



**Police & Crime
Commissioner
FOR HERTFORDSHIRE**



**INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITORS SCHEME
ANNUAL REPORT
2023 – 2024**



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Foreword by Jonathan Ash-Edwards, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire



Welcome to the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Annual Report for 2023-24. This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) during the final year of the previous Police and Crime Commissioners term.

I was elected as the new PCC on 4 May 2024 and formally took office on 9 May 2024.

This report covers the work undertaken by the ICVs over the last year of David Lloyd's service as the PCC for Hertfordshire. I am grateful for all he has done over the last 12 years to keep our communities safe which this area of scrutiny contributes to.

This report reviews the important work undertaken by a dedicated team of volunteers between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024, highlighting both positive and negative issues from which appropriate learning and improvements can and have been made.

I look forward to learning more about the important work of the scheme during my first year in office.

I would like to take this opportunity to place on record my thanks to the officers, staff and volunteers of Hertfordshire Police and the Hertfordshire OPCC for their work during this past year ensuring that there is scrutiny and transparency over how the welfare and rights of detainees are maintained when in police custody. I look forward to working with you all over my first term in office.

Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner

Foreword by the Chief Inspector of Hertfordshire Constabulary's Custody Units



Having served as a constable in custody, a Custody Sergeant and a PACE Inspector I am acutely aware of the centrality of this role to policing and the significant risk that it carries.

However, I am also very mindful of how the operation of custody can impact upon a person's sense of dignity and how this, along with being treated with respect, can influence a person's sense of trust and confidence in policing.

Many of those who are brought into our custody facilities are vulnerable, many feel marginalised, many are fearful. My firm intention is that Hertfordshire will continue to deliver the highest levels of customer service to those we have a duty to look after and to care for whilst in detention.

Across the previous 2 years much has been done to improve our service delivery, to set challenging performance targets and to consistently meet them. I am, therefore, delighted to be working in such an outstanding unit.

I am also a passionate supporter and strong advocate of the Independent Custody Visitors Scheme. This scheme, along with its invaluable cohort of volunteers, provides a robust and reassuring programme of work which helps to ensure that our customer service provision, across both of Hertfordshire's custody facilities, excels in all areas.

In closing I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all those who volunteer for this scheme. My position is clear, your role and the work that you do is absolutely vital. Thank you for all that you do.

**Paul Mitson,
Chief Inspector,
Head of Hertfordshire Custody**

Overview of the Scheme

Under the Police Reform Act 2002, all police force areas are required to have a custody visiting scheme. The scheme's independent checks give the public reassurance that detainees are being treated fairly, that their legal rights and entitlements¹ are given, as well as checking their welfare and dignity are being maintained. Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) also review the custody suites for issues around cleanliness and maintenance. The scheme also provides assurances to detainees at a time when they may be feeling vulnerable or confused.

Following the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (2011), the PCC assumed responsibility for the operation of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme in Hertfordshire. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) manages and supports the smooth running of the scheme including the day-to-day enquiries, recruitment of the volunteers and improvements and development to the scheme.

ICVs are unpaid volunteers who live, work or study in Hertfordshire – at the end of March 2024 we had 29 ICVs compared to 31 last year. Three new ICVs have recently been recruited but were not in post during the reporting period and 2 ICVs have stood down. Due to the introduction of the fixed term tenure policy recruitment will recommence over the coming year to replace those reaching the end of their tenure. This recruitment will also make renewed efforts to attract volunteers from diverse backgrounds to better reflect the communities the scheme serves.

In ordinary times all visits are unannounced and can take place at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The ICVs are trained to introduce themselves to detainees in custody and ask questions that ensures their treatment is fair and that they have access to their rights and entitlements. At the beginning of each visit, ICVs are told how many detainees are in custody at the suite being visited. The detainees are then introduced to the ICVs and, subject to their consent and availability a visit is undertaken.

ICVs complete a report form summarising their visit to each individual detainee. This is then forwarded to the scheme manager at the OPCC, with a hard copy retained by custody staff. Concerns raised by ICVs are reported to the Custody Inspector or escorting officer at the time of the visit, and then submitted to the scheme manager for review. The scheme manager highlights any concerns with the Custody Chief Inspector via email, telephone, or during regular meetings, depending on the urgency. The ICVs can also raise general matters arising from visits at their regular half yearly meetings with the OPCC.

