**DECISION NUMBER: PCCG-2025-014**

## **OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

**TITLE: Independent Custody Visiting Scheme Annual Report 2024/2025**

**DATE: July 2025**

**TIMING: Annual**

**PURPOSE:For Monitoring Purposes**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Police and Crime Commissioner considers the work of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme during 2024/25.

**INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme (the Scheme) is the system whereby volunteers attend police stations to check on the treatment of detainees, the conditions in which they are held, and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. It offers protection to both detainees and the police and provides reassurance to the community at large. This report summarises the invaluable work undertaken by our volunteers.

The responsibility for organising and overseeing the delivery of the Scheme resides with the Police and Crime (Commissioner) in consultation with the Chief Constable.

The Commissioner has delegated the responsibility to the Chief Executive as referenced within the Manual of Corporate Governance. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) is a member of the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA), a national organisation that works with OPCCs and the Home Office to support Schemes. Scheme arrangements within Gwent are based on Code C of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and the Code of Practice for the Detention, Treatment and Questioning of persons by Police Officers.

Responsibility for the running of the Scheme sits with the Governance Officer who is the Scheme Manager. This role includes oversight of the Scheme and the responsibility of ensuring that any issues raised are resolved. The Chief Executive is responsible for any complaints of misconduct raised against any Scheme members or by Scheme members. These matters may be delegated to the Scheme Manager or Head of Assurance where appropriate.. The Assistant Scheme Administrator, a role held by the Administration Assistant, provides support to the Scheme Manager, arranging meetings, logging reports and providing a point of contact for Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs).

Custody staff work closely with the OPCC to consider ways of raising awareness of the custody visiting process. Both Custody and OPCC staff contribute to custody visiting training sessions and meetings.

Gwent Police has adopted a model of Child Centred Policing practice. Although children are sometimes detained in custody, steps have been taken to ensure the relevant agencies are involved from the outset to offer support to the child and that the cells used to detain children are located in a specific area which is segregated from the adult area. The Force also continues to work with other partner organisations to ensure appropriate safe and secure arrangements are put in place. Children are seen as a priority by ICVs during their visits.

**ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

ICVs covered visits across two custody units; Newport and Ystrad Mynach until December when Ystrad became the main custody unit, with Newport being used as an overflow unit when required. They visit custody in pairs at any time during the day or evening and their visits are unannounced. A rota is provided by the ICV Chair, although the ICVs themselves decide which day of the week and time to visit. The majority of the visits to custody were conducted during the weekdays, this is being monitored by the Scheme Manager.

The Chair was re-appointed to their role in July 2024 and a new Vice Chair was appointed. The role of the Chair and Vice Chair includes creating the rotas, leading the quarterly panel meetings, assisting in the recruitment and selection of new volunteers and representing the scheme at training and conferences.

Following dialogue with the Force Wellbeing Specialist, the Scheme Manager was able to obtain counselling services through VIVUP for ICVs should they require it.

The Scheme Manager supported an ICV to take time away from the scheme to recover from a health issue. Having sought welfare advice in regard to the continuation of the ICV on the scheme, arrangements were made for them to conduct a shadow visit to ascertain if they could continue as an ICV. Unfortunately, the ICV did not feel they could fully commit to the role due to their condition. However, they were very grateful for the approach to support them to stay on the scheme.

One of our ICVs participates in the Force Disproportionality Scrutiny Panel with other independent members. The panel meet once a quarter to review data in relation to detainees held in custody and any perceived disparity is discussed and further checks and audits recommended as appropriate.

The Scheme Manager drafted a Custody Performance Recommendation review report, the primary recommendation being to develop an Independent Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel (ICDSP) to scrutinise custody performance. This was supported by the PCC who requested that a feasibility study be undertaken prior to establishment.

The Scheme Manager worked with the OPCC Policy Officer to draft a statutory response to His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service custody inspection, which was well received by the PCC. The evidence provided by the ICVs as a result of their visits assisted in the response. They includied the following:

**Area For Improvement (AFI) 01: Improve translation services at booking in desk**

The force should make sure it has working twin telephone points for language translation, so it can meet the needs of detainees who speak little or no English.

