
2017 Annual Report

Independent Custody Visitors

Gloucestershire Office of the Police
and Crime Commissioner



Independent Custody Visitors



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Foreword

One of my most important roles as the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire is to ensure that everyone in the county gets treated fairly and there is a high standard of service from our local police. That applies wherever they are - at home, out in the streets or in custody.

My eyes and ears watching out for the rights of those in detention are in the form of our entirely voluntary Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs), dedicated to monitoring standards and conditions in police cells and making sure that all police detainees are treated with dignity and respect.

Once again I am proud to be able to introduce the Annual Report for the Gloucestershire ICV Scheme, which has provided another year of excellent service to the county.

I'm really grateful to the work of my office in supporting the volunteers and also the lead IVC co-ordinator Judith Coney-Jones for her continued hard work and dedication.

We rely on the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication of our volunteer Custody Visitors. This year we've seen an influx of new volunteers. This is great and brings with it fresh eyes and ears. I thank you all for your dedication.

ICVs are genuinely independent; they bring the local community in, in providing oversight of police custody arrangements. It's not easy; people they meet, often late at night, can be very angry or extremely distressed.

Our county is a more civilised place thanks to the unselfish contribution made by our Independent Custody Visitors. On behalf of us all, I thank them for their continued service.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "MAS" with a horizontal line underneath.

Martin Surl, Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner



Independent Custody Visitors



Introduction

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). Martin Surl was elected by the public in November 2012 to be the first Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire. The PCC is independent of the police and his main responsibility is to hold the Chief Constable to account for the decisions and actions the police take.

The ICV visiting process and procedure is governed by a Code of Practice ([annex one](#)) which is issued by the Home Office.

The protocols for how this will take place in Gloucestershire are agreed between the PCC's Office (OPCC) and Gloucestershire Constabulary.

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.



How the scheme works



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.

Currently we have 13 ICV volunteers undertaking this role in Gloucestershire.



OPCC activity overview

Following a number of personnel changes within the OPCC, in April this year it was agreed that the OPCC would have two leads for the Independent Custody Visitors scheme. These are the two Policy Officers for the OPCC, Amanda Segelov and Ruth Greenwood. Budgetary restraints mean that having a dedicated ICV Scheme Manager is not currently possible but by having two officers leading on scheme management, it is hoped that there will be more capacity to develop the scheme and improved resilience overall.

Since taking on the role of scheme managers, work has begun to build on the developments implemented by the previous scheme manager, Grace Boughton. This began with finalising the recruitment campaign initiated by Grace in 2016.

The OPCC launched a recruitment drive on Friday the 29 of July 2016 in order to find 8-10 individuals with the flexibility to do evening and weekend visits, and to increase the diversity of volunteers (age and ethnicity predominantly). In conjunction with recruitment being launched, the OPCC worked alongside the Constabulary's design team who created promotional material, issued a press release about the scheme and the Communications and Engagement team made a notification in the internal Police Service bulletin. The aim of this was to raise the internal profile of the scheme.

BBC Radio Gloucestershire interviewed the OPCC ICV coordinator about the vacancies and a local community radio station (Gloucester FM) also publicised the scheme among some of our more diverse communities via the Local Area Sergeant. To generate further interest before the application closing date (28 September 2016), the ICV volunteer coordinators were present during the Gloucestershire Constabulary and OPCC Open Day in the Commissioner's Zone on the 17th of September 2016.

