

Office of the Police and Crime  
Commissioner for Surrey

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# Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Annual Report  
April 2017 – March 2018



## Foreword from Surrey PCC, David Munro

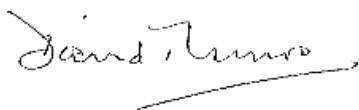
Our Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) provide an essential service by checking on the welfare and treatment of people held in custody in Surrey and I am proud to present the Annual Report for 2017/18.

The management and oversight of the ICV scheme is a statutory responsibility of the Police and Crime Commissioner and one which my office and I take very seriously indeed. It is really important to me that police processes around how detainees are treated in custody are transparent and open to independent scrutiny which is why the ICV scheme remains so essential.

They help ensure that people who find themselves in the custody system in Surrey are treated fairly and any issues raised are appropriately addressed. As you will read, over the last year issues such as the provision of appropriate adults for young people in custody and sanitary products to women detainees have been raised and addressed via the ICV scheme, which shows that it can make a real difference.

Our ICVs come from a variety of backgrounds and walks of life and following a recruitment drive earlier in the year, we now have 42 volunteers in Surrey including a number of new faces which is great to see. Between them they spent a total of over 239 hours in custody last year which is a great achievement. I am extremely grateful to each and every one of them for the time they have given up and dedication they have shown.

I would personally like to thank all Surrey's Independent Custody Visitors for their valued service in this vital role and I look forward to continuing our close working relationship with them in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Munro". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

## What is Independent Custody Visiting?

Independent Custody Visiting is a national requirement, detailed in a Home Office Code of Practice and supported by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA), whereby specially trained members of the public make random and unannounced visits to custody suites to check on the welfare of detainees and the conditions they are being held in. Locally, Independent Custody Visiting is under the remit of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the area who has authority for running and maintaining the scheme in their force area. Therefore, within Surrey this falls to David Munro.

Independent Custody Visiting provides protection to detainees and the police, and reassurance to the wider community. Volunteers from Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Schemes across the UK independently check on the welfare of detainees who may be feeling vulnerable or confused, providing independent scrutiny of their treatment and the conditions in which they are being held. Independent Custody Visiting Schemes exist to provide reassurance to local communities that they can have confidence in the way in which the police treat people who are held in their custody.

Independent Custody Visiting allows the police to demonstrate their commitment to transparency and provides public reassurance that policing in their area is fair and in accordance with statutory legislation and guidance. The aim of this Annual Report is to ensure that this information is available in the public domain.



## How the Scheme is Organised in Surrey?

Surrey Police operates from three custody suites at Guildford, Staines and Salfords (Reigate area). The Woking suite was closed for 24/7 operation in November 2013, but is kept in a state of readiness so that it can be used on a planned basis when extra capacity is required, for example if there is a special operation likely to result in a large number of planned arrests or if a suite is closed for regular maintenance/cleaning. This has been the case since December 2017 when Staines custody closed for refurbishment and therefore the custody operation based from there moved to Woking until works are completed (anticipated in July 2018).

The cell capacity is as follows:-

- Guildford (24 cells)
- Salfords (24 cells)
- Staines (19 cells)
- Woking (15 cells) – when in use

Each of the three 24/7 custody suites has its own panel of ICVs. The panel is responsible for organising the visiting rota and undertaking the visits.

During a custody visit, a member of the custody staff escorts the visitors around the suite to ensure their safety. Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) enter police cells and speak with their permission to individuals being detained. Conversations with detainees focus on welfare needs and the provision of rights and entitlements under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). With permission from the detainee, they will also review the notes kept on their treatment during detention. 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 at the end of each visit, report back to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) on their findings. The OPCC takes any issues raised to Surrey Police in the appropriate way, keeping ICVs informed of feedback and actions agreed.

Each panel meets on a quarterly basis with the Custody Inspector responsible for the suite and the ICV Scheme Manager to discuss the visits made and any issues raised.

## Recruitment & Demographics

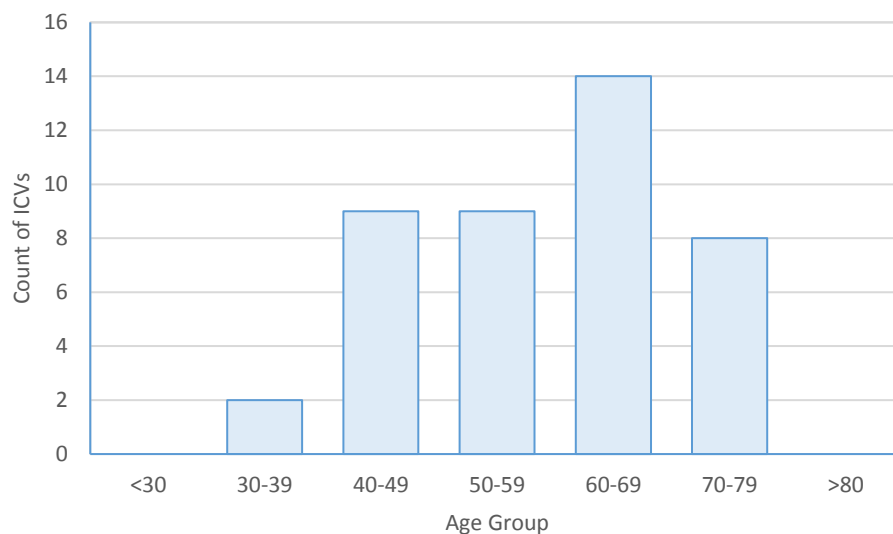
ICVs are independent of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the police, and will have no direct involvement in the criminal justice system. They come from a variety of backgrounds, must be over 18 and live or work within the Surrey Police area. At the close of 2017/18 there were 42 active Independent Custody Visitors working within Surrey.

