with drink. We spoke to her and she claimed that she was arrested as she was suicidal and depressed. Told us that she was on medication and this had been denied to her. Showed us marks on her wrists and claimed they were made when she was arrested. Asked for tea and blanket. Due to her state we made the decision in not completing the survey as she was clearly not in a fit state.
23/11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We noted he smelt of alcohol. When mentioned to staff CS said he was aware he was an alcoholic . Had checked with detainee who says he does fit when withdrawing but is Ok for about 12 hours. So no action

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>being taken at the moment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration • Detainee reported that police would not let him contact anyone to let them know he was here. (Operational reasons?). On medication – police are aware of this. • Detainee did not want any food or drink (came in at 9.30 this morning). Is on medication but police are aware of this. He didn't want a solicitor. • Came in last night. Was totally centred on being cold. Wanted his coat. We said we would get him more blankets. He didn't want any food. Was not sure about having someone know he was there. We felt he was having difficulty understanding us but had declined an interpreter. • Has just been bought in. Eating lunch. Doesn't know what's happening. Awaiting interview. • Was taken for interview as we arrived and unfortunately was still being interviewed at end of visit so unable to do the questionnaire or speak to her.
27/11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detainee complained of pain in right hand wrist - reported that this was due to the handcuffs being put on too tight. No apparent redness to the affected area noted Requested more food – Custody officer noted • Detainee reported that his regular medication was required – time due for this was 1400hrs ICV's informed custody staff regarding this for checking Detainee also requested a blanket
30/11/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues. • Interview • Used sign language and content, spoke no English. • All good happy. • All good happy. • Happy wanted a shower, custody Sgt was sorting it out before the visit. • Asleep
11/12/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrested previously. May need sleeping medication if required to be detained much longer. Req food as he had not had any. • In Interview • Wife informed of presence in custody. Never been in custody before. Required a blanket. • Arrested before. Required blanket and food. Had been to hospital with a broken hand. This injury was not as a result of his arrest. • Language barrier. Had a brief conversation. Was keen to be released seemed in good order had nothing obvious to report. • Paper copy of rights not given. Blanket required. All Ok otherwise. • This detainee was under constant watch. Had learning difficulties. Had been arrested before and was difficult to communicate with. Required another blanket. Otherwise all OK • Blanket required. Had been arrested before. All rights given and understood. Engaged well with us, as visitors, and was happy with his treatment and knew what was happening next to him. • On remand • On remand

Date of visit	Comment
28/12/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detainee was at the hospital at the time of the visit so unable to see • Detainee out of cell having fingerprints taken at time of visit • Detainee out of cell having fingerprints taken at time of visit • Detainee reported in custody since 16.20pm yesterday - reported no food - been offered detainee declined food – medication sorted - Awaiting duty solicitor • Awaiting interview – detainee reported that medication all ok – detainee declined food and drink • Detainee reported in custody from 4.30am today – No medication required – Awaiting solicitor and interview - sanitary products offered – detainee reported not required • Detainee still intoxicated at time of custody visit - he could not recall whether rights given or not on arrival – he thought he had been told his rights this morning – requested a coffee as not had anything to drink • Detainee did not want to engage in conversation with custody visitors. Custody staff reported that this detainee did have mental health issues and had been offered support however detainee had declined this offer • Detainee reported intoxicated when brought into custody so unsure of conversations – reported a smoker and Asthmatic – staff aware of medical need and may need an inhaler – detainee reported that he didn't want to let anyone know he was in custody – awaiting solicitor • Unable to see detainee as not in cell during custody visit

Two issues this quarter have been reported to the Constabulary although not escalated to the Chief Officer Group. On 02/11/18 ICVs queried whether the kitchen provision is inspected by the Food Standards Authority. OPCC have checked with the Criminal Justice Department Chief Inspector and have been informed that the Custody Suite is exempt from FSA inspection.

On 28/12/18, ICVs reported concerns raised by a Custody Sgt regarding nine CDO staff giving notice and leaving within 2 months. The concern being the staffing levels in the custody suite and implications for police officers. The OPCC has raised this concern with the Criminal Justice Department Chief Inspector.