

January – March 2024

Independent Custody Visiting Quarterly Update:

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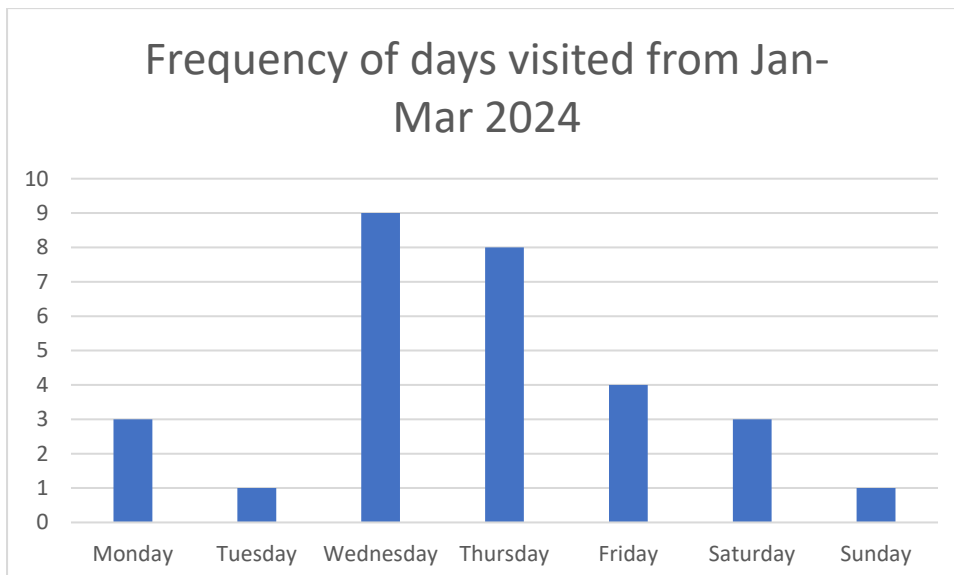
Total number of detainees through custody	Number of ICV visits	Total number of detainees in custody at time of ICV visits	Total number of detainees unavailable	Number of detainees observed	Total number of detainees visited
2585	30	101	15	32	51

Due to the migration of a new computer database system called Niche from May 2023, the data for the total number of detainees cannot be exact as this currently includes additional arrests linked to the custody record system. This issue is currently being revised by the technical team.

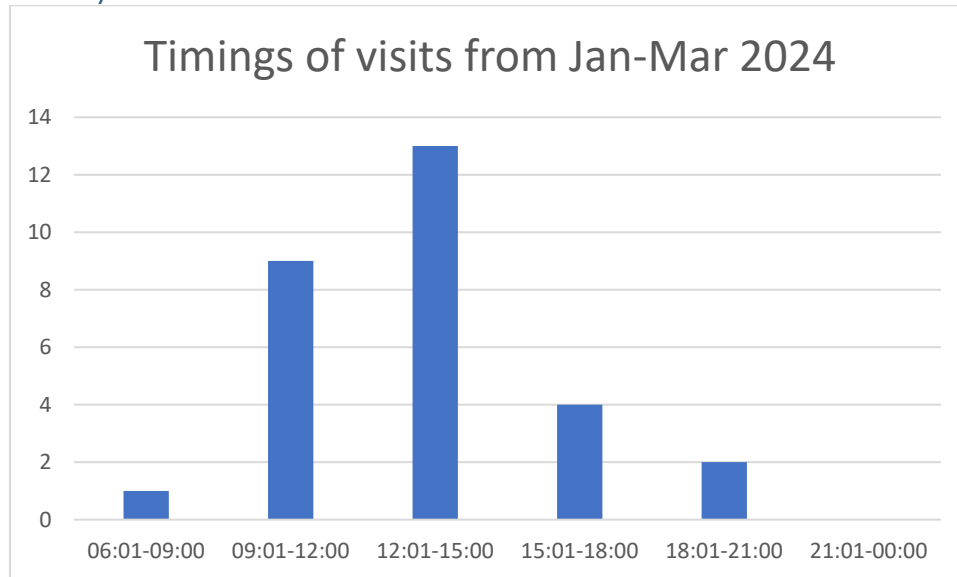
Active ICVs: 16

- Pembrokeshire: 2
- Powys: 4
- Ceredigion: 4
- Carmarthenshire: 6

Timings of Visits:



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Scheme Update:

- Medical cover maintains to be problematic across the more rural custody suites.
- The manner with how religious items were stored was identified by ICVs as a concern, specifying that all religious texts and prayer mats should be wrapped and stored correctly, not alongside other storage items such as shoes, toilet paper or any other personal property as per accordance with ICVA guidance. This was highlighted to the appropriate custody suite via the scheme manager which resulted in a prompt response from the custody to resolve the issue. The items are now stored in a separate room. This demonstrates the good communication between the ICVs, the scheme manager and the custody staff.
- Staffing issues remains to be a concern. Other than for affects to delays in processing and releasing detainees, ICVs have also highlighted other issues that included the following encounters:
 - In one custody suite, there were no Detention Escort Officers (DEO) to guide the ICVs around the custody and therefore were unable to conduct any visits with detainees.
 - There were two adult female detainees being booked in and there were no female officers equivalent in at this morning's visit except for the female HCP. This posed questions when discussing what would happen the two detainees require a shower.
 - A Custody suite had to be closed overnight due to no available staff.
- There have been a couple of instances whereby ICVs have encountered issues with DEOs.
 - One DEO was unaware entirely of the ICV scheme. Due to the business of custody, this required an extended period of time from the ICVs addressing and explaining the purpose of their visit. This has been highlighted to the Custody Inspector, and the scheme managers within OPCC will look to address this with an induction training for any new prospective DEO staff.
 - Another occasion, a DEO seemed unaware of their responsibilities whilst ICVs were conducting their visit with a detainee. The DEO was reminded that they were not supposed to be within proximity of hearing distance of the visit, which appeared to

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have been ignored as the DEO, who observed from the cell door also interrupted the conversation. This is being progressed and monitored with the cooperation of the custody inspector and the ICV scheme managers.

- Despite the staffing issues encountered, ICVs have provided the following observations that custody staff are making on a regular basis:
 - On one occasion, a custody sergeant was witnessed offering to turn the lights down in a cell for a detainee who was having difficulty sleeping and the sergeant was also observed checking on the detainee’s welfare on a number of occasions due to the risks of potential self-harm the detainee posed to themselves.
 - There was another occasion whereby ICVs reported that despite it being busy, the custody staff were well organized and displayed a “Great staff- detainee relationship.”
 - ICVs observed a meticulous booking in process and allowing the detainee to pray before being visited.
 - An officer was considered accommodating to supporting ICVs in helping them visit a detainee who was naked and refused to wear clothes. The officer managed to persuade the detainee to wrap themselves in a blanket to preserve their dignity prior to a discussion.
 - A DEO was reported as being “particularly helpful” as they were kind enough to provide a demonstration of the effectiveness of the new pixilation within the cells, so that ICVs could advise detainees if they had any concerns.
 - On a number of occasions, ICVs reported that the detainees had spoken highly of the custody staff and that the general conduct of most staff were considered professional and courteous.

Force Response:

In relation to the observations above, these are the thoughts of Chief Inspector Jenna Jones who is commenting on behalf of Dyfed Powys Police:

“Again, it is encouraging to see the positive impacts that ICV’s are having within custody from their visits. It is comforting to know that our Custody Staff feel that ICV’s make a positive impact on provisions within Custody.

The health care provision – There is steady improvement with rota coverage, the current contract is out for tender. CRG are making efforts to recruit staff for the areas that receive the lack of coverage.

The manner with how religious items are stored - this has been fed back to the custody units and will be picked up on inspections and mention in the Monthly Custody performance meetings.

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Staffing issues - there remains to be some resourcing issues this has been unavoidable due to sickness and courses. We will continue to monitor this situation and await an update from the current Force review on Custody staffing Provisions.

One DEO was unaware entirely of the ICV scheme individual issue picked up, this is also fed back to custody staff on all custody courses.”