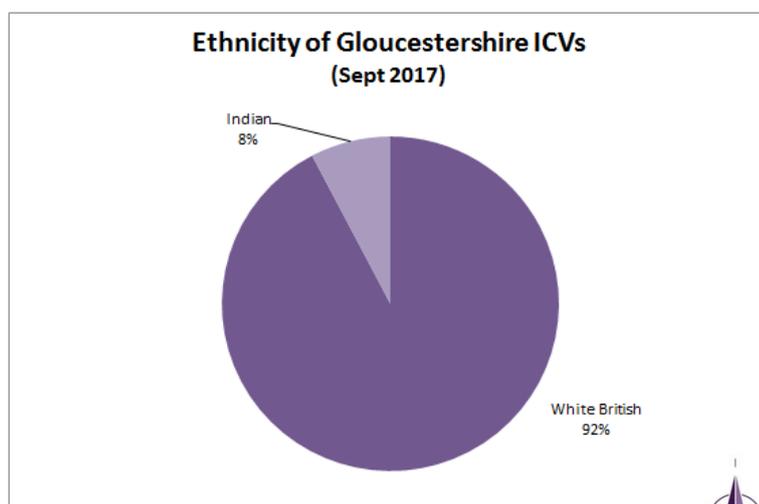
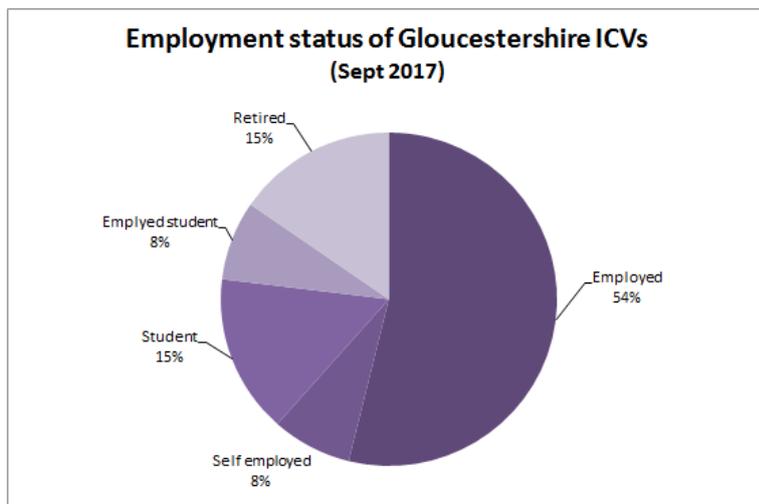
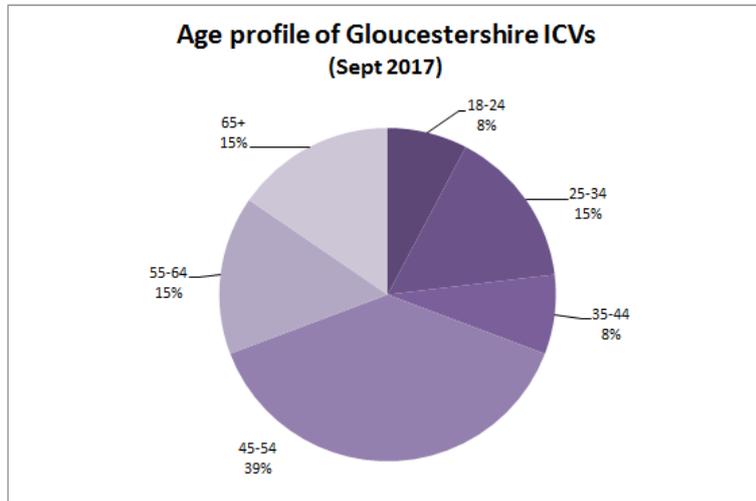
There were approximately 40 expressions of interest in the role and 11 completed applications. Applicants were given the opportunity to visit the custody suite in late October to ensure they were fully aware of what the scheme involved prior to interview. In total nine of the eleven applicants were successful at interview and seven had their initial training on the 11th of March. Two further applicants have been successfully vetted but were unable to attend the initial training.



Following the induction training, the cohort of ICVs increased from six to thirteen. New ICVs were able to begin their visits following training, and accompanied by existing ICVs to support individual learning. As well as increasing the numbers of ICVs, a priority for the



recruitment programme has been to try to develop a more diverse scheme demographically. The scheme has been criticised by HMIC for this in the past. The charts below demonstrate that with regards to diversifying the demographics of volunteers, the recruitment campaign was successful.