Update:

* ICVs check if an interpreter has been requested, as per their checklist, but they do not currently check if the twin telephone points are working.

*Action*: *ICV Scheme Manager will add this point to the ICV Checklist*.

**AFI 05: Improve safety and environment of custody suites**

The force should improve the safety and environment of the custody suites by:

Addressing the potential ligature points and, if resources don’t allow immediate rectification, managing the risks appropriately by briefing personnel.

Update:

* ICVs check for ligature points as part of their current ICV Checklist. ICVs have challenged the inconsistencies of the removal of shoes with laces, as identified in the HMICFRS report. The force advised that this was done as part of a risk-based assessment in line with guidance. However, it was raised by the ICVs that previous visits had noted the removal of all shoes from detainees. Ongoing training is provided to ICVs, which includes identification of ligature points

**AFI 10: Clinical healthcare governance needs to be more robust**

Clinical healthcare governance should be more robust. The force should:

* monitor how quickly healthcare practitioners see detainees;
* better advertise the confidential complaints process for healthcare services.

Update:

* If ICVs are advised by a detainee that they wish to make a complaint during a visit they are to inform the Sergeant/Inspector. This is done and noted on visit forms, and although it does not form part of their Checklist is does form part of their ongoing training.
* *Action: ICVs to check custody records (with the detainee’s consent) of those who have requested to see a healthcare practitioner to ensure this is recorded by custody officers. This will be added to the ICV Checklist.*

**AFI 08: Put in place scrutiny over appropriate adults provision**

The force should monitor the appropriate adult call-out and arrival time to see how long children or vulnerable adults wait to receive this support. This will help them to see how its arrangements with appropriate adult providers are working and to put effective scrutiny measures in place.

Update:

* This has been repeatedly raised with the force at the ICV Scheme Meetings as an ongoing issue. ICVs already note whether an AA has been called as it is a requirement on the ICV Checklist. A reminder is also provided on their visit form.

*Action: In addition, ICVs will be asked to note AA request and arrival times on their visitor reports for monitoring.*

**AFI 04: Take and Record complaints while in custody**

The force should assure itself that complaints are recorded during the detainees’ time in custody. It should make sure:

* when detainees make a complaint, this is recorded in the custody record, and that the force monitors performance in this area.

Update:

* If ICVs are advised by a detainee that they wish to make a complaint during a visit, they are to inform the Sergeant/Inspector. This is done and noted on visit forms, and although it does not form part of their Checklist is does form part of their ongoing training.
* ICVs check whether detainees have been advised of the complaints process when they disclose they would like to make a complaint. The Custody Sergeant is then informed of the detainees complaint request. Although this does not form part of the ICV Checklist, it is included within their ongoing training.

*Action: During training sessions, the ICV Scheme Manager will reiterate the importance of checking custody records to ensure this recorded.*

**AFI 11: Improve outcomes for detainees with mental health conditions**

The force should improve the outcomes for detainees with mental health conditions by monitoring how many detainees are referred in custody for a Mental Health Act assessment, and the waiting times, so it can evaluate how well it provides care for detainees.

Update:

* There was one notable occasion in the last three years where it was raised by the ICVs that a risk assessment has not been carried out with a detainee. This was followed up by the Scheme Manager when it was confirmed that the individual had been experiencing mental health issues but was undergoing criminal justice proceedings. Learning had been identified by the Custody Sergeant who subsequently implemented improvements to custody practices

The performance framework for the Scheme enables the capturing of data to map, amongst other things, visiting trends in custody and establish any issues that may need addressing such as custody records not being viewed, the number of detainees that require translators and whether female detainees are being offered menstrual products in accordance with the changes to PACE code C introduced on 21st August 2019. Updates on the performance framework are reported to each meeting by the Scheme Manager.

During the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, a total of 9,592 people were detained in Gwent.

During visits made within this period:

* 584 people were detained in custody;
* The majority were white males between the age of 18 to 49, the same as the previous year;
* 25 detainees refused a visit;
* 108 detainees were incapacitated, asleep or at interview;
  + ICVs observed 67 detainees who were asleep through the hatch.
* 384 detainees accepted a visit; and
* ICVs gained entry to the Custody Suites within 15 minutes for the majority of the visits, there were no abandoned visits during the year.