The position of an ICV is an unpaid, voluntary role. All ICVs are encouraged to regularly complete an expense form to allow any costs associated with visits to be reimbursed by the Commissioner. The Commissioner also incurs other related costs for running the scheme

¹ An extensive list of these legal rights are provided under the section Rights of Detainees

including, but not limited to OPCC staff time, ICV training, printing, some limited catering for panel meetings, conference booking fees, and OPCC membership of the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA). Over the year, training has been carried out online so no catering has been required for in-person meetings, two ICVs attended the ICVA National Conference in May 2023 at a cost of £100+VAT per person and OPCC Membership of ICVA was renewed at a cost of £1000+VAT. ICV Expenses claims have totalled £1,675.

Nationally, the Independent Custody Visitor Association² leads, supports and represents PCCs and police forces with regards to the Independent Custody Visiting schemes. The OPCC has developed a good relationship with ICVA and other scheme managers over several years. This has enabled the OPCC to ensure the scheme's aims and management are effective and they are kept informed of legislative changes and reforms.

Quality Assurance Framework

The Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) was introduced by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) in April 2018. It enables schemes to reflect on how they comply with the Code of Practice and the legislation which underpins custody visiting. The QAF seeks to encourage schemes to celebrate areas of strength and achievement, promote custody visiting, drive performance and increase sharing of good practice.

In November 2023, Hertfordshire was presented with the Silver Award therefore maintaining the standards achieved in the previous assessment. It is the aim to look at ways to improve diversity among volunteers. Not just diversity in terms of protected characteristics but also diversity of thought, bringing different perspectives to the scrutiny so the scheme better represents the communities it serves which is a requirement of the higher awards.

Custody Chief Inspector

In March 2024, Chief Inspector Paul Mitson was appointed as Chief Inspector for Custody. We are forging the same working relationship and lines of reporting that we had with previous Chief Inspectors; this is so the quality of the scheme remains consistent, and issues raised from the ICV visits can be addressed promptly.

² [Home Page of ICVA \(The Independent Custody Visitors Association\)](#)

Key Findings (1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024)

Number of Visits

Over twelve-months, 12,280 detainees passed through both custody suites (6,563 through Hatfield and 5,717 through Stevenage). This compares to a total of 12,255 detainees in 2022/2023, an increase of 0.2%. This suggests no substantial change in demand during 23/24 which is more closely aligned with a stable level of recorded crime. Overall ICVs visited 5.3% of those detainees who were booked in³, an increase on the previous year (4.7%). A figure that can be attributed to the higher number of visits carried out over the year.

Figure 1 shows that in 2023/24, ICVs undertook 113 custody visits, speaking to or observing a total of 649 detainees from a possible 762 who were available for a visit. Due to our recruitment effort and improved volunteer engagement, this allowed us to conduct 3 visits per week on more occasions, increasing visits by 94 on the previous year.

Figure 1: Breakdown of the visits for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

Custody Suite Visited	No. of visits undertaken	No. of detained persons held	No. of detainees available to visit	No. of detained persons visited	% of detainees visited (of those available)
Hatfield	61	490	442	380	86%
Stevenage	52	356	320	269	84%
TOTAL	113	810	762	649	85%

It should be noted that the number of detainees held at the time of ICV visits was 11% lower than in the previous year. While the number of visits increased, as illustrated in Figure 2, the percentage of detainees spoken to or observed remained constant at 85%. Whilst we expected this percentage to increase in 23/24, we identified an unusually high refusal rate which reached 40.5% in September and 32.6% in October – above the $\leq 15\%$ local average.

Declined Visits

Detainees who do not consent to a visit equates to 15% (n=113) of the cohort (see Figure 1). This is a slight increase on the previous figure of 14.5% and still comparatively high compared to other forces; the refusal rate elsewhere is between 7% and 16%⁴. There are several

³ Not all persons who are brought to custody are booked as the Custody Sergeant must determine whether the weight of evidence is sufficient or whether there is a case for an alternative intervention. For example, a detainee may require a mental health referral, or when a juvenile risks being detained overnight which would be a breach of policy. In the latter situation, alternative provisions and accommodation would be sought.

