

PART 1 – NON-CONFIDENTIAL

1 Introduction and background

The Independent Custody Visitors Scheme (the scheme) is a statutory scheme borne of section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002 whereby volunteers of local communities attend custody suites to check on the treatment of detained persons (DPs), the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed. The scheme offers protection and confidentiality to DPs and the police, and provides reassurance to the wider community.

The Thames Valley PCC is a member of the Independent Custody Visitors Association (ICVA), paying an annual membership fee. ICVA support scheme administrators to operate an effective scheme in their respective police force area. The support ICVA provide includes an induction day training package for new volunteers to the scheme, bitesize training for panel meetings, two annual conferences, weekly updates and a member's forum to share information.

2 Volunteer numbers and recruitment

At the start of the reporting period the scheme had a total of 57 visitors visiting eight designated stations across the Thames Valley (locations below). During the reporting period seven visitors left the scheme. The OPCC held two induction days, following recruitment, in May 2016 and March 2017 and this added 14 new visitors to the scheme. This resulted in a net increase of seven scheme members with volunteer visitor numbers therefore standing at 64 at the end of the reporting period.

Recruitment of new volunteers continued to be very difficult during the year, as has been the experience historically. The main portal for advertising is the national volunteering website 'Do-it'. Other avenues used are social media and flyers at PCC supported events. Of 30 enquiries received, via the Do-it website, during the year only five application forms were received. The number of enquiries was significantly down from the 52 received last year. We are now seeking to advertise via local Parish Councils.

The eight custody suites in the Thames Valley area are located at Abingdon, Aylesbury, Banbury, High Wycombe, Loddon Valley (LV), Maidenhead, Milton Keynes (MK) and Newbury.

These suites are grouped into five 'panels', which are:

1. MK with Aylesbury,
2. Abingdon with Newbury,
3. LV with Wycombe,
4. Banbury
5. Maidenhead

Each panel has a volunteer coordinator who produces a rota. Visits are conducted in pairs and, from the rota, visitors agree a date and time to conduct each one.

3 Scheme training

Training is provided in three main ways: panel meetings, a training day and a quarterly bulletin. This year there was additional training provided on the Children in Custody Concordat, across three dates, which was attended by 31 custody visitors.

Each panel held one meeting during the reporting period except for Banbury which held none. Banbury has been operating with lower numbers of volunteers (6) and the coordinator has reported the panel was running smoothly with few reported incidents, hence the panel meeting was felt to be unnecessary. High Wycombe, Maidenhead, Milton Keynes and Aylesbury held two meetings.

The annual training morning was held on Saturday 21 May 2016 at Aylesbury Police station. It was attended by 26 visitors, (the best level of attendance for four years) and included presentations on Liaison and Diversion and Child Sexual Exploitation. Training is also available once a year via the ICVA National Conference. The conference this year was held in Birmingham on Saturday 11 March 2017 and was attended by two visitors. The cost to attend was £65 per visitor plus travel mileage.

ICVA held the annual two day Scheme Administrator's conference which took place on 31 October and 1 November 2016. This was attended by the OPCC scheme administrator, Colin Simpson.

4 Visit frequency

The agreed number of visits to achieve is 52 per year, per custody suite. A written report, produced by the visitors at the end of each visit, records findings and actions taken and matters for further investigation. The chart below shows the actual number of visits achieved during the reporting period which totals 403 against the desired target of 416.