There have been a few instances where ethnicity had not been reported. The Scheme Manager is monitoring this and ICVs have been reminded to ask the Force for the information during their visits.

During the 2024/25 financial year, 49 visits took place to check on the welfare of the detainees, 5 more visits than in the previous year with 66% of the detainees accepting a visit.

As evidenced in appendix 1, the frequency of planned and actual visits differed slightly; 52 were planned and 49 took place. A number of scheduled visits were unintentionally missed due to being overlooked. ICVs were reminded to advise the OPCC if they were unable to find cover due to sickness so assistance could be provided.

Any action taken by the OPCC resulting from ICV feedback is relayed to ICVs at their quarterly meetings. Anything more serious is referred immediately to the Custody Inspector. In order to ensure clarity around this, a formal reporting process is included in the Scheme handbook.

There were 208 minor issues raised over the course of the year, with the majority being in relation to detainees requesting water or food, a blanket, shower, to use the exercise yard, reading material, to see the nurse, to make a phone call or for a solicitor to be contacted. The issues raised were dealt with by the custody officers on duty immediately. There were issues followed up with the Custody Inspector by the Scheme Manager including:

**Issue:** Bright lighting, resulting in headaches

**Force response:** Dimmer lighting is installed in all areas apart from the corridor which needs to be brightly lit for health and safety reasons.

**Issue:** Cold in cells.

**Force response:** This was due to a problem with the heating system which had been reported and was due to be rectified. More blankets were available if required.

**Issue**: Low staff on occasion

**Force Response:** There was an issue due to training and sickness, this was rectified as resilience cover had been put in place.

**Issue:** Fridge in the unit was the wrong temperature at 10.5 degrees.

**Force response**: Inspector agreed to check fridge and replace if necessary.

**Issue:** Problems with putting calls through intercom

**Force response:** alternative option offered. An Engineer had been called to fix intercom.

There were 9 near misses (a dangerous occurrence which did not result in an injury or damage to property, but clearly could have done), and there were no deaths in custody. Processes have been put in place where possible to prevent issues from happening again.

Operation Safeguard was implemented nationally. This involved using police custody cells as accommodation for prisoners when the number of prison cells available became critically low.



The ICVA has a Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for ICV Schemes to benchmark progress and achievements and to further enhance engagement with the PCC and local community. Initial assessment by the ICVA in 2018 saw Gwent OPCC awarded ‘Code Compliant’ status. The ICVA have undertaken a further review and awarded the OPCC Silver Compliance in September 2023, which has been maintained in 2024.

**NEXT STEPS**

Recruitment will need to be undertaken during 2025/26 as 3 experienced ICVs will be leaving the scheme between August and October 2026 having completed their tenure. The appointment of additional ICVs prior to the departure of the existing ICVs will ensure there is time for them to embed into the team and to learn from the more experienced members

As already mentioned, the Scheme Manager will continue to monitor when the visits take place with any identified issue raised at ICV panel meetings.

As well as being more representative of our communities, we will look to try and ensure representation from all Local Authority areas in Gwent as part of the next recruitment campaign. Work will continue with the Communication and Engagement Team in order to attract more interest from these areas and to increase the awareness of our scheme so that the local community can better understand the incredible work of our volunteers. A Recruitment Strategy has been developed by the Scheme Manager to assist with increasing the level of future applicants.

We aim to achieve the gold compliance award in next year’s ICVA Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) assessment.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

ICVs are appointed on a voluntary basis, there is no facility for financial remuneration. However, all reasonable travelling expenses are reimbursed with mileage paid at 45p per mile. Additional costs may include conferences and training.