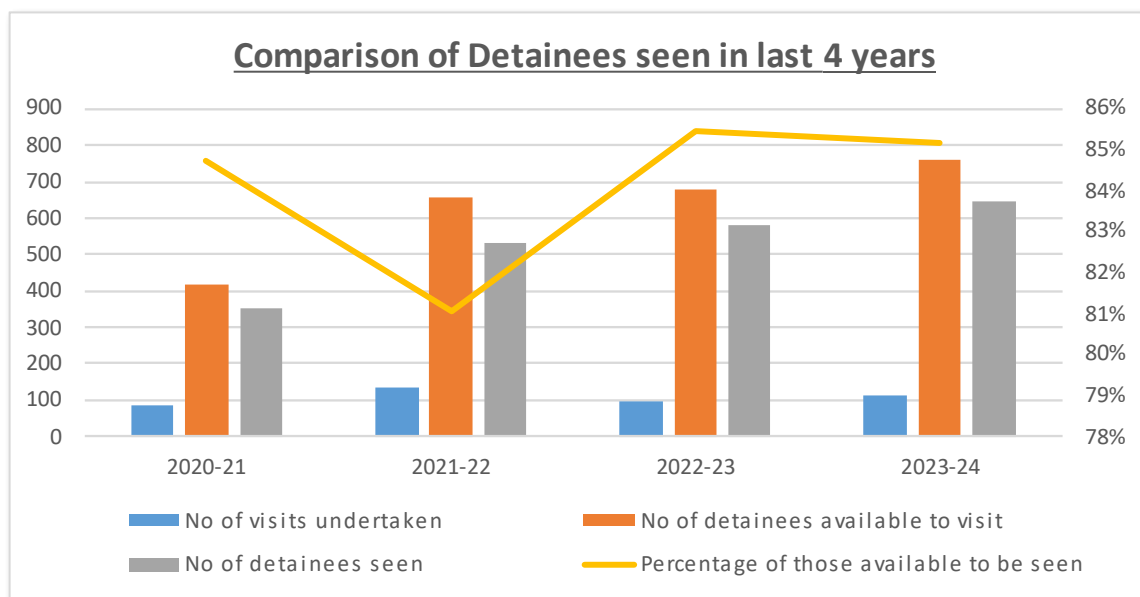
⁴ Taken from annual reports and direct enquiries with other forces.

reasons why ICVs are unable speak to detainees, including detainees being asleep, intoxicated or deemed too violent by custody staff. Detainees may also be unavailable if they are being interviewed, they may be in Court, with a health care professional or providing a DNA sample.

Understanding the reason(s) for our high refusal rate has been the subject of scrutiny and engagement with ICVs. Volunteers suggested that the way in which custody staff were introducing them to detainees was open to negative responses and therefore a refusal. Work has been undertaken in partnership with ICVA to produce standardised guidance on how ICVs should be introduced, encouraging the use of positive phrases and interaction. All custody staff were briefed on the guidance in March 2024, with the same advice rolled out nationally to assist other schemes.

In the coming year we will continue monitoring refusal data to determine the impact of the described change. As detainees do not have to give a reason for refusing a visit it is difficult to identify improvements, but we hope the changes made to the wording and approach to detainees will make a difference.

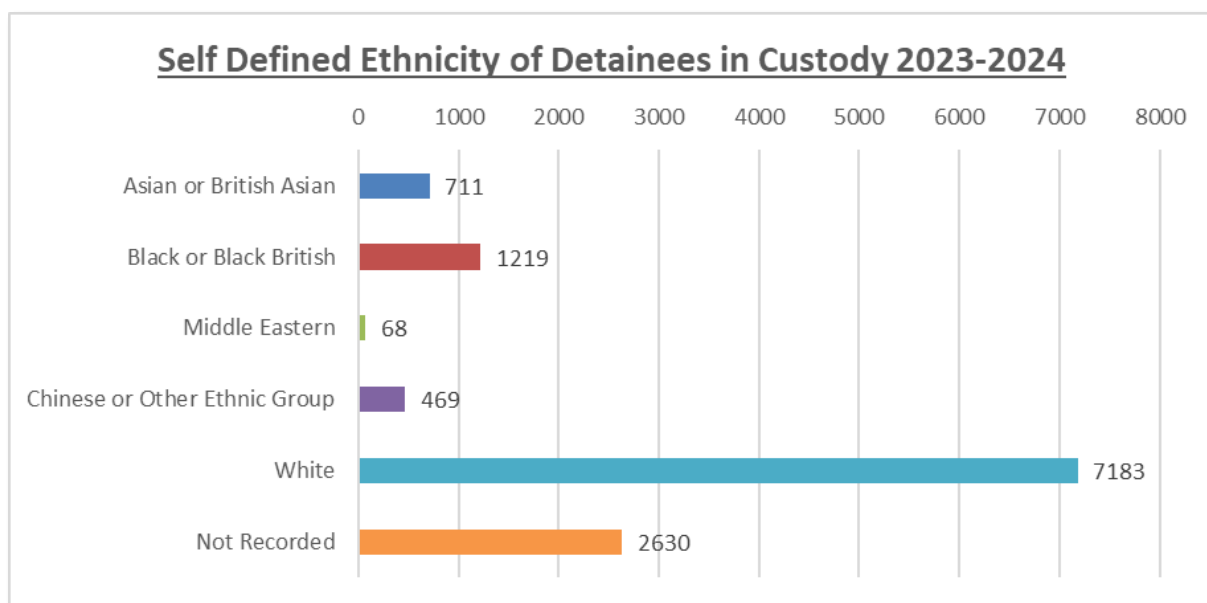
Figure 2: Comparison of detainees seen between 2020/21 and 2023/24



