

2024/25

Independent Custody Visiting



**Derbyshire
Police and Crime
Commissioner**

Safer and Stronger Together

**Protecting Communities
Fighting Crime**



Annual Report



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Welcome to Derbyshire's Independent Custody Visiting (ICV) Scheme Annual Report.

This report provides an overview of the activities and impact of the ICV Scheme in Derbyshire for the year 2024–2025. It highlights the work of our dedicated volunteers, the findings from custody visits, and the improvements made to ensure detainee welfare and uphold public confidence in policing.

Background

Independent Custody visiting to Police Stations owes its origin to Lord Scarman, whose report on the Brixton riots in 1981 recommended a system of independent, unannounced inspections of procedures and detention in Police Stations by local community members. The main reason was to counter growing mistrust of the Police and to increase their accountability to the general public. Whilst Scarman advocated a statutory arrangement, Home Office ministers approved a Lay Visiting system, which was non-statutory.

The Police Reform Act 2002 paragraph 51 then placed a statutory obligation on Police Authorities to have in place an effective ICV Scheme. The Act was supported by Codes of Practice and National Standards developed jointly by the Home Office and the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA).

Today, Independent Custody Visiting has a number of connected purposes. First, and most obviously, it offers an extra level of protection to detainees by providing independent scrutiny of their treatment and the conditions in which they are held. By giving approved members of the local community an opportunity to observe, comment and report on these matters, it can reassure the community, improve the public's understanding of procedures at Police Stations, and strengthen their confidence that these are being properly applied.

From a Police perspective, it is a clear demonstration of their commitment to transparency and openness in relation to this critical aspect of their duties. Furthermore, it can improve Police management of their own performance by pointing out areas where problems have occurred and which may have implications for policy, training, communications, or the daily work of Officers responsible for Custody at Police Stations.

Independent Custody Visiting is an extremely important aid for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Derbyshire in fulfilling her responsibility of ensuring that policing in the County is carried out fairly, in accordance with statutory rules and with respect for the human rights of all those coming into contact with the Police.

What is Independent Custody Visiting?

Independent Custody visiting (ICV) is a process where trained volunteers make unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the welfare of detainees and ensure their rights are upheld. It promotes public confidence in policing by providing independent oversight.

All visits are unannounced and can take place at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Visits are conducted in pairs and upon arrival at the suite, ICVs are given immediate access to the custody suite. The ICVs are trained to introduce themselves to detainees in custody and ask questions to assess if their treatment has been 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 the detainees consent and availability, a visit is undertaken.

Following the visit, ICVs complete a report form summarising their visit to each individual detainee. This is then sent to the Scheme Manager at the OPCC. Any 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 Manager via email or phone depending on the urgency. The ICVs can also raise general matters arising from visits at any time with the Scheme Manager or at their quarterly meetings with the OPCC.