The annual budget allocated for the scheme for 2024/25 was £3,350 which includes the subscription to ICVA of £1000. The actual cost of running the scheme during 2024/25 was £2839.00, a breakdown of costs is included in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Account Description** | **Actual Spend YTD (£)** |
| Staff Course Fees | 300 |
| ICVs Casual Mileage | 1443 |
| Subscriptions - Organisational | 1000 |
| Catering | 85 |
| Hospitality Car Parking Costs/Train Costs | 11 |
| **Total:** | **2,839** |

**PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS**

The Scheme is administered within the OPCC. The running of the Scheme is the responsibility of the Governance Officer as Scheme Manager. All administration of the Scheme is conducted by the Scheme Administrator.

The Scheme Manager delivers training sessions to their ICVs. Online resources have been introduced by the ICVA to support ongoing training. The Scheme Manager has conducted 3 yearly reviews for the ICV members to identify any ongoing concerns or training requirements.

Training of our ICVs is very important to ensure that they are up to date with changing legislation, and they have the skills to do their work. ICVs received refresher training in 17 March 2025 and continue to receive the ICVA bitesize online training material.

Over the course of the year, training has included:

Refresher training March 2025 covering the following areas:

Mental Health

The Role of Appropriate Adult with vulnerable detainees

Custody Record Reviewing

Observations, Reviews and Rousals

Learning Disability & Autism

Race & Policing

Religion and Police Custody

Changes to PACE: Menstrual Care & Dignity

Transgender Awareness

Equalities & Bias

Vulnerability

Children’s Concordat

Use of Force

Assertiveness

Detention Clock – Custody

His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service – What ICVs can look for in Custody

ICVA bitesize online training resources/checklists have been circulated via newsletters to ICVs on the following areas which also included a refresher on some of the areas above:

[Human Rights Overview Bitesize](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fhuman-rights-overview-bitesize-training%2F&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198429372%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=RSnXVjLaWwJp%2B5kn1fO2qcK44La28HKPs3KpyPqkrKE%3D&reserved=0)

[Immigration Detainees in Police Custody Bitesize](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fimmigration-detainees-bitesize-training%2F&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198442044%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=pZOZEZjEcLPgGERKeYlivIDvoe8XlRGg0DkvfeJC60U%3D&reserved=0)

[Suicide Prevention Awareness for ICVs](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fsuicide-prevention-awareness-for-icvs%2F&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198454511%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=C3bz%2BXAiiWOivMi6iAuf6deCRflg4UnxUsa1e3Bo9Bw%3D&reserved=0)

[Custody Record Reviewing Bitesize](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fcustody-record-reviewing-bitesize%2F&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198466955%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=NjzYXDJjJ8I4fJYm%2BfQyhs%2BneD5Pz6krd6qUO2lNqEM%3D&reserved=0)

[Alcohol and Substance Misuse Briefing](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F11%2FSubstance-Misuse-Disorders-Briefing.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198478852%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=VU4hDH1UnPTKQEY19R%2FPuRtZeqC8ZQisXf4htu%2BK9MU%3D&reserved=0)

[Custody Record Reviewing Guidance](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F08%2FCRR-Form-Blank-2024.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198490719%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=IB2OXeL7dEGxTW4gwSxL1AA5u%2FQHZhEcWQEQ1HE0dsE%3D&reserved=0)

[Immigration Detainees Briefing](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2025%2F03%2FImmigration-detainee-briefing.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198507829%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=yhCkoI%2FgWSRicgWyp%2FiypO5bQf3QISV8y0MJPZnj7T0%3D&reserved=0)

[Non-PACE Area Complaints Briefing](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2025%2F02%2FNon-PACE-Areas-Complaints.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198521754%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=tkMJdhIpNb72xnk%2FwV0msIj33cQKXGtiJ2cMUWsVq0U%3D&reserved=0)

[Pregnant Detainees Briefing](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2025%2F01%2FPregnant-Detainees-Briefing.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198537482%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=VxEqPMVcOkiOuuB2%2B6ByyC8nr2yTPVaFH63ZucEC0DU%3D&reserved=0)

[Speaking to Detainees with Mental Ill Health](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F06%2FSpeaking-To-Detainees-With-Mental-Ill-Health.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198550071%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gZ7QP%2FL3YCxAli7wi6nWYUTubcbfglaSo%2FdA6CwO%2Bcc%3D&reserved=0)

