

Office of the Police and Crime  
Commissioner for Surrey

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# Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

Annual Report  
April 2018 – March 2019



## Foreword from Surrey PCC, David Munro

I am delighted to present the Annual Report for 2018/19 during which our Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) have continued to provide an essential service by checking on the welfare of people in custody.

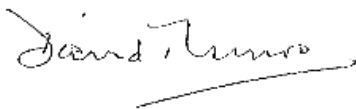
The custody process is an often an area of policing the public see little of and I believe the ICV scheme provides that crucial independent scrutiny and transparency on how detainees are treated. Whilst it is a statutory responsibility of the Police and Crime Commissioner, it is one my office and I continue to take very seriously indeed.

We have had a number of new faces this year in the ICV team with 14 volunteers who completed their training. By the end of 2018/19 there were a total of 39 in Surrey and between them they spent a total of over 286 hours in custody which is a fantastic accomplishment.

I was particularly pleased this year to see the hard work and dedication our volunteers put in recognised in the first ever Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) Quality Assurance awards in which the Surrey scheme was awarded gold.

This is a testament to the energy and passion that both the ICV manager Erika Dallinger and all of our volunteers have invested in the scheme to ensure it continues to play a crucial role in the custody process in Surrey.

I offer my warmest congratulations on this achievement and I would personally like to thank each and every one of the team for their continued service and commitment to this essential scheme. I look forward to our close working relationship continuing to grow over the next year and beyond.

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 stroke.

## 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 (located in the 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 during maintenance or refurbishment of the other suites. This was the case for the 9 months prior to September 2018 when Staines custody was closed for large scale refurbishment and therefore the custody operation was moved to Woking.

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

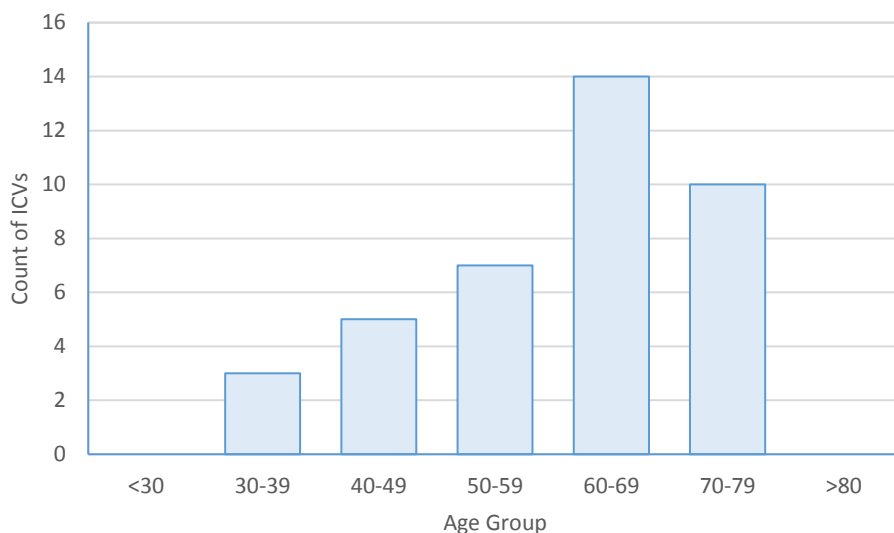
ICVs are independent of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the police, and will have no direct involvement in the criminal justice system. They come from a variety of backgrounds, must be over 18 and live or work within the Surrey Police area. At the close of 2018/19 there were 39 active Independent Custody Visitors working within Surrey.

A successful recruitment campaign during 2017, 2018/19 saw 14 new ICVs complete their training and become fully appointed ICVs.

Exploring the composition of volunteers further shows the following:

- Our volunteers are 55% female, 45% male. The census data from 2011 shows within Surrey, 51% of the entire 1,132,000 population is female, 49% male which therefore means Surrey's ICV Scheme broadly reflects the overall county trend.
- The average age of our ICVs is 61. (Full details on the age breakdown are indicated in the bar chart).
- The average length of service is 5 years with over 203 years of combined service. Over 30% have completed over 8 years of service, with our longest serving member having 24 years of experience.
- 10% of all volunteers come from a BME or Non British background.

### 1. Age Spread of ICV Volunteers



## ICV Visits

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' (OOH) visit (between 11pm and 6am). This is crucial to ensure that visits do not become predictable and do not occur at set times.