Detainee Data

Figure 3 shows that the proportion of 'Not Recorded' self-defined ethnicity has once again decreased on the previous year and now accounts for 21% of records, down from 22%. While this is not a mandatory field on the custody record, the expectation is that staff complete this field. Monthly reports are reviewed by the Custody Chief Inspector to identify non-compliance so that Inspectors can address these issues their teams directly.

Figure 3: Self-Defined Ethnicity of those passing through custody 2022-2023



Profile of the Independent Custody Visitors

At the end of 2023/24 there were 29 ICVs supporting the scheme who live in Hertfordshire. This is a decrease of 2 on the previous year, however three more volunteers will be inducted at the start of the 2024/25. While short of our target of retaining around 40 volunteers the level of engagement and commitment among the existing cohort of volunteers is high, which means the scheme operates well.

ICVs are asked to fill in a voluntary information disclosure agreement. This year 100% have declared their age and gender and 72% disclosed their ethnicity. From the data available 48% of volunteers are male, 52% are female, and the majority of volunteers are white (see Figures 4⁵ and 5⁶). Whilst the recent recruitment campaign targeted those from a wider ethnic background, further work is needed to improve the ethnic representation among ICVs.

⁵ According to the Office for National Statistics 2021 population denominators, Hertfordshire's population demographics shows ethnicity as: White 81.8%, Asian/Asian British 8.6%, Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British 3.7%, Mixed multiple ethnic group 3.8%, and other 2.1%. This information can be found at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021/report?compare=E10000015#section_5

⁶ According to the Office for National Statistics 2021 Census the comparable age range in Hertfordshire was represented by 11% aged 20-29, 21% aged 30-44, 21% aged 45-59, 6% aged 60-64, 9% aged 65-74 and 6% aged 75-84.