The training in March was the last training to be supported by ICVA ([Independent Custody Visiting Association](#)). ICVA have taken the decision to invest in 'train the trainer' events to enable local schemes to deliver their own training, rather than rely on a central resource. In May 2017, the two scheme managers attended training in Cardiff based around the new induction package developed by ICVA which includes new, updated training materials.

With these new skills and training resources, the OPCC plan to embark on a rolling recruitment programme to encourage more ICVs with the aim of increasing the regularity of visits and diversify the times of visits. Further 'bitesize' training packages will be developed by ICVA which, along with the Constabulary's Learning and Development (L&D) Department, will be delivered by the OPCC in what we hope will be regular panel meetings with ICVs. Discussions have already been held with L&D and future training will include health and safety, safeguarding, mental health and personal safety.

Along with planned regular panel meetings, training packages and recruitment, the OPCC has also identified a number of the activities required to improve the overall administration of the scheme. This included refreshing the ICV Memorandum of Understanding (see [annex two](#)), refreshing the complaints process for ICVs (to be discussed and agreed at the 2017 AGM), and access to the Force IT system in a move towards paperless reporting.

With access to the same IT system used by the OPCC and Constabulary, ICVs will now be able to record their visits directly onto the 'system' which will be accessed by the scheme managers. This will negate the need for scanning and e-mailing forms and, it is hoped, decrease the opportunity for visits to be missed in relation to recording.

A new Microsoft Word form has been developed and can be accessed via PC terminals in Compass House by ICVs (see [annex three](#)). Training around how to access and save these forms will be provided at the 2017 AGM.

It is our longer term aim to develop a closer working relationship with the ICV volunteers and to try to engender a feeling among volunteers that they are part of the wider OPCC team. This is of course while being cognisant of the importance of independence. With this in mind, PCC Surl will be accompanying ICVs on a visit to custody in the near future.



We also aim to develop our links with ICVA and to that end we have arranged a visit from the ICVA Chief Executive, Katie Kempton in November. This will be the first time Katie has visited Gloucestershire and we hope that we will be joined by as many volunteers as possible.



Further developments for the OPCC include ensuring that all ICVs have review meetings to ensure the scheme remains compliant with the [code of practice](#) and liaising with IT to explore opportunities around mobile devices for recording visits.

Finally, the OPCC would like to thank all ICVs for their ongoing commitment for the scheme, not least Judith, Anthony and Paul who have volunteered for over five years now, Alison and Sarah S for ten years and Ian for twelve. All those named will be invited to the annual long-service achievement awards next year hosted by the Constabulary and OPCC as a formal thank you.

ICV activity overview



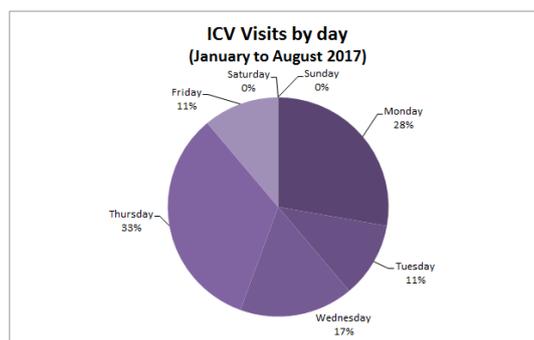
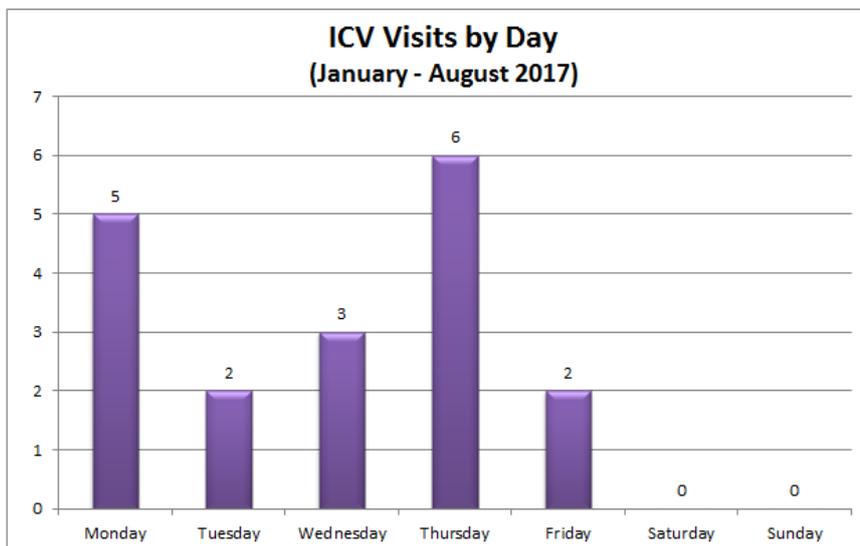
At the AGM last year, it was reported that the visits were taking place around **once every two weeks** (14 days). This followed a drop in the number of volunteers in the previous year.