During the autumn of 2017, the OPCC launched a successful recruitment campaign to gain more volunteers for the scheme. The scheme manager promoted the work of ICVs within universities, volunteer bureaus and widely on social media (which netted the greatest response). The recruitment campaign generated a great deal of public interest and resulted in 26 applications. In October 2017, the OPCC offered 16 applicants positions on the scheme and all now have successfully completed the training and passed vetting. The OPCC wishes each of our ICVs a long and successful appointment.

Exploring the composition of volunteers further shows the following:

- Of the 42 volunteers, 25 are female, 17 are male.
- The average age of our ICVs is 59. (Full details on the age breakdown are indicated in the bar chart).
- The average length of service, rounded to the nearest year, is 4 years and the longest serving ICV has been with the Scheme for 23 years.
- 12% of all volunteers come from a BME or Non British background.

### 1. Age Spread of ICV Volunteers



## Visit Statistics

Visits provide a snapshot of what is going on in custody at the time of the visit and are undertaken across all days of the week and on a 24 hour basis. Each ICV Panel aims to complete one weekly visit between the hours of 6am and 11pm and one monthly 'out of hours' visit (between 11pm and 6am). This is crucial to ensure that visits do not become predictable and do not occur at set times.

When looking at the number of visits between the 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018, the following can be established:

- Surrey's ICVs conducted 183 unannounced, random visits across Surrey's custody suites.
- Surrey ICVs spent over 239 hours in custody during the year.
- Visits were well spread over the entire week and hours of the day, thus helping keep ICV visits unpredictable.

### 2. ICV Visit Statistics

	Surrey Wide	Guildford	Salfords	Staines
Visits Undertaken to Date	183	61	61	61
Regular Visits	149	50	51	49
OOH Visits	33	11	10	12
Hours spent in custody	239	87	82	70

During the same period, a total of 11,788 people were held in Surrey custody centres, this was an increase of 219 people from the previous year. At the time of the ICV visits a total of 981 detainees were in custody (8.32% of overall annual custody population). This sample size is broadly consistent with that of the previous 4 years. Of these 981 people:

- 543 or 55% of detainees in custody at the time of an ICV visit were available to the ICVs. The remaining 45% (438) of detainees were not available to the ICVs for justifiable reasons such as sleeping, being in interview or being booked in or out by the police.
- 501 of the 543 (92%) available detainees when asked by ICVs if they were willing to discuss their treatment in police custody agreed to do so.

- 26 detainees (5% of those asked) whilst declining a custody visit, agreed that the ICVs could have access to their custody record in order to obtain an overview of their treatment whilst held in custody.
- In total, 519 detainees (96%) expressively gave their consent for their custody record to be viewed by ICVs.
- Only 11 detainees (2%) refused both the opportunity to talk to an ICV and for them to review their custody records.

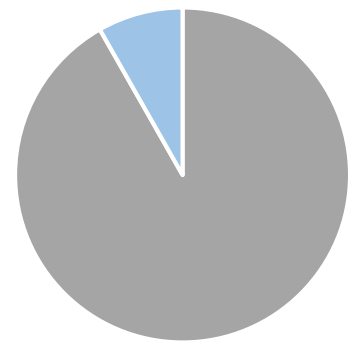
These are felt to be very good, positive results when benchmarked nationally with other custody visiting schemes and is largely due to the professionalism of the volunteers, the police’s support of the scheme and policy of ICVs introducing themselves and the Scheme to detainees as opposed to this introduction being custody staff led.

### 3. ICV Interaction with Detainees

	Surrey Wide 2017-18 Performance	Compared to Previous 12 Months	Guildford	Salfords	Staines
<b>Number of detainees in custody during ICV visits</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>+102</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>273</b>
Detainee agreed to both interview & records check	493		163	181	149
Detainee agreed to interview, refused records check	8		3	1	4
Detainee refused to interview but agreed to records check	26		15	6	5
Detainee refused both interview & records check	11		6	4	1
Number of detainees where interview wasn't possible	438	+42	176	149	113
<b>Number of detainees receiving some form of welfare check by an ICV</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>+93</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>272</b>

In addition to this, Surrey ICVs assume access to the anonymised custody records of detainees who are not available to them in order to have some kind of overview of the welfare and treatment of as many detainees as possible (438 during this reporting period). Taking this into account, ICVs had some form of welfare access to 970 of the detainees in custody at the time of their visit. This means that ICVs had the opportunity to comment on the detention of 8.23% of the total Surrey custody population for the financial year 2017/18 (up from 6.86% in the last reporting period).