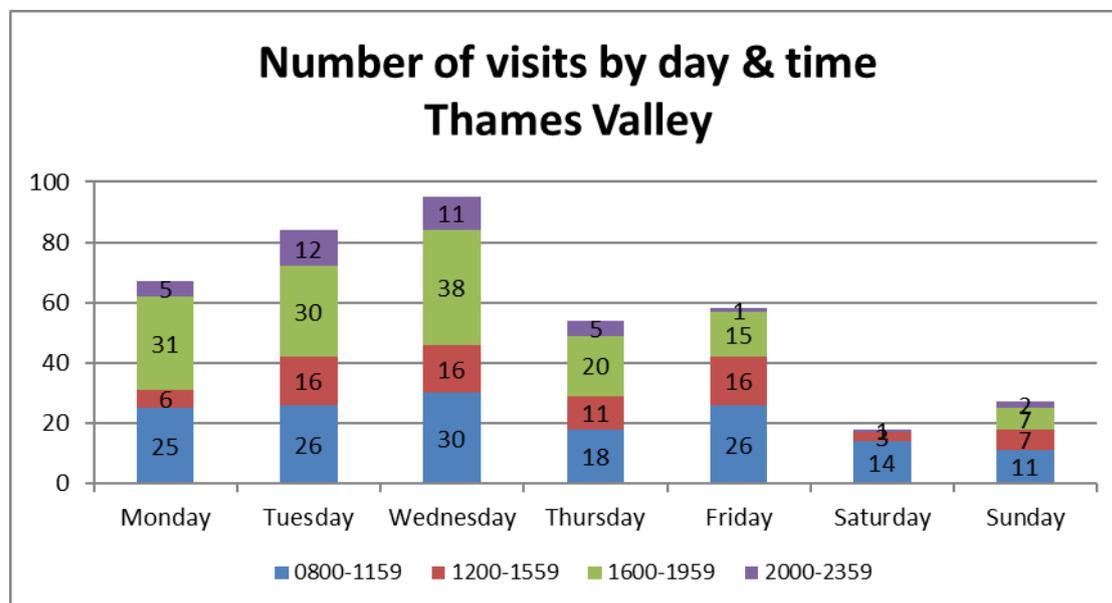
April 2016 to March 2017			
Custody Suite	Expected visits	Actual visits	Variance
Abingdon	52	48	-4
Aylesbury	52	50	-2
Banbury	52	52	0
High Wycombe	52	52	0
Loddon Valley	52	51	-1
Maidenhead	52	47	-5
Milton Keynes	52	52	0
Newbury	52	51	-1

Custody visits can take place at anytime of the day or night, seven days a week. The graph below shows what time of day visits took place during the reporting period. Only 11% of visits took place at weekends; the scheme administrator is encouraging visitors to undertake more visits over weekends, when statistics show there will be a higher percentage of DPs held in custody.

The total figures are:

Time of day	Number of visits
0800hrs - 1159hrs	150 (37%)
1200hrs – 1559hrs	75 (19%)
1600hrs – 1959hrs	141 (35%)
2000hrs – 2359hrs	37 (9%)

The earliest visit was at 0805hrs and the latest at 2159hrs. There were no visits undertaken outside of these times.



The average time each visit took was 37 minutes with the shortest being 10 minutes and the longest one hour 48 minutes. 75% of the visits were between 20 and 50 minutes duration. If necessary custody visitors will prioritise visits to children and other vulnerable DPs.

