

ICV Scheme Interim Report

Prepared for PCC's Performance Meeting 14/01/2019*

What is Independent Custody Visiting?

Custody Visiting, formerly known as Lay Visiting, came about as a result of Lord Scarman's inquiry into the civil unrest in several large cities in the UK in 1981. Lord Scarman recommended that in order to promote public confidence in policing, a system should be developed whereby policing activity should be made more publicly accessible, easily scrutinised and subject to greater questioning and comment. Custody Visiting was one measure introduced as a result of this. The first Visiting Schemes began to be set up in 1983 and the Surrey Scheme was established in 1987.

The Police Reform Act of 2002 placed Custody Visiting on a statutory basis and required the Home Secretary to issue a Code of Practice.

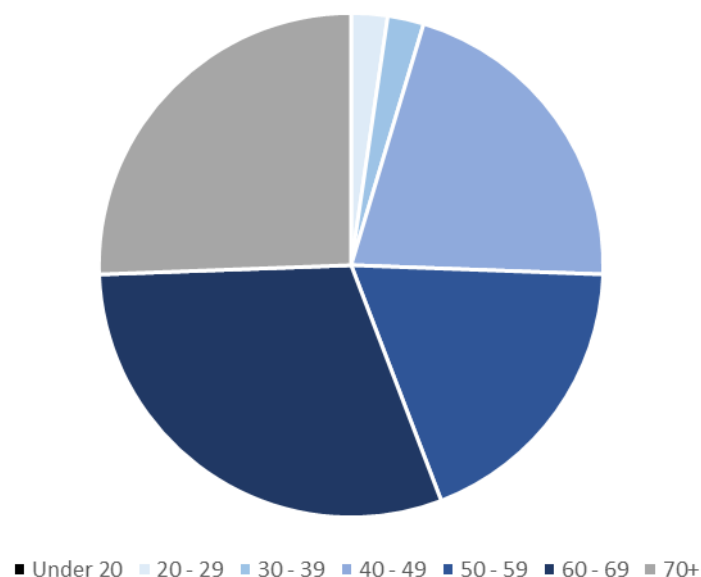
Who are Surrey's Independent Custody Visitors?

The OPCC currently has 43 volunteers involved in the Surrey Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme.

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.

Our volunteers are 53% female, 47% 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.

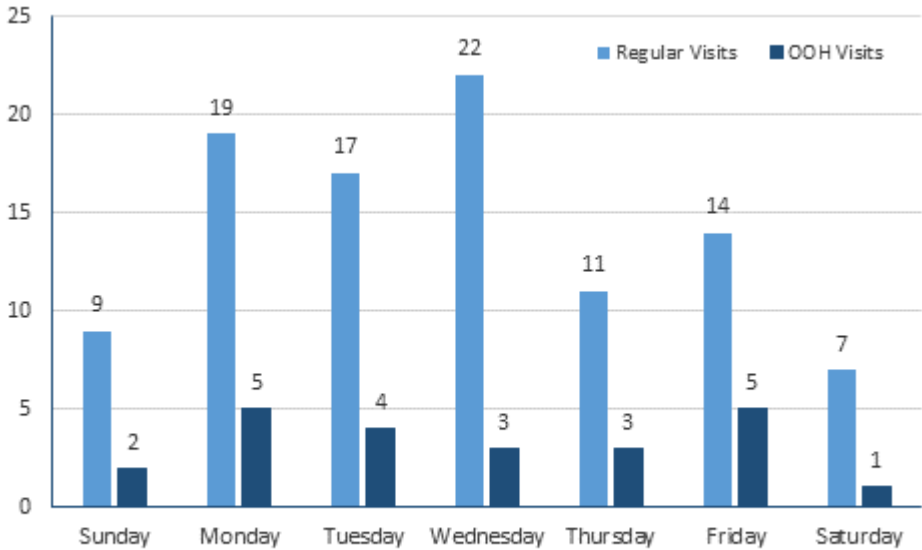
The average age of a Surrey ICV volunteer is 60 years old. The recent wave of recruitment has lowered this from the average in 2016 of 64. Majority of the volunteers are over 40 as shown on the chart below:



Within Surrey, there is an aging population with individuals between 40 and 50 as the largest population segment. This older population is reflected within our scheme, but work is still needed when opportunities arise to address recruiting younger volunteers to reduce the disparity

When do Visits Happen?