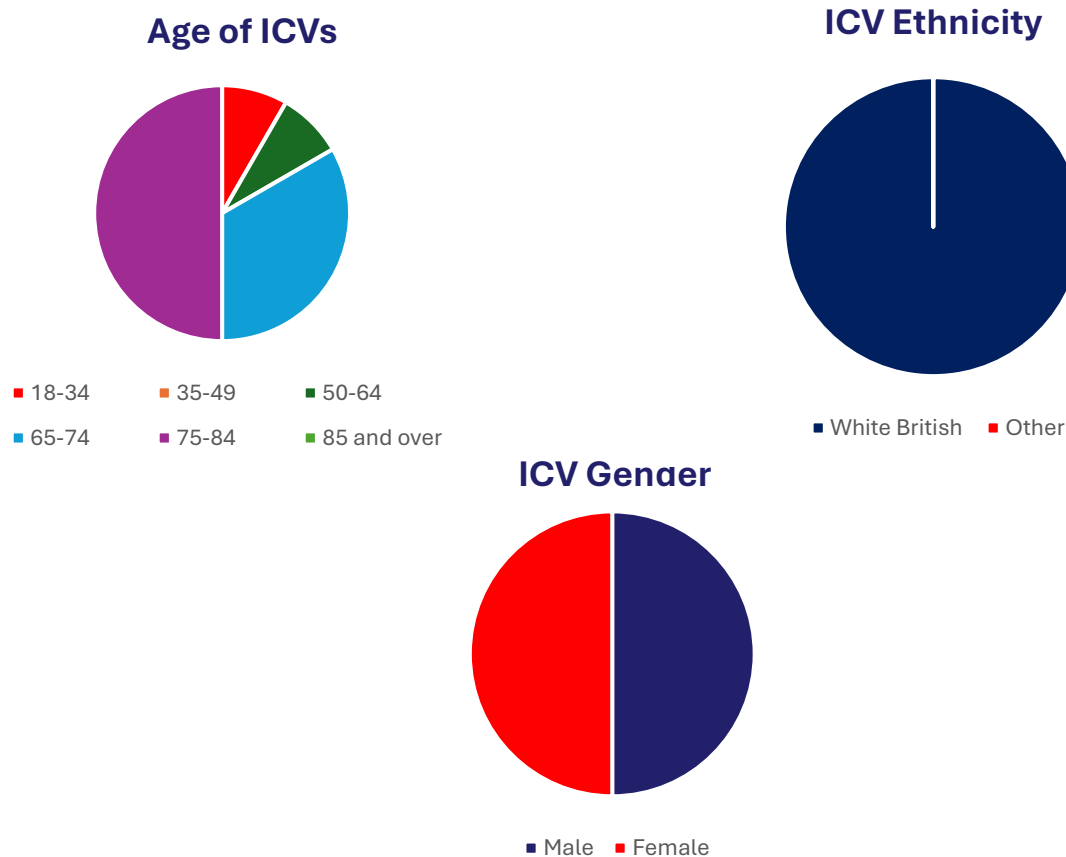


Overview of Derbyshire's ICV Scheme

The Derbyshire ICV Scheme is coordinated by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC). There are two designated custody suites in Derbyshire:

- St Mary's Wharf in Derby which has 42 cells.
- Wyatts Way in Ripley which has 17 cells.

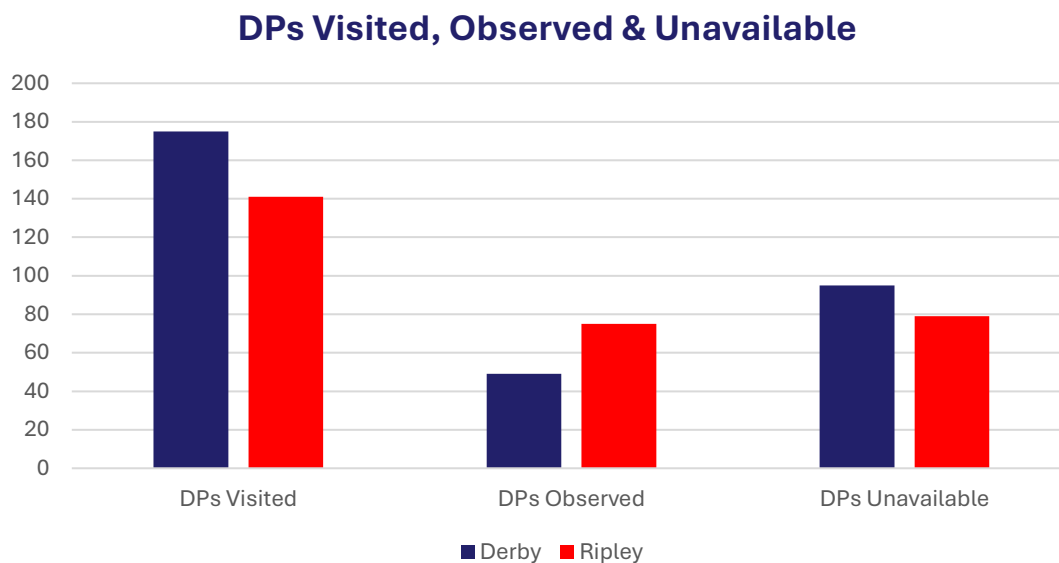
During the 2024–2025 reporting year, the scheme was supported by 12 active ICVs. Below is a breakdown of their age, ethnicity and gender.