Figure 4: Ethnicity profile of the Independent Custody Visitors

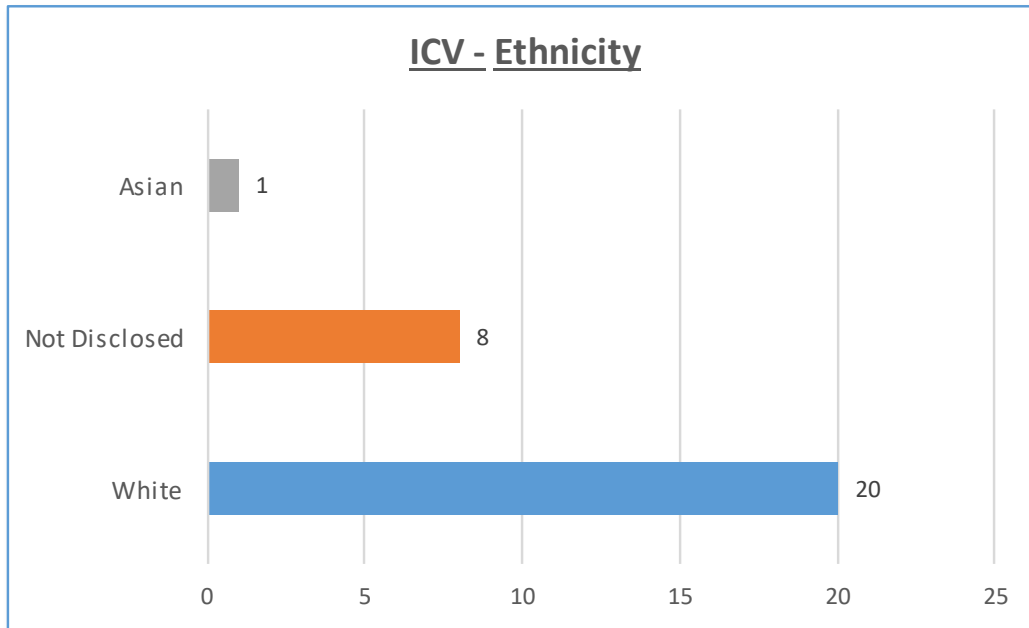
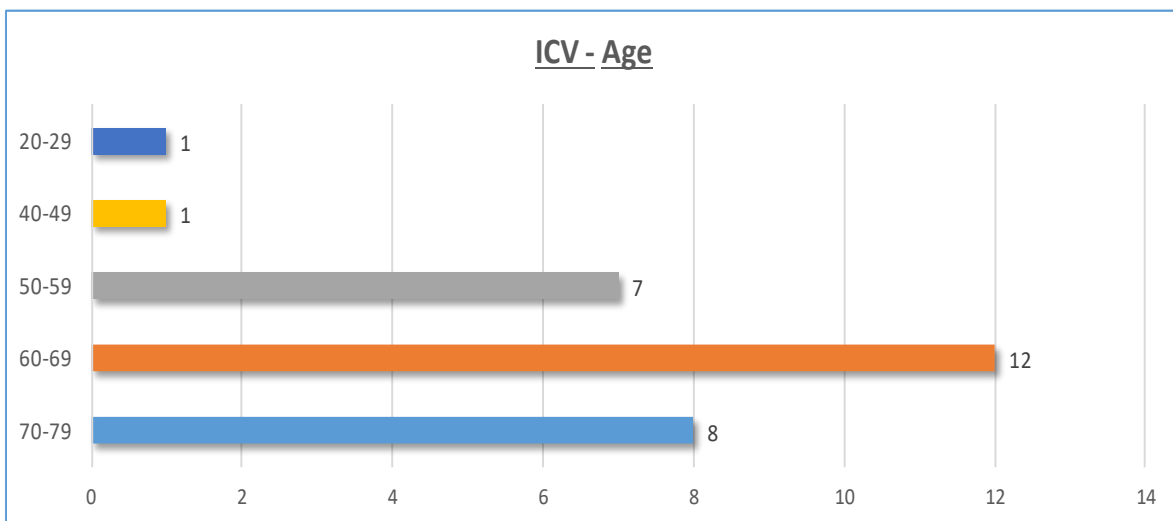


Figure 5: Age profile of the Independent Custody Visitors



Matters arising from custody visits

ICVs have been making at least one visit to each custody suite each week. The visits take place over a 24-hour period and meets the minimum statutory requirement. We aim to undertake a total of three visits per week where availability allows, but with the cohort currently available and accommodating the volunteers' own availability, this has not been consistently possible in the reporting year.

During 2023/24 of the 649 detainees visited, issues were noted from 27 (4.2%) detainees compared to 10 (1.7%) in the previous year. In total 36 issues⁷ raised by detainees were reviewed and 18 raised by ICVs. Positively, 96% of detainees did not raise any issues regarding their welfare whilst in custody, this is compared with 98% over the previous reporting period. The reason for this increase can be primarily explained by issues with healthcare coverage reported by both detainees and ICVs which we will address. Seventeen (2.6%) detainees made positive comments about their detention; comments focus on considerate treatment by custody staff.

All feedback is discussed in monthly meetings between the scheme manager and the Custody Chief Inspector. The Chief Inspector will then pass on and discuss with the Police Inspectors areas of required improvement, learning and training issues. Of the issues raised by detainees, the majority relate to the Rights of Detainee. Twenty-three individual issues were raised compared to 11 in the previous year. The main rights issues recorded this year include access to medical help (see Figure 7).

Of the 20 detainees who raised these issues, 60% were White British; 10% Any Other White, White and Black Caribbean, Any Other Asian and Any Other Ethnic Group were 5% each, 10% had Refused or Not States their Ethnicity and in 5% of cases Ethnicity had not been recorded by the ICVs. The proportions remain similar to the figures for 2022-23 where 66% were White British, 17% Any Other Mixed and 17% not stated.

