



Derbyshire Police Authority

Independent Custody Visiting and Animal Welfare Schemes
Annual Report

1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010

Introduction

There are 43 Police Authorities in England and Wales, each of which oversees the work of its local police force. Together with the Home Secretary and chief police officers, they are responsible for the management of policing in England and Wales.

Derbyshire Police Authority is made up of 17 members: seven county councillors, two city councillors and eight independent members.

The Councillor members of the Police Authority are appointed by their respective local authority (Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council) on an annual basis. The representation of political parties is based on the number of seats for the county and city area as a whole.

The independent members are appointed for four years by the Police Authority following a selection process involving an Independent Selection Panel.

We have a number of specific responsibilities, including:

- Consulting with local people about policing
- Maintaining professional standards within the Force
- Setting the annual budget
- Monitoring spending
- Reviewing and evaluating the Force's performance
- Promoting racial equality
- Operating a custody visitors scheme
- Appointing the Chief, Deputy Chief and Assistant Chief Constable and Director of Administration and Finance

You can find more information on Derbyshire Police Authority; its members, meeting dates and latest information on our website: www.derbyshire.police.uk/policeauthority.

The Independent Custody Visiting Scheme

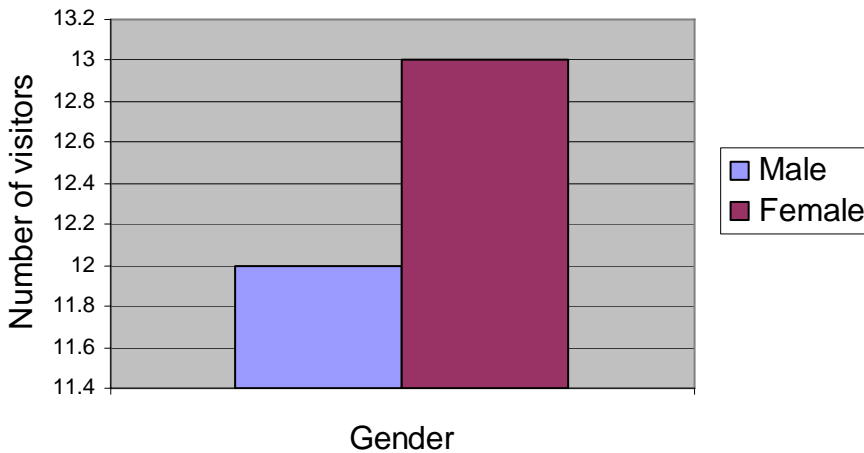
The organising, overseeing and delivery of the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme, which plays an important part in maintaining police accountability to the local community, is a statutory responsibility of Derbyshire Police Authority and is undertaken by the authority in consultation with the Chief Constable of the Constabulary.

The Professional Standards Panel, informed by the authority's Nominated Officer, has responsibility to supervise and manage the Custody Visiting Scheme (and Animal Welfare Scheme). The day-to-day management of the scheme is undertaken by a designated Scheme Administrator within the authority.

Independent Custody Visitors (ICV's) are impartial people from a variety of backgrounds and sections of the community who volunteer for the scheme. They must be over 18 years of age and have a good understanding of the English language. Due to the importance of ICV's being independent the following people may not become an ICV:-

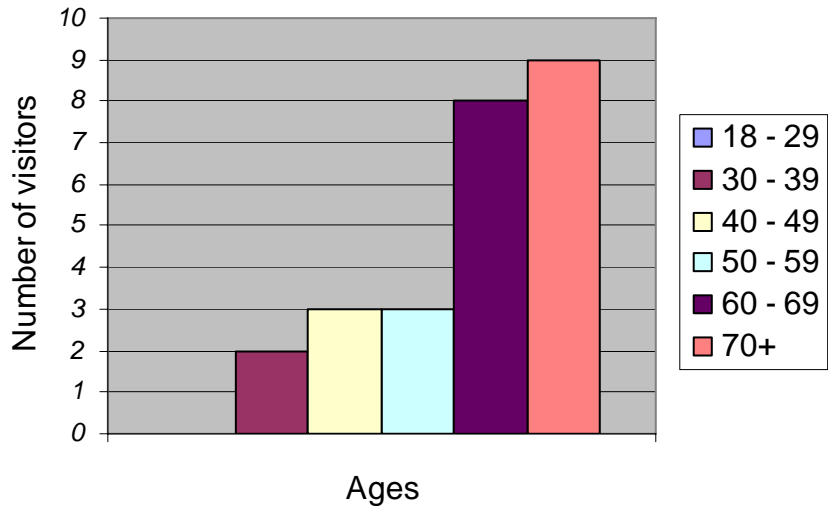
Serving members of the authority, authority staff, police officers, police staff, Lay Justices or anyone whose work may bring a conflict of interest, for example, a solicitor.

