



**OPCC**

Office of the Police &  
Crime Commissioner  
for Gloucestershire

# Independent Custody Visitors

**Quarterly visit report: Qtr. 4 (Jan-March) 2018/19**

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire



Security classification: **NO MARKING REQUIRED**

## 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.

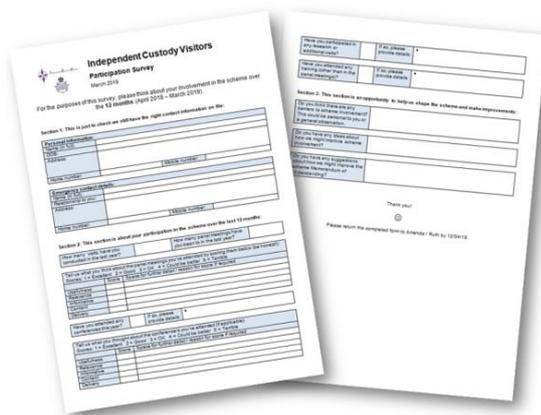
ICVs come from a variety of backgrounds and sections of the community. They must be over the age of 18 and live, study or work within Gloucestershire's policing borders.

## Custody overview

Total number of detainees through custody Qtr4	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
1805	11	65	12	13	40

The new ICVs have commenced their six month probationary period and visits. Feedback from accompanying ICVs has been positive.

As part of the ongoing commitment to provide training at the quarterly ICV Panel Meetings, the Scheme Managers were delighted to be able to enhance the trans training provided by ICVA by inviting PC Bee Bailey, former chair of the [National Trans Police Association](#) along to the meeting. The training was really well received by all participants.



As part of an ongoing commitment to improve the scheme and its efficacy, the Scheme Managers devised a self-assessment form for volunteers to complete, capturing their involvement with the scheme so far and potentially identifying areas of improvement. Drawing on the scheme expectations as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding, the survey captures attendance at Panel Meetings and therefore training, conferences and other activity such as open days.

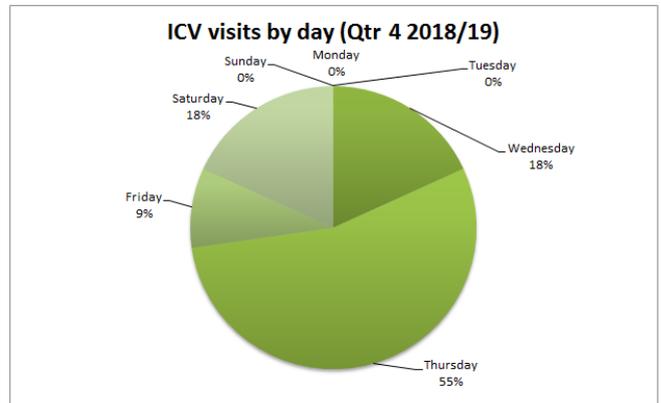
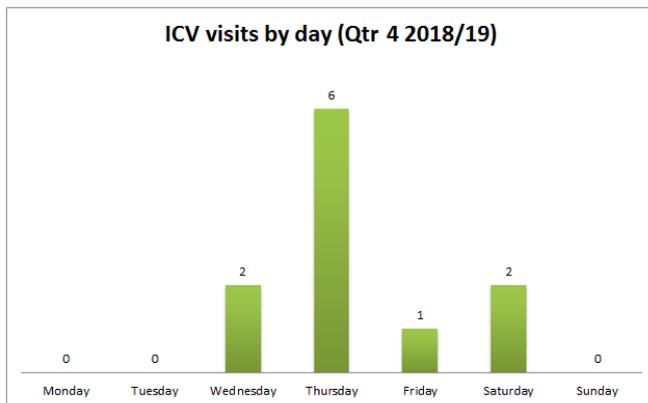
A summary of the feedback is outlined below:

- The **MOU** already contains a commitment to attend at least 2 panel meetings a year and the consensus is for this to remain. However, an additional requirement is to be added to stipulate that there should be participation in a *minimum of one per year of additional sessions* (such as national/regional conference(s), open day, meeting new starters, recruitment/promotion of scheme, filming, additional training, volunteering for pilots and studies and participation in other groups such as use of force scrutiny panel)