5 Detainee response

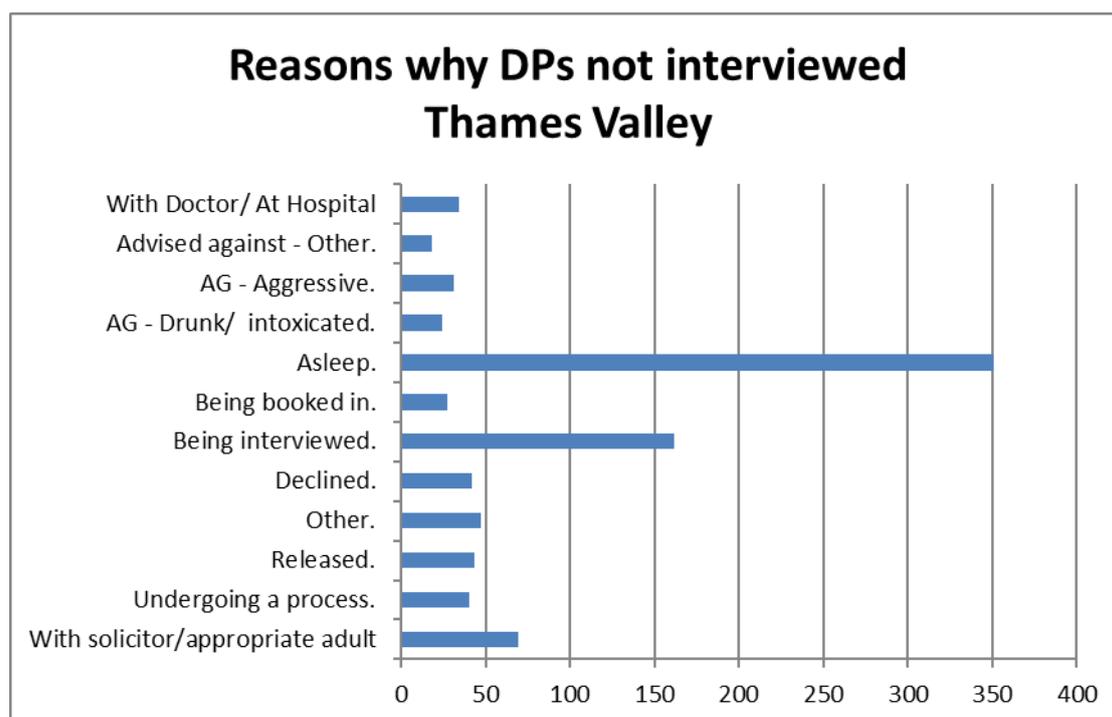
The following statistics show the number of DPs in custody at the time of the visits, over the reporting period.

Total in suite	DPs offered to visit	DPs visited	% take up visited to offered
2,002	1,154	1,112	96.4%

Custody Visitors introduce themselves to the DP (as opposed to a member of custody staff making the introduction for them). Since this new form of introduction, in 2013, the take up of visits by available DPs has remained at a very high percentage of over 90%. This year's high percentage matches percentages from our neighbouring forces in the South East region. During the reporting period 403 visits were conducted, meaning there was an average of three (rounded up) detainees seen on each visit.

There are 12 recorded reasons why 890 DPs were unavailable to be spoken to, with the largest number being 351 (39%) who were asleep and cannot be disturbed from their eight hour rest period, and 162 (18%) who were being interviewed by the police/solicitor. The number of DPs who simply declined a discussion with custody visitors was only 42 (5%); a reduction from 7% last year.

The full details are shown in the chart below.



6 Issues identified by visitors

The majority of issues identified by visitors are dealt with during the visitor's time in the suite, directly with the custody staff, or immediately afterwards; examples being additional blankets, a DP needing a drink, a DP requiring a phone call, a medication need and a solicitor requirement. Those issues highlighted as requiring further investigation are recorded separately, and totalled 16. These have all been resolved by the Scheme Administrator in conjunction with the Inspector of the relevant custody suite and/or the Force Chief Inspector of Custody.

Examples of issues identified from the reporting period are:
(DP = Detained Person, HCP = Health Care Professional)

High Wycombe (Jul 2016)

Report – DP has been in over 12 hours and stated on prescribed medication and has not seen a HCP.

Response – The DP had a telephone consultation with the HCP. The DP had two inhalers one for asthma and one for GTN which assists with heart conditions. The HCP advised that the DP needed access to both inhalers but that the access needed to be controlled by the custody staff. Sometimes we allow asthma inhalers into cells but GTN inhalers have up to now been controlled by police only. In this case there was no danger to the DP and proper medical supervision was in place.

Loddon Valley (Dec 2016)

Report – DP who referred to a request to go to hospital, which when checked against their custody record showed they had declined. The Custody Sergeant requested the nurse attend immediately to assess the current position.