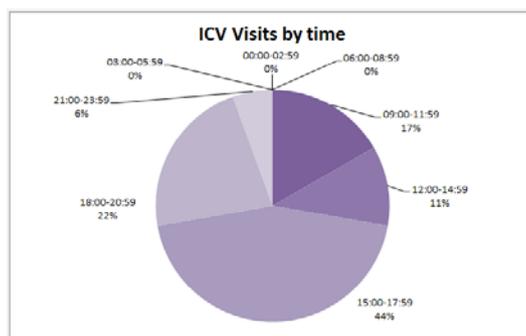
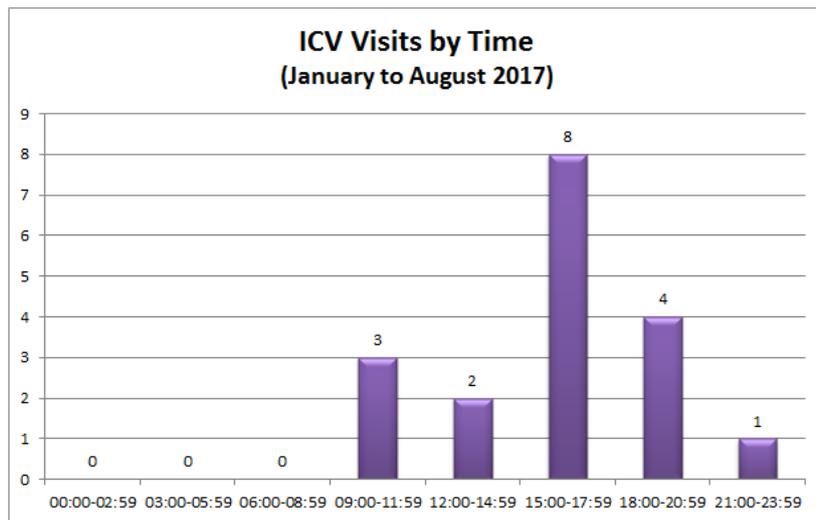
The last visit recorded was on the 24th of August which was the **18th visit** this calendar year. This equates to **one visit every 13 days**.

Taking the period from April, which is when numbers of volunteers increased, to the 24th of August, there have been **12 visits**. This equates to an average of **one visit every 12 days**.

This analysis shows that we are still outside of the target of one visit every ten days but the trend is definitely in the right direction.

The graphs below provide a visual overview of the visits this calendar year.





The charts above show that visits are predominantly occurring on **Thursdays (33%)** and **Mondays (28%)** and between **3pm and 6pm (44%)**. Over the next year we would like the ICVs to try to spread their visits more evenly across the week and day. Ongoing analysis will monitor this throughout the year.