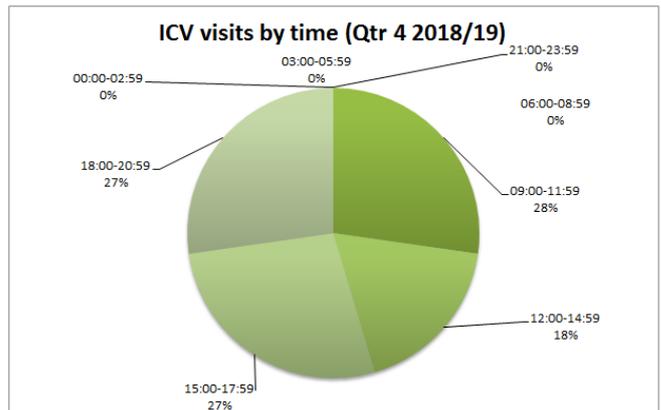
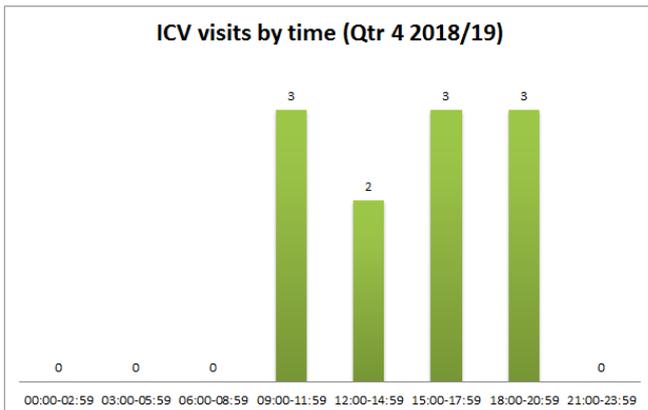
- Prior to first visits for new ICVs, a **pre-meet will be introduced**. It is suggested that an informal meeting in the car park 5/10 minutes early to have a proper introduction and chat through the procedure of the visit before actually commencing would better support new volunteers.
- **Variation of times** of panel meetings. The Scheme Managers have previously offered catch up sessions for training, etc. with no take up. Following feedback from the survey it is suggested that a 5.30pm meeting start is considered by the volunteers rather than 6pm.
- **Annual review**. The Scheme Managers have proposed an informal annual review to discuss any issues, the scheme and talk about generally how it is going.

## Visit statistics for Qtr. 4

### Days of the week



### Times of the day



## Length of visit

Date of visit	Length of visit (hour : minute)
10/01/19	00:50
24/01/19	00:40
02/02/19	00:34
07/02/19	01:00
16/02/19	01:05
21/02/19	00:41
28/02/19	00:35
06/03/19	00:55
14/03/19	00:59
22/03/19	00:35
27/03/19	01:20
Average for quarter	00:50

## Length of visit

Average of 1 visit every 8.18 days.

## Comments

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

Date of visit	Comment
10/01/19	<p>We saw that the various religious texts and prayer mats were stored respectfully and appropriately.</p> <p><b>REDACTED</b></p> <p>We observed that one of the detainee phones was out of order and had been for over a week.</p> <p>We were shown the interview rooms which were of a high order, clean and well appointed. We understand that there were bespoke facilities for vulnerable detainees such as children.</p> <p>It was clear that a good relationship had evolved between the custody staff and AA's however we understand that Solicitors can question this familiarity.</p>