Response – He was seen shortly afterwards by the HCP and then taken to hospital for treatment. He returned back to custody around 4.30pm and whilst at the hospital

he had facial x-rays and a CT scan and was found to have a minor fracture to his nose, with follow up appointments set up for him to go back to hospital in a few days.

Aylesbury (Jul 2016)

Report – Custody Officer took decision not to provide medication. DP now saying too late to take them. Mentioned this to the current custody sergeant who will look into this further.

Response – After contacting his mother it became clear that DP had ceased to take his medication for several days prior to his arrival in custody. Once in custody the DP decided that his medication was important to him. After being reviewed by the HCP it was determined that his medication was not essential due to the decision made by the DP to terminate the use of his medication outside custody and that as the drugs he uses are effective only if taken consistently then they were not required during his detention. He was advised to seek a medical consultation with his healthcare providers once released from custody.

Abingdon (Sep 2016)

Report – A DP in for 1 day & 18 hours has not been offered shower/wash/teeth clean

Response – I will send out an email to all my Sergeants again re-iterating the need to ensure DP who have been in custody for a period of time should be routinely offered a shower.

Milton Keynes (May 2016)

Report – DP stated due to medical conditions and high cell temperature this could induce a stroke or heart attack and burn dressing on foot needed changing. HCP unable to treat burn and not aware of the other issue.

Response – Summary record of DP provided resulting in DP release on bail. All appropriate care appears to have been taken and the high cell temperature would not induce a stroke or heart attack.

Banbury (Feb 2017)

Report – An overnight DP has not been offered showers or exercise.

Response – They did arrive during a busy Saturday evening. However, I would have hoped that they would have been offered a shower and to clean their teeth during the Sunday morning. Recruitment and retention of Detention Officers has been a problem over the last eight months. I will email out again a reminder to all my Sergeants.

7 Death in custody

It must be noted that, whilst falling outside of the reporting period, there was a death in custody at Loddon Valley on 3 April 2017. The IPCC attended and conducted initial enquiries and the custody suite reopened later in the day on 3 April. No scheme visitors were involved on or around the time of the incident. We await the results of the initial enquiry, and it will be assessed for relevance to the operation of the scheme as and when available.

8 Financial comments

The scheme budget for 2016/17 of £10,488 was under spent by £3,808. The large underspend is explained by the timing of claim forms. The budget covers the cost of mileage claims, honorarium payments for coordinators and costs associated with induction training, the annual training day and the ICVA national conference. The number and frequency of claims varies from year to year. The budget for 2017/18 is £10,677.

9 Legal comments

As summarised above, under section 51 of the Police Reform Act 2002, Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales are required to organise and oversee the delivery of an independent custody visiting scheme in their force area. The contents of this report would indicate that the PCC is meeting his statutory obligations under the 2002 Act.

10 Equality comments

The gender split at the start of the period was 26 male to 31 female visitors. The gender split at the end of the period was 27 male to 37 female, a split of 42% male to 58% female.

The age demographic as at 31 March 2017 is as follows:

18-25yrs	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Over 65
0	5	8	9	18	24

The demographic is little changed from last year with 80% aged 46 or over. Those visitors aged 46 and over generally have greater flexibility and are able to offer experience to the scheme.

Ethnicity and disability information of scheme visitors is provided below.

<u>White</u>			<u>Black</u>		<u>Asian</u>		
British	Irish	Other	African	Caribbean	Indian	Pakastani	Bangladeshi
53	1	1	1	2	4	1	1

There are 3 visitors who are disabled within the meaning given by the Equality Act 2010.

Public access to information

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and other legislation. Part 1 of this form will be made available on the website within 1 working day of approval. Any facts and advice that should not be automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on a separate Part 2 form. Deferment of publication is only applicable where release before that date would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved.

Is the publication of this form to be deferred? No**Is there a Part 2 form? No**