The total number of people spoken to during visits over this period is **90** out of a possible **155** detainees. This means that during visits ICVs are speaking to **58%** of detainees in custody. This is an increase compared to last year where **44%** of detainees were spoken to.

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

Date of visit	Comment
06/01/17	Despite questions arising, all questions answered by custody staff very quickly and helpfully.
18/01/17	Helpful as always - very busy.
02/02/17	Helpful as always, no issues. 2 unserviceable microwave ovens can make life difficult.
17/02/17	Nothing reported



Date of visit	Comment
28/02/17	All rooms clean and tidy. Very cooperative staff. Thank you.
15/03/17	Everyone helpful - all areas in order
10/04/17	No issues
20/14/17	Tour of cells all clean and tidy. Detention officer very helpful and happy to answer questions for new ICV.
11/05/17	Very helpful - no issues
17/05/17	No problem - helpful as ever
25/05/17	Everyone helpful. Slight delay in letting us in (10 mins) - rang a second time. Very busy.
17/06/17	No issues. Helpful as ever.
26/06/17	No comments recorded
13/07/17	Custody busy but still clean and tidy. Custody officer very helpful
24/07/17	Other general areas - all in order. Custody staff very helpful
14/08/17	11 - Detainee requested hot food. 22 - Detainee reported was on medication - custody informed.
15/08/17	1) Urine on floor - deep clean when cell vacated. Kitchen seen - checked food dates - all fine. Medical room seen but speaking to detainee All staff very helpful
24/08/17	No cell issues. Clean cells. Calm environment. Helpful staff

The table below details comments made about detainees during visits:

Date of visit	Comment
06/01/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked for update on process • Asked to speak to mum and wants solicitor - has one. Will try mum again. • OK. Had translated document. • Over 24hrs. Had extension from outside Glos. • Didn't understand what happening. Checked and mental health assessment arranged
18/01/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No problems • Interview • Asking for phone call • Interview • No problems • Asleep • Mental health - doctor on the way (psychological issues) • No problems • Asleep
02/02/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues • Asleep • Mental health assessment



Date of visit	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues • No issues • Not happy - discussed with custody Sgt and looked at custody records. No issues. • Need to look at custody record • Interview • Asleep
17/02/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asleep • Felt cell was cold • Asleep • Asleep • Asleep • Asleep
28/02/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not want to speak to ICV, said all is 'OK' • Being released • Mental health issues - seen by medics. Bruising on left arm. Requested Auntie Anne could accommodate if custody spoke to her mother for details. • Detainee says he has Parkinson's - had medication. Awaiting solicitor • All OK, awaiting Court • Swollen hand - seen by doctor. Had drink, declined food. • Detainee reported that he has bipolar - did not inform custody on arrival of need for medication. Now needs medication. Requested 2x cups of tea as not eating. Has been punching wall and red marks to knuckles on both hands. Requested a solicitor and also requested a toothbrush.
15/03/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In interview • No problems • In interview • Immigration OK • In interview • No problems except cup of tea - said he had not told them he was on meds. • Court - asleep • Released
10/04/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked about meds - checked, Dr seen • At interview • Sleeping • Wanted someone informed but no telephone number available. Now wants legal • Due to mental health not spoken to but observed



Date of visit	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleeping • At interview
20/14/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All OK • All OK • All OK • All OK - requested more food • All OK - awaiting interview • Detainee in hospital • Detainee in hospital
11/05/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth interview • Asleep • Requested water • With solicitor • Wanted water and reading material
17/05/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Office • No problems • Asleep • Asleep • Asleep • No problems
25/05/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stated father says you need solicitor • Not sure about solicitor • Requested cup of coffee • Female pregnant waiting to be seen • Waiting to see doctor • Cup of coffee and food required • No problems • In interview • Asleep
17/06/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form illegible
26/06/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues • Sent to hospital • Sleeping
13/07/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asleep • Asleep • Asleep • OK - appropriate adult in reception



