

# INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING (ICV) NEWSLETTER

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire



**September 2023 – February 2024**

**NEW**

## **INDEPENDENT CUSTODY DETENTION SCRUTINY PANEL**

Over recent years, several independent reviews such as the 'Lammy Review,' 'Angiolini Review' and the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) have identified issues of disparity and inequality in the Criminal Justice System which has led to a trust deficit between communities and the police.

In response to this, our office have implemented an Independent Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel (ICDSP), with our first meeting being held on 1 November 2023.

It was a very positive meeting and involved assessing and reporting on detention and custody processes, examining and challenging disproportionality in police custody.

We are currently completing training for new panel members and our next meeting is due to take place in March 2024.

Recruitment is ongoing and if you are interested in joining, please email [\*\*PCC@beds.police.uk\*\*](mailto:PCC@beds.police.uk)

# INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING ASSOCIATION QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK



In a country-first, Bedfordshire OPCC have advanced from being code compliant to **platinum** for our custody visiting scheme.

Platinum status means our scheme provides an outstanding standard of custody visiting and volunteer management. To achieve this, there were more than 25 criteria covering key areas such as holding the force to account and requiring evidence to support each assessment. ICVA assessed each submission in order to obtain platinum award.

Our scheme were one of only six schemes nationally to obtain the platinum award.

Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye said “This award is a fantastic achievement shows that our independent custody visiting scheme is among the best in the country.

“The team and volunteers have worked exceptionally hard to progress us from code compliant to platinum.

“I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all our independent custody visitors. They conduct visits at all hours of the day and night, without financial reward and play a critical role in ensuring that people who are held in police custody are treated fairly”.

[Read more about the QAF platinum award on our website.](#)



01234 842 064

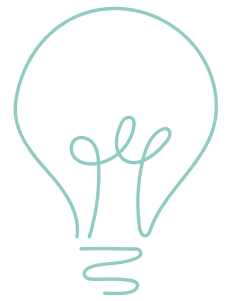


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# KEY HIGHLIGHTS



- We have officially achieved the platinum award for the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA) Quality Assurance Framework. We have advanced from code compliant to platinum which is the highest level of the QAF and are the only scheme in the country who have achieved such an increase in levels.
- We held a meeting with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) alongside the Inspector for Kempston contribute to a piece of work that the APCC are completing around preventing deaths in police custody. Samaritans are completing with detainees in custody. Samaritans conduct cell sweeps and listen to detainees and staff alike, as well as being available 24/7 on phones for them to speak to someone.
- We are working on a project surrounding moving ICV report forms to online. Initial ideas have focussed on the use of Microsoft Forms however we are consulting with Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire schemes to share best practice and to ensure collaboration across Tri-Force.
- The Volunteers Celebration Event was held on Thursday 28 September 2023. It was a brilliant way of recognising the hard work of our volunteers.

“Many thanks for invite to volunteers celebration and it was quite unexpected to receive an award! The whole evening was truly memorable. Please pass on my thanks to your colleagues who helped in providing a unique and thoroughly well organised event”.



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# THEMES AND FINDINGS FROM VISITS



- Monitoring of sanitary products -following reports of low stocks in custody suites, ICVs are now regularly checking and reporting back on stock levels.
- Solicitor notice in discreet charge room has been addressed and actioned.
- Following Inspector review of guidance regarding storage of religious items, this has been completed in Luton and religious items are now stored appropriately.
- ICVs have noted that all staff courteous, professional and helpful on their visits.
- ICVs requested that the Halal certificate be updated. This has been actioned.
- Shortage of blankets, this is being reviewed by custody. ICVs to prioritise reporting shortages of blankets and feed back to custody and to the OPCC due to colder months throughout the Winter period.
- Renovations underway at Luton Custody Suite.



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# DATES FOR THE DIARY

2024

- ICV Panel Meeting - Wednesday 27 March
- ICV Panel Meeting - Monday 24 June
- ICV Panel Meeting - Thursday 26 September
- ICV Panel Meeting - Tuesday 17 December



## ICVA RESOURCES

<https://icva.org.uk/icv-resources/>



On this page, you will find links to ICVA's 'straight to ICV' Bitesize training modules, all of which have been recorded for you to undertake at home with all the links you need for any additional reading. There are also briefings on a whole host of topics, guidance and additional resources from other bodies to support you during your visits to custody.

The most recent resources added are:

- Observations, Reviews and Rousals
- Menopause Awareness for ICV's
- In The Cell: Rights and Entitlements - A Police Perspective

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You can also keep up to date with the PCC and his offices day to day work via X (formerly Twitter), Facebook and Instagram



If you need to contact the police please either call **999** if it is an emergency

or dial **101** if it is a nonemergency