Given the number of reported issues is very low and ethnicity is not recorded in every instance it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about bias relating to ethnicity. Figure 6 shows the breakdown of reported issues by ethnicity.

⁷ More than one issue may have been reported by each detainee or may have been expressed by an ICV and exclude the positive comments

Figure 6: Rights of Detainee by self-defined ethnicity

	Rights of Detainee	Vulnerable Detainees	Access to Amenities	Services Available	Cleaning	Maintenance	Food Drink Reading	Detention Issues PACE	ICV Staff Issues	Positive Feedback
White British	13%	3%				1%		2%		10%
White Irish										
Any Other White	2%				1%					
White and Black Caribbean	1%									
White and Black African										
Mixed White and Asian										
Any Other Mixed										
Asian/British Indian										
Asian British Pakistani										
Asian/British Bangladesh										
Any Other Asian	1%							1%		1%
Black/British Caribbean		1%								
Black/British African										1%
Any Other Black										
Chinese										
Any Other Ethnic Group	1%									1%
Refused/Not stated	2%						1%			4%
Not Recorded by ICV	4%			13%	3%	9%			19%	4%

Categories of issues raised by ICVs

1. Rights of Detainee

Rights of the Detainee are broken down into 13 sub-categories and detailed in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Sub-categories of issues relating to the Rights of Detainee

Rights of Detainee	Number of Issues raised	% of total	Number of Valid Issues/ Number of Not Valid Issues
Access to medical help	12	52%	1/11
Not given rights	4	17%	1/3
Access to food	4	17%	1/3
Phone Call	2	9%	1/1
Someone informed of their location	1	4%	1/0
Access to free legal advice	0	0%	
Privacy while receiving legal advice	0	0%	
Access to "Codes of Practice"	0	0%	
Can see written notice of rights	0	0%	
Access to drink	0	0%	
Access to interpreter/language cards	0	0%	
Access to complaints procedure	0	0%	
Contact Embassy	0	0%	
Total issues noted	23		

The highest reported area of concern is 'access to medical help' and by a significant margin. Of the twelve issues raised, it was verified that in all but one case the detainees had been offered, but refused medical assistance initially and subsequently requested it. Such requests were subsequently arranged or were pending authorisation so that staff could dispense medication.

In one specific case where learning was identified, a detainee had been waiting for their medication. ICVs checked the custody record to find at 6:11am no medical assistance was noted, but this failed to check whether medication was needed. At 6:45am (on handover) it was recorded that officers were bringing medication from home. Custody was chasing and the medication eventually arrived at 10:15am, taking 4 hours to receive. In this case, while appropriate steps had been taken there was a significant delay which could have led to more serious repercussions. The importance of getting medication to detainees promptly has been reiterated because, in this case, onsite medics would not have been able to prescribe the specific medication required.

Of the four rights issues, two detainees could not remember if they had been given their rights. A custody record check showed they had but the rights were reissued in response to the ICVs raising this. In the other two cases the detainees had been intoxicated, one had been given rights twice and the other was too intoxicated when booking in to understand. In both cases there had been a delay with rights reissued when both detainees were more capable of understanding.

Of the issues regarding access to food, three of these were raised by the ICVs themselves. One in respect to Vegan meals, of which there should normally be an option available, two where there were extremely low supply of meals and no sandwiches at all, and one where the detainee claimed they had not been offered any food or drink. The ICVs checked the custody record which showed both food and drink had been offered but had been declined and was again declined during the visit. It should be noted that while there were instances where sandwiches were out of stock there was always a supply of ready meals. The sandwich option is an alternative to ready meals but is not guaranteed. There were no instances where there were no meal options at all.

Of the issues regarding phone calls, the officer stated that for one person, and due to the nature of the investigation they were unable to contact anyone. For the other, despite initially saying to the ICVs they had not been allowed to make a call, the request was followed up by the ICVs and a call was facilitated. This ties in with a further report whereby the detainee wished to inform his wife of his whereabouts. A call had not been facilitated due the wife being overseas which necessitated an international call. Whilst international calls are not made, officers subsequently attempted to identify a friend in the UK who could pass on a message to the detainee's wife.