Genders of current ICV's



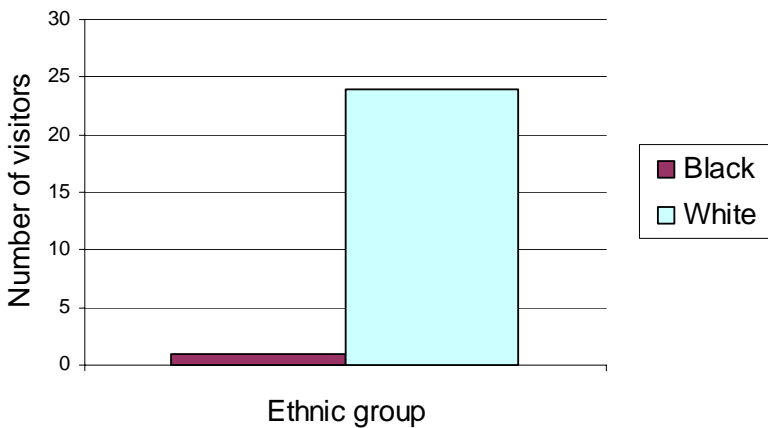
In February 2010 the number of visitors increased when six new visitors completed their induction training – run by the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA).

Age range of current ICV's



As of 31 March 2010 twenty-five Independent Custody Visitors were trained to make visits to Derbyshire custody suites.

Ethnicity of current ICV's



The authority is committed to the policy of equal opportunities. The charts on this page give breakdowns of the ages, genders and ethnicity of our Independent Custody Visitors as of 31 March 2010.

Visits to the Custody Suite

Unannounced visits are made in pairs to those Derbyshire custody suites authorised to hold detained persons. Each suite should receive a minimum of one visit per week, in accordance with scheme guidelines and the national Codes of Practice.

Visitors are escorted by a member of the custody staff whilst in the suite; however they should be within sight but out of hearing of any conversations which visitors have with any detained persons.

Visitors introduce themselves to the detained persons and check on the conditions in which they are being kept, their health and wellbeing and that they have received their legal rights and entitlements, in accordance with Code C of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984. Where appropriate, and with the permission of the detainee, they may also consult the detainee's custody record in order to check on and clarify any concerns raised.

Any issues and requests raised should be discussed with the custody officer and recorded on the visit report form. In order to preserve anonymity, entries refer to a detained person by their unique prisoner reference number, gender and whether they are an adult or a juvenile. Under no circumstances is information recorded which could lead to a persons' identification by anyone outside of the custody suite. Copies of the form are distributed as directed by the authority.

The frequency and outcomes of visits are monitored continuously throughout the year by the Police Authority. Any issues raised by the Independent Custody Visitors are dealt with either by the custody suite staff or by the Criminal Justice Department, who have overall responsibility for the running of Derbyshire Constabulary's custody suites.

The four designated custody suites within Derbyshire are:

- *Ripley Police Station ('A' DHQ) which has eighteen cells.
- Buxton Police Station ('B' DHQ) which has fifteen cells.
- Chesterfield Police Station ('C' DHQ) which has twenty-one cells.
- St. Mary's Wharf Police Station ('D' DHQ) which has forty-four cells.

Summary of visits conducted for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010

Custody Suite	Number of Visits	Total DP's in Custody [∞]	Number offered a visit	Number Seen	Number Not Seen	% of DP's Seen	% of DP's Not Seen
Ripley	58	311	174	159	152	51%	49%
Buxton	33	127	101	80	47	63%	37%
Chesterfield	39	208	116	76	132	37%	63%
Derby	56	681	367	328	353	48%	52%
OVERALL TOTAL	186	1327	758	643	684	48%	52%

[∞] Refers to total number of detained persons in custody at the time visits were made

There are a number of reasons why a detainee would not be seen; for example detained persons have the right to decline a visit, they may be asleep or being interviewed. If cells are particularly busy an arbitrary number of detainees are selected.

Overall the average number of detained persons visited, compared to those in custody at the time, is approximately 48%. This is a slight decrease from last years' total of 52%.

* After 1 April 2010 Derbyshire Constabulary moved to a three divisional structure. 'A' Division became part of 'C' Division. The custody suite at Ripley remains open.

Issues raised as a result of visits

Table one is a summary of the issues which were raised over the course of the year by the detainees but did not require any follow up from the Authority.

Table One

Issues Raised	A Division	B Division	C Division	D Division
Food/Drink Requested	29	13	13	48
Phone Call Requested	15	4	1	25
Person to be/not to be Notified	2	3	0	28
Solicitor Requested/Awaiting	5	2	3	33
Written rights/entitlements	3	0	0	0
Blanket requested	20	0	4	23
Cell temperature	5	3	2	3
Access to exercise Yard	19	4	1	2
Reading Material Requested	10	3	5	11
Medication Requested	16	4	2	9
Dr/Nurse Care	7	5	9	16
General unwell/health issues	11	2	17	13
DP with injuries	4	0	1	4
Replacement Clothing/Footwear	6	1	0	3
Visit from family or friend	5	0	1	0
Shower/toilet	3	0	4	8
Update on what is happening	2	1	3	1
Interpreter	2	2	2	15
Miscellaneous	11	5	6	23
Total No. of detainees Interviewed	147	75	74	328
Total Number of Issues Raised	175	52	74	265

Table two overleaf summarises the issues which were raised, either by a detainee or by a custody visitor, which required following up by the Authority.