Date of visit	Comment
	In summary this was a very positive and well facilitated visit.
24/01/19	As seen from above quiet and calm. No issues. Staff helpful.
02/02/19	No comment
07/02/19	<p>The Kitchen area is currently being redecorated</p> <p>This was <b>REDACTED</b> first Custody visit - all staff were extremely helpful and took time to explain certain situations in particular explaining the situation with regards to the detainee in Cell 24 this demonstrated how staff were doing all they could to support this detainee with his specific individual needs - this was particularly useful as it gave an insight into the complexities of some situations that arise in custody</p> <p>Please pass on our thanks to the staff for their attention today</p>
16/02/19	<p>Slight delay in access but no issues.</p> <p>Sgt very helpful to us and interacting with detainees when required.</p>
21/02/19	<p>Empty cells were checked and found to be clean.</p> <p>Food stocks were good and in date. Checked for cleanliness</p> <p>Signature pads, for the checking in desk, fail to operate on a frequent basis. Thus not allowing for the detainee to sign for receiving their rights. This is an issue that requires urgent rectification. Cell 39 – Faulty toilet Cell 40 – Faulty toilet Cell 43 – Door fails to shut as it sticks.</p>
28/02/19	Staff excellent. Sgt <b>REDACTED</b> was very good as this was <b>REDACTED</b> first visit. He explained everything taking time out of his busy evening.
06/03/19	We had a substantive conversation with the G4 Medic. He raised the point that often the supplies of dressings G4 have provided in response to Police requests are rather limited. This prevents him from potentially adequately treating his custody patients. The implications being that suppurating wounds/ulcers could become infected with implications for their on-going health. Especially as often this is the first and only time these health issues are seen.
14/03/19	<p>Blankets recently replenished, two types of blanket were observed. Non-rip and standard. There were plenty of both types.</p> <p>Had a long discussion with the inspector, who felt very strongly that the food is 'sub-standard', and of poor calorific value. He also implied that there is a large amount of waste due to detainees disliking their first choice and trying multiple meal options. Stocks of certain meals were also low (all day breakfast).</p> <p>We were also informed that the 'spork' is no longer used due to a safety breach. This means that detainees are now using spoons for all of their meals.</p>

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>Visited an exercise yard, which was overall okay but had a few bits of rubbish scattered around the floor.</p> <p>Escorting officer was extremely helpful and happy to help. He gave us plenty of time to look around and answered any questions we had fully.</p>
22/03/19	Spoke to inspector in charge of the custody suite. She informed us that there were no outstanding issues around the custody suite itself.
27/03/19	<p>Had conversation with duty nurse who was happy with the contents of the medical room and facilities.</p> <p>The visit went without issues and we were provided with access quickly. Sergeant <b>REDACTED</b> gave us all the support and guidance required and requests made. The suite seemed very calm and well controlled.</p> <p>We provided some feedback regarding some detainees requiring extra blankets especially in the low number cells (1-9) which appeared to be cold. Also fed back on those that have asked for food and not received.</p>

The table below details comments made about detainees during visits:

Date of visit	Comment
10/01/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainee feeling a bit shaky. By his own admission has been off his meds for anxiety and depression for 3 days. Showing withdrawal symptoms such as tremors. We were told by the custody sergeant that he was due to be seen by the doctor we asked that he be reviewed by the mental health team as well. As we were leaving the corridor, he was being seen by the duty GP.</li> <li>• This detainee was in interview.</li> <li>• This detainee had been in his cell since lunchtime after a warrant for his arrest was issued. The duty sergeant informed us that as they were unable to get him to the Magistrates Court before 3pm, he now has to remain in custody overnight until he can go to Court tomorrow. This impacts the experience of the detainee as well as the work involved for the custody staff. We would question why Magistrates refuse to have prisoners moved to Court after 3pm, despite the fact that they are open until 5pm.</li> <li>• This detainee had not been informed that he could have some reading material or have a shower. He has specifically asked for the former and the duty sergeant was informed.</li> <li>• This gentleman was in interview. He has LD and an Appropriate Adult had been provided.</li> <li>• This detainee earlier tried to escape from the exercise yard. This is discussed in our comments below. We viewed him in his cell through CCTV as he appeared to be asleep, but staff were also concerned he may be violent to us as ICV visitors.</li> </ul>
24/01/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainee not in cell. Interview. Not seen</li> <li>• Detainee seen but refused. Had been asleep</li> </ul>