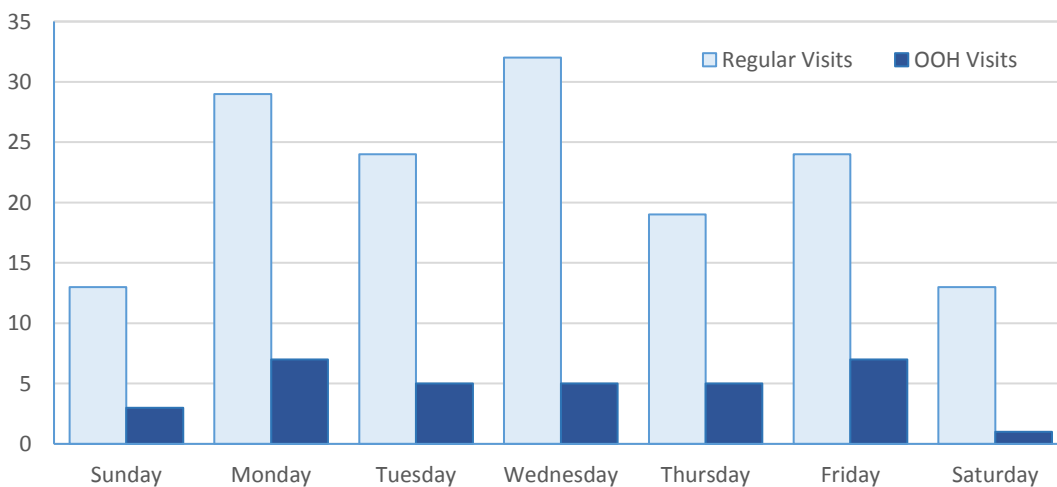
When looking at the number of visits between the 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, the following can be established:

- Surrey's ICVs conducted 187 unannounced, random visits across Surrey's custody suites.
- Surrey ICVs spent over 286 hours actually in custody during the year, which given they always visit in pairs or groups of 3 amounts to 622 volunteered hours.
- Visits were well spread over the entire week and hours of the day, thus helping keep ICV visits unpredictable. However, weekend visits are still less frequent across the estate than weekday visits and work is being undertaken to counteract this discrepancy.
- Visits happen around the clock with ICVs having been present in custody at every minute of the 24 hour clock during the 12 month period.
- The average visit lasted 1 hour, 32 minutes.

### 2. ICV Visit Statistics

	Surrey Wide	Guildford	Salfords	Staines
Visits Undertaken to Date	187	62	62	63
Regular Visits	153	51	51	51
OOH Visits	34	11	11	12
Hours spent in custody	286	89	104	94

### 3. Spread of ICV Visits by Day



## ICV & Welfare Checks

During the 2018/19 reporting year, a total of 12,175 people were held in Surrey custody centres, this was an increase of 387 (3.28%) people from the previous year. At the time of the ICV visits a total of 1070 detainees were in custody (8.8% of overall annual custody population). This sample size is a marked increase on previous years, with 8.3% more detainees being in custody at the time of the ICV visit and therefore a considerable rise in the number of detainees speaking to ICVs. Of these 1070 people:

- 550 or 51% of detainees in custody at the time of an ICV visit were available to the ICVs. The remaining 49% (520) 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 or in rare cases due to custody being busy the detainee not selected for sampling.
- 509 of the 550 (93%) available detainees when asked by ICVs if they were willing to discuss their treatment in police custody agreed to do so.
- 32 detainees (6% 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, 536 detainees (97%) expressively gave their consent for their custody record to be viewed by ICVs.
- Only 9 detainees (1.6%) refused both the opportunity to talk to an ICV and for them to review their custody records.
- 45 detainees were children or young people.

### 4. ICV Interaction with Detainees

	Surrey Wide 2018-19 Performance	Compared to Previous 12 Months	Guildford	Salfords	Staines
<b>Number of detainees in custody during ICV visits</b>	<b>1070</b>	<b>+89</b>	359	382	329
Detainee agreed to both interview & records check	504	+11	152	183	169
Detainee agreed to interview, refused records check	5	-3	1	3	1
Detainee refused to interview but agreed to records check	32	+6	11	6	15
Detainee refused both interview & records check	9	-2	2	3	4
Number of detainees where interview wasn't possible but records were checked	475	+37	183	161	131
Number not selected for sampling	45	+38	10	26	9
<b>Number of detainees receiving some form of welfare check by an ICV</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>+46</b>	347	353	316

During visits, 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 (475 during this reporting period). Taking this into account, ICVs had some form of welfare access to 1016 of the detainees in custody at the time of their visit. This means that ICVs had the opportunity to comment on the detention of 8.34% of the total Surrey custody population for the financial year 2018/19 (up from 8.23% in the last reporting period and 6.86% in 2016/17).

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 and the police's continued commitment to and support of the scheme.