Table Two

Date Raised	Div	Issue	Summary of Action Taken	Date Resolved
16.04.09	D	Wash basin not working	Checked by Inspector – working. No previous problems reported.	24.04.09
01.06.09	A	Air Conditioning not working	Now repaired.	02.06.09
02.07.09	C	No hot running water – repairs not due till September	Leaking water tank which will require the suite to be closed to repair. To be repaired. If detainees require drinks the kettle can be boiled, if require a shower, can be taken to A Division.	08.07.09
27.07.09	A	DP Alleges assault & rights not explained	Checked custody record – rights were explained to DP. Assault allegation noted on initial risk assessment. Complaint procedure explained to DP.	27.07.09 04.08.09
28.08.09	A	Exercise yard dirty and unclean with graffiti and in urgent need of action.	Has been swept & power cleaned and moss removed.	03.09.09
14.09.09	A	Broken hatch in cell M2	Repair carried out.	17.09.09
4.11.09	A	Exercise Yard Flooded.	The yard was unblocked shortly after the visit	22.03.10
4.11.09	D	Faulty Flush on toilet.	The Custody Officer checked the fault; it appeared to be working.	04.11.09
07.12.09	A	Sinks in shower rooms and shower heads need cleaning.	Cleaned every week as part of the cleaning rota.	
25.02.10	D	Cells 11, 12, 13 and 14 blowing cool air. West Wing cells 8, 9 & 10 considerably warmer.	The heating within the suite is controlled by a centralised system which only the building manager can access. The heating system was checked and was set to blow warm air into the cells at a minimum temperature of 21 degrees C. The guidelines indicate only that the cells should be adequately heated and ventilated	02.03.10
16.03.10	A	Exercise yard could do with a scrub	Yard cleaned this am. Is usually cleaned once a month unless obvious spillage etc	22.03.10

Notable Events During the Year

Councillor Alan Charles took over as the Chair of the Professional Standards Panel and is now the member of the authority who is responsible for overseeing the running of both the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and Animal Welfare Scheme.

The Independent Custody Visiting Associations' annual National Conference was held at the Ramada Hotel in Leicester on 14 November 2009, and was well attended. Two visitors and the Scheme Administrator from Derbyshire attended the event. Presentations on the topics of Developments in Custody, Safety and Dignity in Police Detention, Preventing Deaths in Police Care, Reducing the Risk of Deaths in Custody and the ICVA Code of Practice Review were given.

Future Events

Nottinghamshire Police Authority will host the annual Regional Advanced Training day on 15 May 2010. The day, originally planned to take place in Nottingham, was moved to Leicester Police Headquarters and will include a comprehensive talk by the British Institute of Human Rights.

A review of the Custody Visiting and Animal Welfare schemes will be conducted in 2010 by the Police Authority. The aim will be to provide more robust guidelines and procedures to visitors, ensuring an adequate and increased number of visits, providing a more effective and efficient service and promoting greater public accountability.

The Animal Welfare Scheme

The Animal Welfare Scheme arose from the death, whilst in training, of a police dog in another force and the subsequent prosecution of the officers involved in its' training. A review was carried out and a strategy implemented which aimed to restore public confidence and ensure training procedures are ethical, humane and transparent.

The purpose of the scheme is to observe, comment and report on the conditions under which animals are housed, trained and transported and to provide an independent check on the way police handlers carry out their responsibilities with regard to the welfare of animals in their care.

Derbyshire Police Authority is one of only eleven authorities nationwide to operate a voluntary Animal Welfare Scheme.

The only animals which Derbyshire Constabulary use for policing purposes are dogs. Visitors assess them against criteria set by the RSPCA, called the 'Five Freedoms' which are:-

- Freedom from hunger and thirst;
- Freedom from discomfort;
- Freedom to express normal behaviour;
- Freedom from pain, injury and disease;
- Freedom from fear and distress.

Visitors, who are selected from those existing custody visitors who express an interest in animal welfare issues, can arrange to meet with a dog and handler anywhere in the Force area and can make unannounced visits to the Dog Kennels at Force Headquarters at any time. There are currently six animal welfare visitors in Derbyshire.

Visiting Statistics

For the second year in a row the number of visits rose, from twenty-two last year to twenty-seven this year. All the visits were to Headquarters kennels in Ripley.

All dogs were found to be in good condition on each visit, with only police dog Buddy having a minor tail injury on one occasion, and police dog Gunner recovering from an operation on another.

Sadly, near the end of March a police dog sustained an accidental neck injury whilst on duty. He was immediately taken to the veterinary surgeon but died as a result of the injury.

CONTACTS:

For more information about the Independent Custody Visiting and Animal Welfare Schemes, please contact:

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