

Independent Custody Visitors' Scheme 2015/16

Independent Custody Visitors are members of the local community who make unannounced visits to custody suites to check on the treatment of detainees. The scheme offers protections and confidentiality to detainees and reassurance to the wider community. The Police and Crime Commissioner is responsible for coordinating and overseeing the scheme.

More than
100 hours
spent in
custody suites

445 detainees
were visited

124 visits were
completed
across the five
custody suites

Highlights and achievements from 2015/16

- Improved the quality of information gathered and how it is logged and monitored, helping to raise standards of custody in Cambridgeshire.
- Moved to a single administrative panel to allow greater sharing of best practice from across the county.
- Hosted and organised an Eastern Region Conference for more than 50 ICVs which explored the theme of vulnerability and helped ICVs identify enhanced questioning opportunities.
- Recruited four new ICVs, to provide a wider range of visit times, bringing the total number up to 22.
- Cambridgeshire continues to represent the Eastern Region on ICVA's Board helping to shape national change and ensure Cambridgeshire can respond quickly to it.

Issues raised by ICVs and subsequently resolved

- Delays in detainees being seen by a Healthcare Professional.
- Requests from detainees like blankets or exercise.
- Qibla arrows missing or pointing in the wrong direction.
- Concerns that the cleaning regime is not frequent enough or to a high enough standard.

Recommendations for 2016/17

- To work with colleagues in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire to ensure the schemes can respond to the tri-force collaboration of custody.
- Design a digital tri-force visit report form to enable sharing of information and make identification of issues easier and more efficient.
- Continue to recruit ICVs to broaden the skills and experiences within the group.