Date of visit	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asleep • Observed wounds (knuckle & arm). OK - seen by medic (checked records) • Unsure of what's going on - adult contacted • Asked for medical attention • Asleep • Asleep • Asked about transport home - officers arranged whilst there • On constant watch - observed by camera only
24/07/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angry and incoherent but no issues • At interview • No issues • Sleeping but observed no issues • No issues • No issues
14/08/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All OK • All OK • All OK - awaiting interview • Detainee appeared agitated • In interview • Detainee asleep - viewed through door • Unable to view
15/08/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urine on floor • Requested phone call - sister or daughter • Waiting on CPS decision • Waiting for solicitor - water please • At interview • At interview
24/08/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requested blanket • No issues • Call mum - requested food and blanket. No issues

As the tables above show, there have been no real areas of concern reported to the OPCC requiring the attention of the Chief Officer's Group within the Constabulary. No issues of concern have been reported in relation to the standard of the environment in custody or with individual detainees.

Of the **120** comments listed above:

- there were **3** occasions where detainees were reported as being either 'agitated', 'angry and incoherent' or 'not happy';
- there were **4** reports of visible injuries;
- mental health is mentioned **5** times;



- there were **26** mentions of detainees being asleep;
- detainees being at interview was mentioned **16** times;
- there were **5** requests for food or drink;
- on **1** occasion there was a report of urine on the floor – the comments indicate that a deep clean of the cell was organised;
- there are **3** reports of detainees requiring medication;
- **4** requests or notes of medical assistance are recorded;
- a blanket was requested **once** as there was **1** report of the cell being cold; and
- no issues / no problems / all OK was reported **38** times



Summary and next steps

This report provides an overview of the many positive steps the ICV scheme has taken this year but, as ever, there's still more to do.

Building on the successful recruitment campaign, we will be launching the rolling recruitment programme in the New Year. This will be supported by in-house induction and refresher training delivered by the Scheme Managers.



We're finally moving away from paper-based reporting and over the next year we will work with colleagues in IT to develop a mobile solution to reporting.

Numbers of visits has increased but we are still outside of our target of one visit every ten days. By recruiting more volunteers we hope that this target is more achievable. We also hope that more ICVs will result in more diversity in visiting times.

We now have two TACT (Terrorism Act) trained and vetted ICVs but we need two more. We will therefore be seeking volunteers to take on this important role as a priority.

With regular scheduled meetings, we hope to build a strong working relationship between the OPCC and ICVs. These meetings will not only provide regular contact and a forum for refresher training, they will, most importantly, enable volunteers to provide feedback to the Scheme Managers and identify further opportunities for improvements.

Finally, thank you for your time and ongoing support! There has been a lot of changes over the last twelve months but we hope that our volunteers agree, these developments have been to the benefit of the scheme overall.

Amanda & Ruth



Annex one – Independent Custody Visitors Code of Practice

The Home Office published Code of Practice on Independent Custody Visiting can be found here: http://icva.org.uk/uploads/publications/ICV_Code_of_Practice-APR2013.pdf

“This Code of Practice on independent custody visiting is issued in accordance with section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002, as amended by section 117 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and paragraph 299 of Schedule 16 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Local policing bodies and independent custody visitors (ICVs) shall have regard to the Code in carrying out their relevant functions. Throughout this Code, the term ‘police and crime commissioners’ includes the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) (in respect of the Metropolitan Police Service) and the Court of Common Council of the City of London Corporation (in respect of the City of London Police).”

(page 5)



Annex two – Independent Custody Visitors Memorandum of Understanding

This is an agreement between the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire and _____ outlining the expectations and requirements of both parties in the effective operation of the Gloucestershire Independent Custody Visiting Scheme.