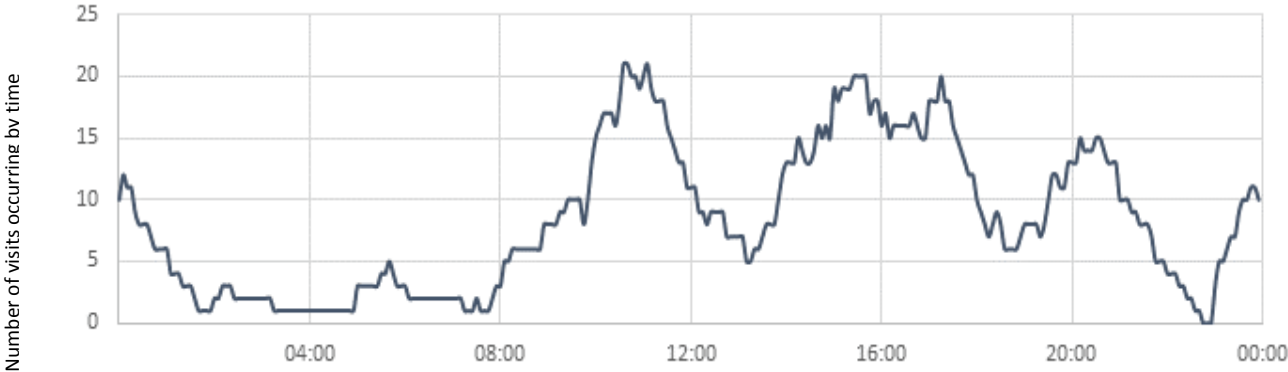
Each of Surrey’s 3 custody suites are visited 5 times per month (weekly visits during the hours of 6am and 11pm and monthly between 11pm and 6am). So far 122 visits have been recorded by ICVs, with 23 of these being ‘out of hours’ visits.



Weekend visits are still less frequent across the estate than weekday visits, work is being undertaken to counteract this discrepancy.

The average visit lasts 1 hour, 41 minutes. In total, ICVs have spent 202 hours in custody, given they visit in at least twos, our volunteers have so far given up at least 404 hours for the scheme.

As can be seen from the graph below, visits happen around the clock.



ICVs & Welfare Checks

During the ICV visits, 710 detainees have been present in custody of which 342 have been verbally interviewed by an ICV. A further 19, whilst not agreeing to talk to the volunteers, did give explicit permission for them to view their custody record.

Within Surrey we assume consent to a DPs record if they are unable to give it themselves (for example if they are sleeping or at hospital), this happened in 317 cases. Therefore, it can be concluded that 95% of all detainees within custody at the time of an ICV visit receive a welfare check of some sort.

In comparison to last year, the overall number of detainees both in custody within Surrey and actually being checked on by ICVs have increased (as shown in the table below). However, proportionally ICVs are checking on a greater proportion of detainees than the year previously.

	Year To Date (from 1/4/18)	Year On Year
Number of DPs in Surrey Custody Overall	7223	+6.4%
Visits Undertaken to Date	122	0.0%
Regular Visits	99	
OOH Visits	23	
Hours spent in custody	201:45:00	+24.8%
Number of DPs during ICV visits	710	+9.4%
Number interviewed by an ICV	342	+9.4%
Number where interview wasn't possible	317	+3.2%
Number of DPs receiving a welfare check by an ICV (records or interview)	678	+6.3%
Number of Females in custody during ICV visit	84	<i>Data only available from Feb 2018</i>
Number of CYPs in custody during ICV visit	19	

It is worth noting that the significant increase in time spent in custody is anticipated as a temporary rise due to 14 new volunteers joining the team during 2018 and naturally training visits can be a little slower.

Issues & Challenges

Overall any issues reported by ICV are quickly and swiftly dealt with by custody staff during the volunteers visit (such as a sleeping review not being communicated or out of date food in a cupboard) and other issues are resolved efficiently due to the robust governance processes around the scheme (such as quarterly meetings between the PCC, Chief Inspector and 6 nominated ICVs).

In summary, during the last 12 months, the main issues arising during custody visits are as follows:

- **Sleeping Reviews** – ICVs have raised concerns over the fact that on occasion DPs are not informed upon waking of the fact a review of their detention was undertaken during their sleep. Since 1st April 2018, ICVs record that 28% sleeping reviews undertaken to DPs in custody at the time of an ICV visit were not communicated upon waking, or at least the custody record has not been accurately updated to reflect this has happened. ICVs always raise this issue when found with the Lead Sergeant to ensure it's resolved quickly and improvements in NICHE will hopefully reduce the occurrences of this in the future.
- **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 81 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.
- **Inconsistent Reception from Staff** – Salfords have experienced a seemingly high turnover of staff in the last year (at senior levels) resulting in some variable receptions to the ICVs during their visit. ICVs hope that following the recent Inspector appointment, they will enter a period of greater stability.
- **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.

Good Practices

ICVs are always keen to report on good practices or areas that impress them. Such an example was earlier this year when ICVs witnessed an event whereby officers watching a DP on constant observations due to a perceived intoxication. Realising that the DPs 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 DPs 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 DPs are treated. The staff in the custody suite speak calmly and politely to them despite the way they are sometimes spoken to by the DPs"*.

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"*.

Challenges for the future

Whilst it is essential that one must never be complacent, ICVs continually report on a well run custody who value their visits, however challenges and opportunities continue to exist.

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). With improved reporting capabilities, work will also be undertaken to ensure total 24 hour coverage of ICV suites during the year as currently no ICV has been in custody between about 10:45pm and 11pm.

In addition, in light of the fantastic advances in dignity for female detainees, work will be undertaken to ensure dignity is remaining the upmost consideration for ALL detainees – areas for consideration will include anti-rip clothing and religious materials.

Finally, Surrey's ICV scheme is being assessed by ICVA as part of their Quality Assurance Framework to ensure good practice. It is hoped Surrey will achieve a Gold standard award, recognising the investment and time put into the scheme from everybody involved.