Date of visit	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainee not in cell. Not seen.</li> <li>• Detainee engaged well. Detainee claimed he had not been given written rights but had been read his rights verbally. Had been in custody before.</li> <li>• Detainee not in cell so did not see.</li> </ul>
02/02/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asleep with blanket. Noted rise and fall of chest</li> <li>• Had no food and requested all day breakfast and tea two sugars. Not on medication and did not know what would happen next. We advised we would request that he was informed.</li> <li>• Had been in custody since Thursday lunchtime over 36 hours. Magistrates had given extension. Was waiting to see her solicitor this afternoon. Had been offered food and but only wanted crisp which was provided. Been given nurse/doctor facility. Had had shower yesterday and was informed that she could go outside for fresh air. Only had to ask. Offered feminine products.</li> <li>• Asleep but observed rise and fall of chest and checked that she had been roused. Had blanket.</li> <li>• Arrived at 4.00am he was waiting for a solicitor. Had had a drink did not want food and was not on any medication. Someone had been contacted and he knew what was going to happen next.</li> <li>• He wanted all day breakfast and tea no sugar. He was not sure what was going to happen next and how long he would be in If long time he would like to let someone know. Advised he could have a solicitor but did not want one as did not think serious enough. Advised we would ask sergeant to let him know re next action.</li> <li>• Asleep under blanket with foot out. Sergeant went into check all ok.</li> <li>• Asleep under blanket. Noted rise and fall.</li> </ul>
07/02/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainee appeared to be asleep – blanket covering the detainee - observed face to face in the cell and later during the visit via the CCTV</li> <li>• Detainee was non English speaking – limited understanding but reported all ok with a thumbs up – did report he had been given a drink Detention officer reported that the detainee had been communicated with via language line to check needs etc.</li> <li>• Detainee was non English speaking – limited understanding but reported all ok with a thumbs up – did report he had been given a drink</li> <li>• Detainee was agitated and during the visit the custody staff were communicating with him through the cell door to try to calm the detainee down – staff reported that the detainee had removed items of clothing and was threatening self-harm by tying the items around his neck – constant observation was being carried out to ensure detainee safety Staff reported that the detainee had been offered food, water and the opportunity to go out into the exercise yard but had refused this offer. Staff explained that the detainee was unhappy as he had not been able to go to court this morning – We checked the detainee via the CCTV</li> <li>• We discussed this detainee with <b>REDACTED</b> the YST support worker who informed us that this detainee was currently being assessed by the mental health team – we decided that it would not be appropriate to speak to this detainee at this time as we did not want to exacerbate the situation</li> <li>• This detainee was on a constant watch – it was agreed that we would</li> </ul>

Date of visit	Comment
	not visit this detainee as he was likely to be volatile however we did observe on the CCTV and he appeared to be asleep under the blanket
16/02/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advised that she had had a full mental health assessment and was being transferred to a secure hospital in Hereford. We viewed her through the cell door but did not carry out a visit due to the above reason.</li> <li>• Engaged with us well, had been in custody before arrested 18:00 Friday night.</li> <li>• First time in custody. She said it was scary being in first time. Arrested last night. We asked if she required female hygiene products – she didn't, we informed her they were available on request.</li> <li>• Had been in custody since 20:00. He didn't want anyone informed he was in. He commented that his mattress was thinner than he would have liked.</li> <li>• Detainee's level of English was adequate. He said it was cold in the cell - the blanket made it ok. We informed him he could have extra blankets. He was advised that his friends had brought his phone so he could have that on release.</li> <li>• Arrested 04:00. Had been in custody before. Complaining of injuries sustained prior to arrest and healthcare had recorded this. He was still waiting to see a solicitor.</li> </ul>
21/02/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checked through cell door. All appeared well.</li> <li>• Not very happy with his situation. But had been treated OK this time. Mentioned that he suffered from mental health issues. This was not elaborated.</li> <li>• No copy of his rights had been issued. Overall happy with his situation and the way in which he had been treated. Had only been in custody 2 hours</li> <li>• Did not require anybody contacted. Had not received copy of their rights.</li> <li>• Had been treated well although only just been processed.</li> </ul>
28/02/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All good / no problems</li> <li>• In interview</li> <li>• No issues</li> <li>• In interview</li> <li>• Asleep</li> <li>• Asleep</li> <li>• Concerned about length of time to process. Spoke to Custody Sgt - operational requirements as other person involved had some legal representation and taking time with first interview. All good.</li> </ul>
06/03/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just inside the door was a puddle of water which we have asked custody staff to mop. This happened when he used the sink.</li> <li>• This detainee didn't realise he could have a shower and having been in the cell since yesterday he would appreciate one. He requested that he be given something to read, preferably with pictures.</li> <li>• This gentleman requires his anti- anxiety meds which he didn't come with. Custody staff are aware of this and are allowing the statutory 6 hours before they administer any meds. He wanted his mother and father informed where he was. We checked with his record and for operational reasons his family cannot currently be informed. He claims he does not know what is on offer to eat and would like a coffee with x2</li> </ul>

