

Independent Custody Visitor Scheme

North Yorkshire

Annual Report 2018/2019



Contents

Introduction.....	2
Foreword from Julia Mulligan, Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, North Yorkshire.....	3
OPFCC and the ICV Scheme – 2018/2019 Achievements.....	4
ICVs, Recruitment and Training.....	5
ICV Visits (April 2018 to March 2019).....	6
Plans for the Future.....	7

Introduction

Independent Custody Visiting is a vital element of the work of the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner in ensuring the police service is open and accountable to the people it serves. Every PCC/PFCC has a statutory duty to run an Independent Custody Visiting scheme. These schemes co-ordinate local volunteers, called Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs), to make unannounced visits to police custody to check on the treatment and wellbeing of detainees as well as the conditions they are held in. The Scheme works to Home Office guidelines.

Independent Custody Visitors come from a variety of backgrounds and sections of the community. They must be over 18 and have no direct involvement in the criminal justice system, for example, as serving police officers or special constables or magistrates. Other people such as solicitors or probation officers may be excluded, to prevent possible conflict of interests for the individual. This maintains the independence of the scheme as a whole.

This annual report provides an overview of the North Yorkshire ICV Scheme during 2018/2019.

Foreword from Julia Mulligan, Police Fire and Crime Commissioner, North Yorkshire

The Independent Custody Visitors Scheme here in North Yorkshire fulfils an extremely important role in helping me properly scrutinise North Yorkshire Police.

I am exceptionally proud of the work undertaken by our team of volunteers, who give so much of their time.

I am very grateful for their enthusiastic commitment to weekly visits, ongoing involvement in training and inductions, panel meetings and our annual conference.



With ever more rewarding and interesting voluntary opportunities available, it is vital we continue to support our ICVs as much as possible.

I am pleased therefore that this year has seen a number of positive developments within the scheme, such as improved focus on training and development, greater collaboration with North Yorkshire Police on UK-wide custody initiatives and raising the profile of the scheme both internally and externally.

I am also delighted to be given this opportunity to formally thank all our Independent Custody Visitors for their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

Your effort and contributions are recognised and very much appreciated. I look forward supporting you further in the coming year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Julia Mulligan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Julia Mulligan

Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for North Yorkshire

OPFCC and the ICV Scheme – 2018/2019 Achievements

This year the focus by the OPFCC for the ICV Scheme has been as below:

- Training and Development of ICV's
- National Issues/Initiatives
- Raising the Profile of the Scheme within the wider North Yorkshire Police team

Training and Development of ICV's

Initial training and induction of ICV's along with ongoing training and support is recognised as being key to ensuring the ICV's and the Scheme continue to successfully fulfil their function and purpose.

Induction and initial training having undergone a significant update and overhaul, is now tailored specifically to the North Yorkshire ICV Scheme and the manner in which this is operated. This training is also now a much more interactive session, incorporating an element of role play within the safe training environment which provides the new volunteers with a realistic view of how visits are conducted and what they may encounter during such visits.

Not only has this updated programme improved the quality of this training, but it has also significantly enriched the volunteer experience where having undergone this update training session, they approach their first visit with increased confidence, knowledge and understanding of what to expect, what is expected of them and the value of their contribution to the scheme.

These induction sessions have now also been opened up to any ICV volunteer who may wish to attend to refresh their basic knowledge and understanding.

In addition, bitesize training sessions have been introduced to the quarterly panel meetings. These sessions pick up on key issues, whether national or local, and ensure there is a regular programme of ongoing training in place to support the ICV's in their role.

On a national level, our specialist trained ICV's remain appropriately trained/qualified to be able to continue to undertake ICV visits to TACT facilities where they conduct interviews with suspected terrorist detainees. Refresher training is completed annually. We have also supported other police force areas within Yorkshire as and when required throughout 2018/2019 with our specialist ICVs.

And finally, the annual ICV conference now includes an element of training which further reinforces the above training and development initiatives.

National Issues/Initiatives

The OPFCC, North Yorkshire Police and the ICV's have all worked together in supporting a number of national issues and initiatives, in particular how we respect the dignity of women detainees and any sanitary protection needs during their time in custody. Much hard work has gone into ensuring we get this right, not only from the quality and range of products offered, but from the very basic challenge of having the conversation with the female detainee in the first place. Posters and leaflets are now in place to assist detainees and custody suite staff with this quite personal and often embarrassing topic.