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner of Gloucestershire undertakes to:

- Ensure that custody visitors are properly supported in performance of their role;
- Pay close regard to Home Office/Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) guidelines and best practice;
- Keep volunteers informed of local and national development in independent custody visiting;
- Provide initial and ongoing training available to all custody visitors;
- Provide official identification;
- Process scheme volunteer expense claims in a timely and efficient manner;
- Ensure, when necessary, that any issues/concerns arising from custody visits are dealt with by the Constabulary;
- Liaise with/between the Constabulary and custody visitors and to review and act upon all items arising from such reports;
- Have regard to the scheme's guidelines in respect of the process for dealing with complaints made against custody visitors;
- Conduct probation reviews for visitors new to the scheme (six months after their first visit);
- Conduct full re-assessments of suitability at 'regular intervals', but no longer than three years apart;
- Have regard to the scheme's guidelines in respect of the process for removing custody visitors from the scheme;
- Include an update on the scheme within the PCC's annual report; and,
- Ensure the Independent Custody Visiting scheme's smooth and efficient operation.

The custody visitor undertakes to:

- Maintain high standards of personal conduct, integrity and appearance;
- Keep the identity card safe and use it only on custody visitor business;
- Carry out visits to custody units in pairs with fellow visitors in line with the panel rota, scheme guidelines and training received;
- Make a minimum of 4 visits per year (dependent on the size of the team)
- Undertake the expected duties of a custody visitor during visits, including:



- Check on the conditions in which a detainee is kept, their health and wellbeing and their legal rights and entitlements, with reference to Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984;
 - Consult (where appropriate) the detainee's custody record to clarify and check concerns raised by the detainee;
 - Discuss with the custody officer any concerns and requests arising from the custody visit, and to bring to the custody officer's attention any issue that needs to be dealt with; and,
 - Report to the co-ordinator or scheme manager(s) any issues or concerns from the visit.
- Ensure custody visit reports are completed satisfactorily, ensuring all relevant information is recorded correctly, clearly and concisely and is sent to the appropriate contact within two days;
 - Keep the panel co-ordinator and other panel members informed of any problems relating to your own ability to meet the requirements of the visiting rota or changes in personal circumstances;
 - Adhere to the health and safety requirements for the custody visiting scheme;
 - Complete and submit any necessary documentation relating to the scheme, or in connection with your appointment, in a timely manner;
 - Retain a good working relationship with key stakeholders including custody visiting colleagues, the OPCC, custody staff and any other interested group or individual;
 - Attend and take an active part in at least two quarterly panel meetings per year;
 - Attend seminars, development and training sessions as and when required;
 - Contribute towards the success of the scheme, promoting improvement in the way that the scheme is delivered;
 - Inform the scheme manager(s) when withdrawing from the scheme;
 - Return documentation and identity card on leaving the scheme; and,
 - Maintain confidentiality of personal information accessed whilst being a custody visitor **at all times.**

We agree to be jointly bound by this custody visiting agreement.

Signed: _____
**Chief Executive,
Office of the Police and Crime
Commissioner of Gloucestershire**

Signed: _____
Custody Visitor

Date: _____

Date: _____



Independent Custody Visitors



Annex three – Independent Custody Visitors Visitor’s Record



Independent Custody Visitors

Visitor’s Record

Compass House, Gloucester

Day:		Date:	
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TIMES OF ARRIVAL

At reception:		In custody area:	
Time visit started:		Time visit ended:	

Category of detainee	PACE		Home Office	Other	Total
	Adults	No. of persons under 17			
Total number of detainees					
Number seen					

RECORD DETAILS OF EACH DETAINEE VISITED

Cell number	Custody number	Visit accepted (A) or refused (R) and why	Any matters brought to the attention of the Custody Officer and action taken by the Custody Officer

Name of Custody Officer:	
Number:	



CUSTODY VISITOR'S GENERAL COMMENTS			
Name of ICV:		Name of ICV:	
Remarks of Custody Officer / LPA Commander (To note any action taken regarding comments by Custody Visitors)		Deputy Chief Constable's remarks	
Name:		Name:	
Date:		Date:	