2. ICV Staff Issues

This was the second highest reported category with 18 issues highlighted. This is a general category for ICVs to highlight issues they witness or encounter in the custody suite or any general issues that do not fit into other categories. Four of these relate to long delays in ICVs gaining entry to the suite or starting the visit. This was either due to the suite being exceptionally busy and short staffed, ICT issues delaying access, or problems printing the whiteboard list that ICVs are presented with on entry (this provides details of who is in custody). It should be noted that the delays mentioned do not refer to the time spent booking in prisoners. At present 74% of prisoners at Hatfield and 67% at Stevenage wait less than 30 minutes to be booked in at custody suites.

At all times ICVs were kept informed of the situation and guidance has been issued to the ICVs about how to access the whiteboard which they can pass on to custody officers if needed. ICT issues are raised regularly by the scheme administrator and there is frequent maintenance of the system which we hope will begin to resolve these issues. The issue of staffing levels was

reported on two specific occasions but also as a reason for the some of the delayed entry cases. This was acknowledged when raised with the Chief Inspector he explained that more staff would be recruited to custody in September and October 2023. Since then, access difficulties have not been highlighted as an area of concern.

The most significant issue highlighted was over the provision of onsite healthcare. On 12 visits the ICVs specifically commented on the lack of cover either at certain times of the day or for extended periods. These issues were regularly reported to the Chief Inspector. Senior Constabulary staff had also been monitoring this provision which resulted in a change to the service supplier at the end of the reporting year. While there has been a handover period and it is too soon to assess what improvement this change might bring about, it is noted that the ICVs are already reporting better coverage. This will continue to be monitored.

3. Cleanliness & Maintenance

Cleanliness and maintenance issues were noted on a total of fourteen occasions, five of these related to concerns about CCTV not working in all areas. There was a known fault that had developed due to the age of the CCTV system, which was waiting on authorisation for work to begin on its replacement. At no point was there any risk to either staff or detainees.

Other issues related to cleanliness around air conditioning units, the exercise yard and damage to individual cells. All issues had been reported by custody staff and were waiting to be addressed. Overall, the ICVs regularly comment on how clean and well-kept all areas of custody are.

4. Vulnerable Detainees⁸

In the reporting year, the ICVs identified four issues of concern two relating to a 14 and 17-year-old juvenile being kept in custody overnight. There are robust processes in place that aim to prevent this from happening which were positively commented upon during the most recent HMICFRS inspection⁹. In this instance one was held due to being a high risk to the public and likely to reoffend having been arrested for a similar offence two days before. The other was deemed to be a high flight risk. The ICVs were satisfied that the assessments were reasonable, and both detainees commented that they had been well looked after.

Two people were noted to being held under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. One a 17-year-old juvenile who was being held and referred to hospital under the Mental Health Act. ICVs commented that the staff were clearly solicitous for her welfare. The other was a 66-year-old male who was being held due to suicidal tendencies and was waiting to be taken to a more appropriate Mental Health Unit.

⁸ For a definition of vulnerability, see Appendix 1.

5. Detention Issues

Three issues were noted relating to detention and detainees being held for over 24 hours. One had been in hospital hence the lengthy detention but stated they had been treated fairly. Another was subject to immigration issues and was waiting to be collected for deportation, but officers had yet to arrive. In the third instance there was a delay in finding an appropriate adult resulting in an extended detention. This had been subject to a Superintendent review and had an extension authorised.

No issues were noted by the ICVs under any of the other reporting categories during the 2023-24 reporting period.

While the number of issues reported is higher than in the previous year, many of these are due to issues with healthcare provision, which the appointment of a new supplier is expected to address. Overall, the figures demonstrate how the staff and processes in place are maintaining the welfare, dignity and needs of the detainees.

6. Positive Feedback

ICVs recorded several positive comments by detainees regarding their welfare in custody. Of the 21 noteworthy positive comments, 17 were from detainees and 4 from the ICVs. All detainees chose to comment specifically about their welfare saying they had been well treated and that their dignity had been maintained. Comments such as; “well looked after, nicest ever been”, “staff have been amazing, well respectful”, “treated like a human being”, “been treated with dignity and respect” and “Hatfield is one of the best stations” are of particular note.

Once again ICVs also noted that police staff were helpful and professional when dealing with detainees and themselves. This is commented on for almost every visit, the comments highlighted were where the ICVs noted a particularly good interaction, one comment being “Excellent manner with detainees”, “Good rapport with detainees”, another “Excellent response to any actions required”.