[Updated Strip and Intimate Searches Briefing](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F05%2FStrip-and-Intimate-Searching-Children-2024.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198563469%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=iAjCprA7%2FmFgXZpWy7m6pMz0%2BQhzWjiYHyMOjHs%2FXMA%3D&reserved=0)

[Updated Women in Police Custody Briefing](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F08%2F2024.07-Women-in-Police-Custody-A-Checklist-for-ICVs.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198575895%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=qF5YC3UVCA68TGv%2BQfWZ0Kp7cgqIMNVAte7gZQAHO9s%3D&reserved=0)

[Understanding the Needs of Autistic People in Custody](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ficva.org.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2024%2F12%2FUnderstanding-the-needs-of-autistic-people-in-police-custody-a-step-by-step-guide-for-ICVs.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CNicola.Warren%40gwent.police.uk%7C89b5064f03874498765d08dd6dd0e764%7Ce46c8472ef5d4b63bc744a60db42c371%7C0%7C1%7C638787466198587909%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Jdaky9wTTZ8cINfMc%2BmkDpBPvuORplS8df5D%2Fj0Tisk%3D&reserved=0)

The ICVA resources website is provided to ICVs should they wish to watch the videos or access checklists to refresh.

The Scheme Manager attended an online ICVA conference in November 2024, which included discussion on the forthcoming ICVA Digital Transformation Strategy consisting of a new ICV online training facility and a new national visiting form. The form will assist them in capturing thematic information. The training will enable Scheme Managers to monitor when online training has been completed.

Regular catchup meetings were held with other Scheme Managers as well as bi-monthly meetings to share best practice with the Regional Scheme Managers in Wales.

There may be resourcing implications resulting from development of an Independent Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel in terms of OPCC staff and recruiting independent volunteers to participate in the panel as well the extra work required to achieve ICVA QAF3 gold compliance award.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 Part 3 Section 299 confirms the statutory requirement for the Commissioner to run an ICV scheme.

**EQUALITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS**

This report has been considered against the general duty to promote equality, as stipulated under the Strategic Equality Plan (the Plan) and has been assessed not to discriminate against any particular group.

Whilst due cognisance is given to the requirements of the Plan in the recruitment, training and operation of Custody Visiting, the over-riding consideration must be the health and safety of ICVs whilst undertaking their role. ICVs sign a volunteer agreement agreeing to inform the OPCC to any changes to their wellbeing or circumstances which could affect their ability to carry out visits.

Consideration has been given to requirements of the Articles contained in the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 in preparing this report. Human Rights matters and legislation are of vital importance when considering custody matters.

The Scheme is firmly committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all local people and communities and are committed to recruiting ICVs who are representative of the community to better reflect the population of Gwent.

The demographics for the Scheme as of 31st March 2025 were as follows:

* 5 men and 5 women
* Ages range between mid 20s to 70s
* 10 white

Of the 10 ICVs, 2 have been on the Scheme since 2015, 1 since 2017, 2 since 2021 and 5 since 2023. The maximum tenure for an ICV is nine years with reviews and re-appointment confirmed every three years. ICVs must have completed positive 3 yearly reviews to remain on the scheme. Three of the ICVs agreed to extend their tenure to provide cover during the pandemic and to allow additional ICVs to be appointed and trained. Therefore, their tenure will end during 2026.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Local Authority | Number of ICVs |
| Caerphilly | 2 |
| Monmouthshire | 2 |
| Newport | 2 |
| Torfaen | 4 |
| Blaenau Gwent | 0 |

**RISK**

The risk of not providing a scheme is a breach of statutory duty and the failure to ensure that detainees are being treated appropriately could pose a reputational risk to both the OPCC and the Force.

**PUBLIC INTEREST**

This report will be made available to the public once it has been reviewed by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

**CONTACT OFFICER**

Nicola Warren, Scheme Manager

**ANNEXES**



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| **Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent**  I confirm that I have considered whether or not I have any personal or prejudicial interest in this matter and take the proposed decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct.  The above request has my approval. |
| **Signature:** |
| **Date:**  **23.09.2025** |