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>sugars and milk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refused visit</li> <li>• This detainee had been given sanitary products and reading material. She had not eaten despite arriving yesterday but this was her choice and evidence of cups in the cell showed that she was well hydrated. She assured us she was taking x2 sugars with every hot beverage!</li> </ul>
14/03/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In interview</li> <li>• In interview</li> <li>• In interview</li> <li>• Although they were given contact to a family member, he requested another phone call when talking with us. This was passed on to the accompanying officer.</li> </ul> <p>During our talk, he also mentioned that he is on Citalopram. He had not told the officers this, and has said that he does not need it during his custody stay. Although, this may be due to the fact that he believes he will be 'out in no longer than an hour'. This has been handed over to the accompanying officer.</p> <p>When asked if he has been offered food and drink, he made it clear he did not want to eat the food as he had heard it was not good.</p>
22/03/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wanted clarification about next steps. She was unhappy about her time in custody and did not want to take out her frustration on us and therefore chose not to discuss it.</li> <li>• His boss was informed, however he also wanted a family member informed that he was in custody. Needs blood pressure medication. Sergeant made aware</li> <li>• Wants an update on what will happen next.</li> <li>• No requests or issues</li> <li>• Wants drink, custody staff were informed. He needs medication tonight, sergeant informed.</li> </ul>
27/03/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First time in custody, we had no concerns understood what was happening and being looked after. No requests.</li> <li>• The detainee was Romanian and had little grasp of English. He had been provided with a sheet of information in his language. Did not require food or a blanket and was booked in with an interpreter via the telephone.</li> <li>• Asked for another blanket and this was provided. He has asked for food awaiting delivery. He was advised that he could be held for 24 hours having arrived at 9:00am.</li> <li>• Asked for a blanket as she had a coat over her. We asked if she had been offered hygiene pack and she said yes.</li> <li>• Had requested food three times but was still waiting. Also requested another blanket as he was cold. Has also asked for someone to be contacted an hour ago.</li> <li>• No concerns or issues had only been in since 5:00pm.</li> <li>• Romanian national who spoke very little English. Had been booked in via an interpreter on the telephone and had been provided with information sheet in his language.</li> <li>• Advised that he had been causing problems through shouting. On visit</li> </ul>

Date of visit	Comment
	<p>he was quite calm had been provided with food. He was asked questions but not very coherent and difficult to understand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had been here for 22 hours and was concerned how long he was going to be detained. The sergeant advised him that they were awaiting CPS instructions. He was asthmatic and had his inhalers so no medical requirements.</li> </ul>

The table below details issues raised by ICVs visits and the response from the Constabulary:

Date of visit	Issue raised	Constabulary response
21/02/19	<p>Signature pads, for the checking in desk, fail to operate on a frequent basis. Thus not allowing for the detainee to sign for receiving their rights. This is an issue that requires urgent rectification.</p> <p>Cell 39 – Faulty toilet Cell 40 – Faulty toilet Cell 43 – Door fails to shut as it sticks.</p>	<p>Signature pads – 3 working. Two computers without any. I have checked with ICT they were not on order but are now. I have asked ICT to review how many of these things we have ordered over the past two years as they do not seem to last. I will report back when (and if) they give me an answer.</p> <p>As for the listed cells I have personally checked each and they appear to be operating normally.</p>
06/03/19	<p>We had a substantive conversation with the G4 Medic. He raised the point that often the supplies of dressings G4 have provided in response to Police requests are rather limited. This prevents him from potentially adequately treating his custody patients. The implications being that suppurating wounds/ulcers could become infected with implications for their on-going health. Especially as often this is the first and only time these health issues are seen.</p>	<p>We do not have a supply problem. The stock that we have in our medical rooms fully meet our contractual obligations and is also the recommended equipment that we should have according to the Faculty of Forensic &amp; Legal Medicine (FFLM) Guidelines. The dressings that this particular HCP mentioned require a specialist skill set that we are not all trained on. If we feel that a wound is infected we will send the detained person to an appropriate facility that will deal with the issue.</p> <p>If the ICV's would like to speak to myself I can fully brief them on our role within the custody environment which will allow them to understand why we cant provide the specialist treatments that a GP surgery or an A&amp;E department may be able to provide.</p>