Areas of focus for the year ahead (2024/2025)

Recruitment

Recruitment will continue with a focus on targeting a wider age and ethnic demographic, particularly as some volunteers reach the end of their tenure period in the coming year. With the success of using Instagram as a new social media outlet in the last campaign the OPCC will seek to engage with a communications company to explore other social media campaign opportunities to target under-represented groups.

Additionally, work has been undertaken to explore other established online volunteering portals which already reach an extensive base of potential volunteers; therefore, we hope to expand our advertising opportunities in the coming year.

IT Systems

The Constabulary's intelligence and case management system, Athena, provides ICVs with a snapshot of the detainees in custody when they arrive to undertake their visit. There are still occasional outages causing timeliness issues with obtaining the data, resulting in delays for ICVs. This continues to be monitored as updates are made to the system.

The OPCC is working to understand how other forces use electronic reporting for their ICVs. There has been progress in other areas, and we will be looking at these to determine if any are suitable for implementation in Hertfordshire. Electronic reporting will make sure data is captured consistently, ensure all sections of the form are completed, take away the need for staff to scan and email the forms and allow for more secure processing and data analysis.

The OPCC will also be rolling out a new system for the ICVs to book their visits. This will be an online shared calendar which they can log into, see when other visits are happening to avoid clashes and book the visit directly without having to check with the scheme manager as to whether their preferred day and time is available. This will speed up and simplify the booking process, especially when the scheme manager is unavailable.

Data Quality

The Constabulary continue to review the data they record about detainees. Whilst the recording of self-defined ethnicity has improved in the last year, with fewer instances when it is not recorded, custody staff are being reminded to always record this information or mark it as "not stated". In parallel, the OPCC will continue to monitor and raise issues with Chief Officers to improve systems and data capture.

Quality Assurance Framework

It is expected, but not confirmed, that ICVA will launch the next assessment in Spring 2025 and return to a proposed two-year cycle thereafter. The work carried out to achieve the Silver Award has identified areas to improve and consolidate, in particular with relation to increasing the diversity among volunteers. Working towards these improvements prior to 2025 will lay the groundwork for a potential Gold standard in the next assessment period.

Anti-Rip Clothing Scrutiny

In April 2023, a new scrutiny panel was established to review the use of anti-rip or safety clothing in custody – this was in response to recommendations in the most recent HMICFRS Inspection of Custody⁹. The panel is made up of Independent Custody Visitors and representatives from the Constabulary which has met three times between April 2023 to March 2024 to review incidents and ensure the use of the clothing is justified and proportionate.

Using feedback from these reviews the Constabulary has introduced changes to reduce the use of this clothing. This has resulted in only one recorded use between January and March 2024.

ICVA

ICVA monitor issues raised by scheme managers across the country to review and assess national trends and cascade details of legislative changes and reforms. The OPCC will continue monitoring any findings to inform the scheme's ongoing development.

⁹ [HMICFRS Report on an Unannounced Inspection Visit to Police Custody Suites in Hertfordshire June 2022](#)

Appendix 1

The term vulnerable¹⁰ applies to any person who, because of a mental health condition or mental disorder:

(i) may have difficulty understanding or communicating effectively about the full implications for them of any procedures and processes connected with:

- their arrest and detention; or (as the case may be)
- their voluntary attendance at a police station or their presence elsewhere, for the purpose of a voluntary interview; and
- the exercise of their rights and entitlements.

(ii) does not appear to understand the significance of what they are told, of questions they are asked or of their replies

(iii) appears to be particularly prone to:

- becoming confused and unclear about their position;
- providing unreliable, misleading or incriminating information without knowing or wishing to do so;
- accepting or acting on suggestions from others without consciously knowing or wishing to do so; or
- readily agreeing to suggestions or proposals without any protest or question.

¹⁰ Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code C – Revised July 2018 section 1.13(d)

Interested in becoming an Independent Custody Visitor?

If you are interested in becoming an Independent Custody Visitor please contact:

Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Administrator
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire
13 Vaughan Road
Harpenden
AL5 4GZ

Telephone: 01707 806100

Email: pccadmin@herts-pcc.gov.uk

For more information regarding the role of ICVs and that of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, please visit www.hertscommissioner.org

For more information on the role of the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA), please visit: www.icva.org.uk

We welcome applications from anyone who lives in Hertfordshire. The OPCC is particularly interested to hear from younger people and those from Black, Asian and all Ethnic communities.