Raising the Profile of the Scheme with the Wider North Yorkshire Police Team

This year has been a positive year for the Scheme in being able to raise its profile within North Yorkshire Police. We have been afforded a number of opportunities to attend various training and information sessions through the force which we have used as a platform to educate staff about the Scheme and its purpose. This has proven so successful, the Scheme Administrator and ICV Scheme Panel Coordinators who voluntarily support this initiative, are now included as a matter of course in custody training sessions.

This has proven to be a really proactive step forward in not only custody staff better understanding the role of the Scheme and the ICV volunteers, but in providing a reciprocal learning opportunity as to how the Scheme and the ICV's can better support the custody staff.

The Inspectors and Panel Coordinator quarterly meetings also provide an opportunity to discuss best practice and areas for improvement as identified which are then fed back to both ICVs and custody staff.

ICVs, Recruitment and Training

The North Yorkshire Scheme involves three panels of Independent Custody Visitors. These are based at:

- Harrogate Police Station
- Scarborough Police Station
- York Police Station

This reflects the centralised custody arrangements in place in the North Yorkshire Police area. Members of each panel visit the main designated police station in their area.

Each panel is managed by a volunteer Panel Coordinator who is the first point of contact for the ICV's. The role of the Panel Coordinator is key to the success of the scheme and they play a pivotal role in ensuring each panel is administered efficiently and effectively. They also provide the link between the ICV's and the Scheme Administrator.

There are currently 26 ICV's appointed to the 3 ICV panels within North Yorkshire. Of the 26, 14 are men and 12 are female.

Recruitment is ongoing, specifically targeting the Scarborough area where historically, it has been difficult to recruit. This recruitment drive has proven to be successful, with a number of individuals coming forward to take up this opportunity, not only for the Scarborough panel but for Harrogate and York panels too.

Once recruited, potential ICV's are vetted and upon successfully passing the vetting procedure, ICV volunteers undergo a full and comprehensive induction and training programme. On completion of this training, the probation period begins for the new ICV volunteers.

On successful completion of the probationary period, the ICV is appointed to the panel as a full ICV member.

During 2018/2019, additional training for ICV's has been introduced in the form of bitesize training sessions at the quarterly panel meetings along with training incorporated within the annual conference. Induction training sessions are now open to all ICV's in order for them to receive regular refresher training. Bitesize training reflects key national issues and to date has included:

- The Rights of Women in Custody
- ICVA Annual Report including Key Issues

ICV Visits (April 2018 to March 2019)

Below are the ICV statistics for 2018/2019:

Statistics for all suites:

Year 2018/19								
Quarter	Visits	Held	Offered	Seen	% Seen	CR Seen	Seen	Observed
1	45	247	180	105	58.3%	129	105	24
2	50	246	188	98	52.1%	110	98	13
3	52	262	199	100	50.3%	130	100	10
4	53	254	169	97	57.4%	124	97	11
Total	200	1009	736	400	54.3%	493	400	58

Statistics for each suite:

Area	Visits	Held	Offered	Seen	CR Seen	Observed
Harrogate	50	195	125	64	100	9
Scarborough	57	220	167	112	140	15
York	93	594	444	224	253	34
Total	200	1009	736	400	493	58

Plans for the Future

The OPFCC recognises that it is vital to continue to progress the good work and achievements of 2018/2019 as we move into 2019/2020.

To this end:

- North Yorkshire ICV Scheme is currently being assessed by the ICVA in the hope of achieving Silver within the ICVA's Quality Assurance Framework. Once successfully achieved, this quality mark and associated standard will be sustained
- Continual assessment of Scheme administration processes and procedures to ensure the Scheme continues to operate efficiently and effectively – this includes supporting the Panel Coordinators within their roles
- Recruitment will continue in order that each panel has appropriate level of panel membership

- Training will continue to be reviewed and evaluated to ensure the content and delivery method are appropriate to the needs of both new and existing ICVs
- The OPFCC will continue to raise the profile of the Scheme with exploration of further progressing North Yorkshire Police links along with community links
- In addition, the OPFCC will improve promotion of the ICV Scheme, annual report and sharing of ICV Scheme information in support of raising the Scheme profile
- Proactively working with ICVs and custody staff linking into national issues/initiatives and working more closely as appropriate

The progress by the Scheme in 2018/2019 as evidenced above has provided solid foundations for the future progression of the Scheme and its ability to build upon those foundations. The hard work and efforts of all, whether ICV volunteers, custody staff, North Yorkshire Police and the OPFCC team, is evident and clearly demonstrates the strength of these key working relationships which will assist in facilitating achievement of the goals as detailed above for 2019/2020.