

INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING SCHEME (ICVs)



Matthew Barber
Police & Crime Commissioner
for Thames Valley

Annual Report: April 2025 – March 2026

Independent Custody Visitors are trained volunteers who make unannounced visits to police custody suites to check on the welfare, rights and treatment of detainees and provide independent public reassurance.

Scheme at a glance

-  57 ICVs with..
-  329 years' experience..
-  plus 15 new starters..
-  undertook 286 visits..
-  seeing over 1,040 detainees across..
-  6 Custody Suites that..
-  detained over 33,700 suspects.
-  ICVs raised 227 issues..
-  to support justice and fair treatment..
-  for people under investigation.

Recurrent Concerns

- Cell facilities and plumbing
- Food stock control
- Faith provision
- Menopause support
- Halal certification

Positive Outcomes

- NHS menopause leaflets introduced
- Halal certification updated
- Improved storage of faith materials
- Hijab availability reviewed
- Continued rapid response to facilities issues

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Volunteers

Independent custody visiting relies entirely on the commitment of volunteers from local communities.

Our volunteers undertake significant training to enable them to confidently challenge where they have concerns in an environment that is not visible to the public. They champion vulnerabilities, support the rights of detainees including children, and the dignity of all.

During this year, ICV volunteers:

- Undertook neurodiversity training
- Participated in police ride-alongs
- Helped shape the introduction of a digital visiting app
- Engaged with members of scrutiny groups to explain the role of the ICVs and provide reassurance around independent scrutiny of policing

Goals for 2026



Personal safety training



ICVA e-learning



Continued Quality Assured
Compliance and regulatory
rigour



Rollout of digital visit
recording

For more information about ICVs, please visit our website - [Independent Custody Visitors - Thames Valley PCC](#)