In Derbyshire, it is vital that our volunteers reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. That's why, throughout 2024/25 and continuing into 2025/26, we have actively focused on recruiting individuals from a wide range of backgrounds. In 2025/26 alone, we successfully welcomed four new volunteers to the team—two of whom bring valuable perspectives from different ethnic backgrounds.

Visiting Statistics

Across the four quarters of 2024/25, there were a total of 26,563 detainees processed through Derbyshire Custody Suites. ICVs conducted a total of 94 visits to Derby and Ripley custody suites, during which there were a total of 1,191 detainees in custody at the time of visits. 316 of these were seen, 124 were observed, and 174 were unavailable.



Reasons Why Detainees Were Unavailable

The reason why some detainees were not available to be seen by ICVs during visits can vary. Common reasons include detainees being asleep, at interview, or declining the visit.

Understanding these reasons help assess the engagement levels during visits.

**Note: 'other' consists of DPs that are either; at an external hospital, out of cell with no further explanation given, in the exercise yard, with a solicitor and any anomalies within the ICV reports. **

	Derby	Ripley
At Interview	32	20
Asleep	23	13
Declined Visit by DP	17	17
With HCP	1	3
Released	4	7
Advised not to see	1	1
Other*	15	20
Total	93	81

ICV Report Good Practice

Throughout the year, ICVs identified numerous examples of good practice by custody officers during their visits to Derbyshire custody suites. These observations are vital in helping to maintain high standards of detainee care and ensuring that custody environments remain safe, respectful, and compliant with legal and ethical standards.

Some of the good practice by custody staff, noted by ICVs throughout the year, included:

This detainee had been arrested in a different area and brought back to Derbyshire. The detainee was concerned about their car being left in a different area and the fact that they would over-run the time in the car park there, but the custody sergeant had been in contact with the car parking firm and sorted this issue out for them. The detainee was very happy with how he had been treated whilst in custody.

We were very impressed that custody had a system in place for any detainee observing Ramadan to ensure they had food at the appropriate times. Excellent visit. Excellent staff.

This detainee was distressed regarding their 10-month-old puppy which they had informed staff of when first in custody. We raised this with the escorting officer who confirmed that their house had been visited by Police and their puppy had been fed. The DP was immediately informed of this by the Detention Officer.

Detainee Feedback

When the ICVs speak to the detainees regarding their treatment, it is important they ask how the detainee feels they have been treated during their time in custody. Below are a few examples of the positive comments that ICVs received from detainees:

Had only been in custody for 90 mins - Custody staff had 'brilliantly' sorted out family caring responsibilities. Said he "could not have been treated better."

Another detainee on constant observations and had an officer stationed at the cell door. The detainee described him as "brilliant" and "everyone in custody has been lovely."

"I've been treated like royalty."

Felt she had been treated well and gave them 10/10.

One detainee on constant observations stated she had been treated "brilliantly" and "they're keeping me safe."

"Have been treated exceptionally well."

He felt that he was being treated well and had been provided with an extra mattress due to his damaged hip.

One detainee had to go to the hospital during his time in custody and informed the ICVs during their visit that the staff that took him to hospital were very kind and he had nothing but praise for those currently on duty and gave them 10/10.

Concerns Raised

There were a few causes of concern that the volunteers raised frequently throughout the last year. Below are some examples along with the actions taken to remedy them:

Issue - Availability of Appropriate Adults (AAs) during the late night/early hours.

N.B. AA's are people who support vulnerable people, usually a child or an adult with mental health issues or learning disabilities, when they are in police custody. Their role is to ensure the detainee understands what is happening, including their rights.

Action - This issue was raised to custody staff and is currently being monitored by the Constabulary and OPCC and addressed accordingly to find a resolution.

Issue - During a custody visit, the ICVs noted on their report that "one DP had requested a copy of the Quran and had been issued with a bi-lingual copy. She had refused this as it did not meet her religious requirements." The ICVs then stated, "It would be more acceptable if there was an all-English copy available – is this something that could happen?"

Action - Following this, the head of custody circulated the following to all custody officers: "The copies of the Quran currently held in custody suites for the use of detainees contain both Arabic script and English language translation. It has been identified by ICVs that for some detainees reading the text side-by-side may be difficult. Accordingly, we have acquired some English-only versions. One has been placed at Ripley, and copies will be placed at Derby over the next few days. Should a detainee request a copy of the Quran, please offer them the choice".

Issue - On a number of occasions, the ICVs also raised their concerns that detainees were not being informed of their sleeping review as soon as practicable.

N.B. A sleeping review in police custody refers to a review of a detainee's detention that takes place while the person is asleep. Under Section 40 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE), detainees must have their detention reviewed at regular intervals—typically every 6 hours after initial detention, then every 9 hours. These reviews are meant to ensure that continued detention is justified.

Action - This was raised with the Custody Manager who in turn circulated an email to all shift inspectors reminding them of the importance of informing detained persons if they have had a sleeping review, at the earliest opportunity. We have since seen a positive improvement in this.

Annual Summary for Custody Record Reviews (CRRs)

In addition to custody visiting, Derbyshire also operate a system of Custody Record Reviewing (CRR), which is designed to provide deeper oversight of detainee treatment and rights through the review of custody records.

Each week, a pair of trained volunteers independently review up to five anonymised and redacted custody records. These records are selected based on specific themes to ensure a broad and representative sample of detainees. The categories include but are not limited to:

- Female detainees
- Detainees with mental health concerns
- Juvenile detainees
- Detainees with alcohol and drug dependencies
- Strip searches
- Immigration cases

Volunteers review the records of vulnerable detained persons to ensure they are being held according to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Code C and to their specific needs. The reviews assess if detainees were treated fairly, had their rights upheld, and received appropriate care and support during their time in custody.

Once the ICVs have completed the reviews, they complete an electronic report form summarising their findings, highlighting any concerns or areas of good practice. The Scheme Manager at the OPCC reviews these reports and forwards any concerns to the Custody Manager for feedback and follow-up. This process helps identify patterns, improve custody procedures, and ensure accountability across the system.

In 2024/25, the ICVs reviewed a total of 140 custody records. This is split into:

- 70 for St Marys Wharf, Derby
- 70 for Wyatts Way, Ripley.

ICVA and the QAF

The Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) is the national membership organisation that supports, leads, and represents ICV schemes across the UK. Funded by the Home Office and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) ICVA plays a vital role in ensuring that custody visiting is delivered effectively and consistently.

ICVA's core responsibilities include:

- Providing guidance and training to local ICV schemes to ensure volunteers are well-prepared and supported.
- Promoting best practice and sharing resources to help schemes operate efficiently and in line with national standards.
- Representing ICV schemes at a national level, including engagement with government and criminal justice organisations.
- Championing human rights, equality, and dignity for detainees in police custody.
- Ensuring compliance with international obligations, such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), by being a member of the UK's National Preventive Mechanism (UKNPM).

ICVA's vision is that all detainees are treated fairly, with dignity, and free from ill treatment. It works in partnership with local schemes to prevent harm and improve conditions in police custody.

You can find more information on ICVA, here: [Home Page of ICVA \(The Independent Custody Visitors Association\)](#)



Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)

The QAF is a structured tool developed by ICVA to help local ICV schemes assess, improve, and celebrate their performance against a strict set of criteria, relating to best practices and legal requirements that the OPCC should be undertaking in order to run and manage the ICV scheme. It was first introduced in 2019 and is now in its third iteration (QAF3), reflecting evolving standards and best practices in custody visiting.

The QAF is designed to:

- Ensure compliance with the statutory Code of Practice and relevant legislation underpinning custody visiting.
- Promote transparency and public confidence by encouraging schemes to reflect on their practices and demonstrate accountability.
- Celebrate achievements and highlight areas of excellence within local schemes.
- Encourage continuous improvement through benchmarking and action planning.

Structure of the QAF

The QAF is divided into several key themes, each with specific criteria that schemes must meet:

- **Recruitment and Training:** Ensuring volunteers are appropriately recruited, vetted, and trained.
- **Managing Volunteers:** Supporting and retaining volunteers through effective communication and engagement.
- **Communications:** Promoting the scheme internally and externally, including public awareness.

- **Holding the Force to Account:** Ensuring that issues raised by ICVs are addressed and that the scheme has influence.
- **Transparency and Public Reassurance:** Demonstrating openness and building public trust.
- **Detainee Welfare:** Ensuring that detainee rights and wellbeing are central to the scheme's work.

Assessment Levels

Schemes can be assessed at four levels:

- **Code Compliant:** Meeting the minimum statutory requirements.
- **Silver:** Demonstrating good practice across key areas.
- **Gold:** Showing strong performance and innovation.
- **Platinum:** Exemplifying excellence and leadership in custody visiting.

Each level requires self-assessment, evidence submission, and sign-off by the scheme's OPCC. For Silver and Gold ICVA conducts dip sampling of evidence, and for Platinum, a full assessment is carried out by ICVA where all evidence is assessed.

More information on the QAF can be found here: [What Makes a Good Scheme - ICVA](#)



Looking Ahead

Recruitment

In 2024/25, Derbyshire welcomed two new volunteers to the ICV Scheme, further strengthening our commitment to transparency and community oversight.

Looking ahead, the OPCC remains dedicated to enhancing the ICV Scheme through ongoing recruitment, comprehensive training, and dedicated support. We actively encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds, with a particular focus on engaging those who are currently under-represented within local communities.

Volunteer opportunities are advertised through a wide range of channels, including social media, universities, colleges, voluntary organisations, and local volunteer fairs and on the OPCC website - [Office of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner](#)

To be eligible to join the Derbyshire ICV Scheme, volunteers must be 18 or older, have no direct involvement in the criminal justice system, and successfully pass police security vetting at Non-Police Personnel Level 2 (NPPV2).



QAF

Last time Derbyshire participated in the QAF, we received the Silver award. Derbyshire will be re-assessed in April 2026, thereafter we will communicate the outcome of the level achieved to the public and are hoping to be awarded a higher level this time round!

Training

Over the upcoming year, and following feedback from our ICVs, we would like to invest more into training. This includes training with the IVC's directly, as well as the Detention Officers and custody staff, as we recognise the benefits of continuous training and learning.



Contact Us

If you would like more information about becoming an Independent Custody Visitor in Derbyshire, or for general information regarding the scheme, please contact the:

Scheme Coordinator

📍 Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Butterly Hall
Derbyshire
DE5 3RS

☎ 0300 122 6000

✉ PCCOffice@derbyshire.police.uk

For more information on the ICV Scheme, please see the dedicated page on our website, here: [Independent Custody Visiting Volunteer Scheme | Office of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner](#)



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You can also keep up to date with the PCC and her offices day to day work via:

📰 The Newsletter – [Newsletters | Office of the Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner](#)

📱 Social Media:

- **Facebook:** [Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner | Ripley | Facebook](#)
- **X:** [Derbyshire Police and Crime Commissioner \(@DerbysPCC\) / X](#)
- **Instagram:** [Derbyshire PCC \(@derbyshire_police_commissioner\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)