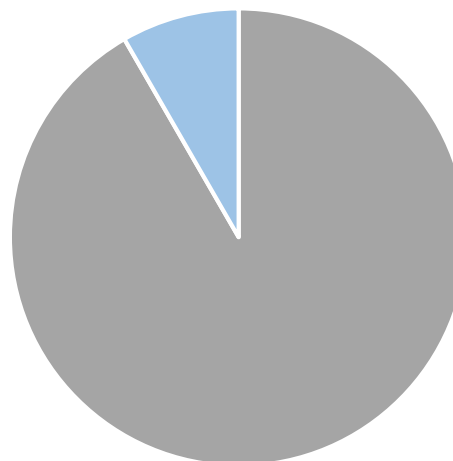
## ICV Feedback

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:-

- Female Dignity – In light of national work in this area led by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA), Surrey has worked to improve the overall treatment of females in custody in Surrey. Significant advances have been made in the provision of sanitary protection for detainees, resulting in Surrey leading nationally in this area. Of the 135 females checked on by ICVs during a visit, over 80% had it recorded on their custody record as having been offered sanitary protection by a female officer.
- Foreign Nationals – There have been several instances whereby an embassy has not been informed of a detainees arrest despite the Home Office issued guidance on “Consular Conventions and Mandatory Notification Obligations”. In all cases ICVs have brought them to the attention of the Lead Sergeant and they have been resolved whilst the volunteers were present in custody. Discussion has also happened between the ICV Scheme Manager and the relevant Inspectors to alert them to this.
- Sleeping Reviews – 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

## 5. ICV Impact on Custody Population



- Total Custody Population
- % of total custody population receiving a direct ICV check during 2018/19



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. During 2018/19, ICVs commented on the successful and timely communication of 251 sleeping reviews, but the failure to do so on a further 79 occasions.

- Anti Rip Clothing – During 2018 it was recognised by ICVs that the clothing given to vulnerable detainees at self harm risk was not particularly dignified. Therefore Surrey Police have moved from providing a smock type garment to a two piece ‘shorts and t-shirt’ style outfit, thus affording the detainee more coverage and therefore dignity.
- Refurbishment of Staines – A major challenge for both custody staff and the ICVs this year was the closure of Staines and its temporary relocation to Woking. ICVs reported that the whole process was very smooth and well run despite the challenges of an older suite. They reported no impact to the detainees during this time.

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. Such an example was earlier this year when ICVs witnessed an event whereby officers watching a detainee on constant observations due to a perceived intoxication. Realising that the detainee’s behaviour was odd and not necessarily down to the initial assumption, they alerted the Health Care Professional (HCP), called an ambulance and potentially saved this detainee’s life. The ICVs passed on their congratulation and thanks to all involved.

The overall consensus from all ICVs is that Surrey should be proud of their custody suites and the treatment it gives detainees. One ICV writes *“Surrey Police custody staff and other officers I meet as an ICV have an attitude of professionalism, compassion and respect, and they take pride in doing their jobs well”*. Another adds *“I have always been impressed with the way the detainees are treated. The staff in the custody suite speak calmly and politely to them despite the way they are sometimes spoken to”*.

When asked about the reception of the volunteers by the custody officers, most comment positively which is essential to a smooth running, successful scheme. *“Surrey Police also has a very good attitude towards ICVs. We don’t always agree, but they listen to us, talk with us and appear to see us as a “critical friend”. They seem aware that our role can also be a support to them, both in confirming existing good practices and in suggesting improvements”*.

## 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 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 October 2018 at the WWF in Woking, with the purpose of thanking the volunteers for their continued commitment. The guest speakers for the evening were Nev Kemp (Surrey Police Assistant Chief Constable and NCP Lead for Custody) and Prof Nick Hardwick, 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. In recognition of Surrey's excellent standard of custody visiting and volunteer management, at the end of the financial year Surrey's ICV Scheme was awarded Gold by Independent Custody Visiting Association at their Quality Assurance Awards. Katie Kempen, Chief Executive at ICVA said: *"Independent custody visiting schemes ensure that the public have oversight of a high pressure and often hidden area of policing. These awards demonstrate how local schemes use volunteer feedback to make change and ensure that police custody is safe and dignified for all. I congratulate schemes on their accomplishments."*

## Looking Ahead

ICVs continually report on a well run custody who value their visits, however challenges and opportunities continue to exist. The 3 key priorities for Surrey's ICV Scheme as we enter 2019/20 are as follows:

- Recruitment – As with any volunteering role, attrition can be high and therefore a constant challenge is to ensure an adequate number of trained volunteers are available to undertake visits. After a period of high attrition and a large recruitment drive, it is hoped that the next 12 months will be more stable, however, should this not be the case the opportunity will be taken to look at making the demographics of the volunteers more in line with Surrey's community as a whole (specifically in relation to age and ethnicity).

- Sleeping Reviews – a continued focus will also be placed on the continued monitoring of timely sleeping reviews. Progress has been made in this regard, but for the benefit of detainees further improvements must be made’.
- Guildford Refurbishment – during the coming financial year, Guildford custody will be closed for a time and refurbished and Woking will be used instead. During this time ICV visits will continue as normal but special attention will be paid to ensure the transition and use of an old suite do not negatively impact on detainees.

## 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

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