### 4. ICV Impact on Custody Population



- Total Custody Population
- % of total custody population receiving a direct ICV check during 2017/18

## Issues Reported

ICVs are encouraged to resolve minor welfare concerns raised by detainees with staff at the time of their visit. They debrief with a custody sergeant at the end of each visit wherever possible enabling clarification of issues where necessary on both sides. Any issues which cannot be resolved in custody will be taken forward by the ICV Scheme Manager as appropriate. Concerns reported to the Scheme Manager are logged and followed up with the Force. The outcomes are notified to all ICVs to enable discussion at panel meetings and cross-panel learning.

In the period covered by this report, ICVs raised and resolved concerns around issues such as:-

- The occasional delay in the provision of Appropriate Adults for young or vulnerable detainees thus potentially lengthening their stay in custody. In conjunction with Surrey Appropriate Adult Volunteer Service (SAAVS) each perceived delay was investigated. Regular catch ups are held between the SAAVS, Surrey Police and the OPCC to ensure a continued excellent service to Surrey's detainees.
- The provision of sanitary products to females in custody. ICVs nationally highlighted that the provision of products available to females in custody was in places woeful – this campaign was supported by ICVA. Since this, Surrey has rolled out a new, much improved, provision for female detainees and processes have been put in place to ensure all female's dignity is upheld.
- Whilst a person is in custody, their detention gets reviewed at specific time intervals by the Inspector (as dictated by Police and Criminal Evidence Act). These reviews can occur whilst a detainee is asleep. However upon waking, the detainee must be informed that a review took place and advised of the outcome of it. This should be recorded in their custody record. On several occasions, whilst the reviews were undertaken in the correct time frames they had not been properly communicated to the detainee on waking or if they had, they had not recorded appropriately in the records. As a result of this, ICVs now track every incidence of this and the findings are collated and fed back to the police at regular intervals to encourage accuracy of records.
- On one occasion, ICVs highlighted that an inappropriate item had been left in a cell with a detainee which may pose a risk to either the detainee or the police. This was immediately raised to custody staff, the item was promptly removed and a debrief occurred with relevant custody staff to ensure lessons were learnt.

ICVs also very regularly comment on the exceptionally good care being given by custody staff to detainees. They highlight the massive concern for welfare demonstrated by the staff and the desire for people to leave custody in a better position than when they arrived.



One such instance was where a female detention officer showed great respect to a detainee when ensuring a prayer mat was handled in a respectful manner, ensuring it wholly met the detainee's needs.

## Training & Other Events

The best custody visiting schemes have the best trained custody visitors and we take our responsibility in keeping our ICVs up-dated on changes in the custody environment relevant to their role very seriously.

We hold an Annual Training Day each year inviting speakers on topics relevant to custody. We also offer our ICVs the opportunity to attend local and regional training events and the ICVA National Conference. Reports were compiled by those attending and circulated to all to share the learning.

The Annual Thank You Event was held in November 2017 at the WWF in Woking, with the purpose of thanking the volunteers for their continued commitment. The guest speakers for the evening were Nick Ephgrave (Surrey Police Chief Constable) and Sherry Ralph (Chief Operating Officer of ICVA), who both gave interesting and enlightening presentations.

## Regional Collaboration and ICVA

The South East Regional ICV Scheme Managers (Hampshire, Sussex, Surrey, Kent and Thames Valley) exchange information and meet on a six-monthly basis in order to bench-mark the Schemes and share information and best practice.

The Surrey ICV Scheme continues to be a member of the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA). ICVA provides access to training for ICVs at all levels as well as support and reference for the Scheme Manager.



## Volunteer & Make a Difference

If you are interested in finding out more about Independent Custody Visiting, please contact us. We would like to hear from you if you:-

- Are over 18
- Live, work or study within the Surrey Police borders
- Are able to communicate well with a diverse range of people
- Are able to work as part of a team
- Are flexible and reliable
- Are a good listener
- Are objective and non-judgemental
- Are able to maintain confidentiality
- Have lived in the UK for the past three years

An application pack can be downloaded from our website at

<http://www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk/independent-custody-visiting/>

A hard copy of the application pack can be requested from this office.

## Contact Details

Erika Dallinger  
ICV Scheme Manager  
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey  
PO Box 412  
Guildford  
Surrey  
GU3 1BR

Telephone: 01483.630200

E-Mail: [surreypcc@surrey.police.uk](mailto:surreypcc@surrey.police.uk)

Website: [www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk](http://www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk)