



Independent Custody Visiting Annual Report 2014-15

Report Published: June 2015



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Each Police and Crime Commissioner is statutorily required to operate an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and as such a scheme operates within Cleveland.

Purpose of the Report

This is the Annual Report of the Cleveland Independent Custody Visiting Scheme for the period 1 April 2014 - 31 March 2015.

This report will outline the following information:

- General information about the Cleveland Independent Custody Visiting Scheme
- The number of visits undertaken by custody visitors during 2014-15
- The number of detainees in Cleveland custody suites during these visits;
- The number of detainees offered a visit by custody visitors;
- The number of visits accepted by detainees;
- A breakdown of times and day of the week visits were undertaken; and
- Comparisons to the previous year

Definition of Independent Custody Visiting in Cleveland

Independent Custody Visitors (ICVs) are volunteer members of the public, who live or work in the Cleveland Police area.

Their role is to visit police custody suites unannounced to evaluate the welfare of detainees held in custody.

There are currently two operational custody suites in Cleveland; these are in Hartlepool and Middlesbrough.

Recruitment and Retention of Independent Custody Visitors

At 1st April 2014 Cleveland's Independent Custody Visiting Scheme was at full strength with 22 volunteers in post. By 31 March 2015 this had reduced to 18 active volunteers which consisted of 9 in Hartlepool and 10 in Middlesbrough.¹

Towards the latter months of 2014-15 four resignations were received, these were due to a variety of reasons including one applicant being appointed as a Special Constable within Cleveland Police, other commitments and for personal reasons.

At present there are two recruits awaiting training and once completed will undertake visits with the rest of the custody visiting team. In previous years 22 was the identified number of custody visitors in place to maintain the Cleveland Scheme. However, after discussion with the custody visitors it was felt that visits could be

¹ One volunteer attends visits to both Hartlepool and Middlesbrough Custody Suites.

done more frequent by pairs and a smaller number of volunteers recruited. It was therefore decided that 20 would be the most appropriate number moving forward in the future (12 in Middlesbrough and 9 in Hartlepool²).

This means that each pairing in Hartlepool undertake visits once every 5 weeks and in Middlesbrough once every 6 weeks.

Independent Custody Visits and Statistics 2014-15

The two custody suites in Cleveland (Hartlepool and Middlesbrough) are scheduled to be visited on a weekly basis as per a rota prepared by the Scheme Administrator. It is important to point out that the scheme administrator is not aware of the exact date visits will take place; this is to ensure complete independence in the custody visiting process. The rota is prepared as a guide for custody visitors and it is down to each pairing to decide at what point in their allocated week a visit will be completed. The rotas for Hartlepool and Middlesbrough for 2014-15 can be seen attached at **appendix 1**.

Visits did not always take place as scheduled during 2014-15 due to various issues, however where possible the rota was adhered to. Table one and two below shows the number of visits to each custody suite during 2014-15 compared to the number of visits undertaken in the previous year.

Table One:

Hartlepool Custody Suite	Number of Visits Scheduled	Number of Visits Completed	%
2014-15	52	44	85%
2013-14	52	39	75%

Table Two:

Middlesbrough Custody Suite	Number of Visits Scheduled	Number of Visits Completed	%
2014-15	52	36	69%
2013-14	52	43	83%

² One Custody Visitor undertakes visits in both Middlesbrough and Redcar Custody Suites).

As you can see during 2014-15 Hartlepool was visited on five more occasions than in 2013-14. In the case of Middlesbrough, more visits were undertaken in 2013-14 (43) compared to 2014-15 (36), a difference of seven visits. The reason for a lesser frequency of visits in the Middlesbrough area during 2014-15 could partially be due to the turnover of volunteers, as it was the Middlesbrough area that underwent the most change in terms of new recruits.

Breakdown of Detainees in Custody during visits

During 2014-15 **786** detainees were held in custody when visits were undertaken – **158** in Hartlepool and **628** in Middlesbrough. Table three and four below shows a breakdown of those detainees and comparisons on the previous year.

Table Three:

Breakdown of detainees in Custody during Custody Visits					
Hartlepool Custody Suite	Male	Female	Male Juvenile	Female Juvenile	Total
2014-15	134	18	4	2	158
2013-14	90	15	10	0	115

Table Four:

Breakdown of detainees in Custody during Custody Visits					
Middlesbrough Custody Suite	Male	Female	Male Juvenile	Female Juvenile	Total
2014-15	528	59	33	8	628
2013-14	645	83	54	8	790

As can be seen there were more detainees present in Hartlepool during custody visits in 2014-15 than the previous year. A reason for this may be due to the fact that there were five additional visits that took place. However, the difference of **43** additional detainees present may suggest otherwise given the small numbers that are historically present in Hartlepool custody during visits.

Middlesbrough sees the opposite to Hartlepool with more detainees present during 2013-14 than 2014-15, similar to Hartlepool this could be due to more visits taking place during 2013-14 (seven in total).

Breakdown of Detainees offered a Custody Visit during 2014-15

Of the **786** detainees held in custody across Cleveland during the time of custody visits in 2014-15, **386** were offered a visit (49%). A break down for each custody suite can be seen below:

Table Five:

Number of detainees in custody v Number offered a visit			
Hartlepool Custody Suite	Number of detainees in custody during visit	Number of those offered a visit	% offered a visit
2014-15	150	138	87%
2013-14	115	97	84%

87% of detainees held in custody in Hartlepool during the time of custody visits were offered a visit; this is a **3%** increase on last year where **84%** of detainees were offered a visit. Of the **87%** offered a visit, **69.5%** accepted with the remaining **17.5%** declining or not being appropriate for a visit due to a number of reasons as detailed below.

Table Six:

Number of detainees in custody v Number offered a visit			
Middlesbrough Custody Suite	Number of detainees in custody during visit	Number of those offered a visit	% offered a visit
2014-15	628	248	39%
2013-14	790	427	54%

39% of detainees held in Middlesbrough custody during the time of custody visits were offered a visit. This is a **15%** reduction compared to the previous year where **54%** of those in custody were offered a visit.

A reason for such a difference in the number of detainees offered a visit in Hartlepool compared to Middlesbrough may be due to the size of each custody suite. Hartlepool has **15** cells whereas Middlesbrough has **50** cells meaning that Middlesbrough is often more of a busier environment. Custody visitors therefore try to minimise disruption as much as possible whilst at the same time fully completing their responsibilities.

There may be a variety of reasons for custody visitors not offering a visit to a detainee; some examples as reported by custody visitors include:

- Detainee not available due to being in interview / speaking to solicitor
- Advised not to visit by detention officer due to aggressive behaviour
- Detainee was sleeping
- Detainee under the influence of alcohol
- Detainee highly intoxicated

On occasions where an actual visit with a detainee is inappropriate, detainees are viewed through the cell viewing window and any concerns are noted / reported back to the custody officer.

Table seven and eight below shows a breakdown of those detainees offered a visit and a comparison on last year's figures.

Table Seven:

Breakdown of detainees offered a visit					
Hartlepool Custody Suite	Male	Female	Male Juvenile	Female Juvenile	Total
2014-15	118	15	4	1	138
2013-14	78	13	6	0	97

Table Eight:

Breakdown of detainees offered a visit					
Middlesbrough Custody Suite	Male	Female	Male Juvenile	Female Juvenile	Total
2014-15	198	25	23	2	248
2013-14	331	64	27	5	427

As can be seen at table seven, an increase in **41** detainees were offered a visit in Hartlepool during 2014-15 compared to 2013-14. This could be due to the fact that in 2014-15 there was **43** more detainees present when custody visits took place,

compared to the previous year. These numbers are interesting when considering that over the last 12 months the number of detainees booked into Hartlepool Custody has seen a total reduction of around **8%**.

In Middlesbrough figures are conflicting to Hartlepool with **179** less visits taking place in 2014-15 compared to 2013-14. These figures are not surprising given the fact that there were **162** less detainees in custody during the time of visits. In addition to this, overall Middlesbrough custody seen a total reduction of around **6%** of detainees being booked into custody.

Breakdown of Detainees accepting a Custody Visit during 2014-15

Table nine and table ten below show a breakdown of the number of detainees accepting a visit following an offer being made to them.

Table Nine:

Breakdown of detainees accepting a visit					
Hartlepool Custody Suite	Male	Female	Male Juvenile	Female Juvenile	Total
2014-15	83	10	2	1	96
2013-14	62	10	6	0	78

Table Ten:

Breakdown of detainees accepting a visit					
Middlesbrough Custody Suite	Male	Female	Male Juvenile	Female Juvenile	Total
2014-15	120	21	18	2	161
2013-14	192	37	25	3	257

As can be seen in Hartlepool **96** people agreed to a visit from custody visitors during 2014-15. This is **70%** of those that were offered a visit. For Middlesbrough **161** detainees agreed to a visit during 2014-15 equating to **65%** of those that were offered a visit. Reasons were not always recorded as to why detainees did not wish

to speak to custody visitors although this will be monitored over the next 12 months with custody visitors encouraged to make note of any reasons given.

Timing of visits undertaken by custody visitors

Custody Visitors are encouraged to undertake visits during evenings, weekends and at various times throughout the seven day week. A breakdown of visit times is shown in table eleven and twelve below:

Table Eleven:

Breakdown of timings of visits taking place			
Hartlepool Custody Suite	06:01 – 14:00	14:01 – 22:00	22:01 – 06:00
	27	20	0

Table Twelve:

Breakdown of timings of visits taking place			
Middlesbrough Custody Suite	06:01 – 14:00	14:01 – 22:00	22:01 – 06:00
	24	9	0

Please note: A number of time entries were missing from report forms so the total does not equal the amount of visits undertaken.

A further breakdown by day of the week visits were undertaken can be seen below at tables thirteen and fourteen:

Table Thirteen:

Breakdown of the day visits took place							
Hartlepool Custody Suite	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
	4	7	14	8	7	3	1

Table Fourteen:

Breakdown of the day visits took place							
Middlesbrough Custody Suite	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
	2	11	4	5	6	3	4

Based on feedback from within last year's annual report, as you can see above visits were more spread out in terms of the day of the week in which they were undertaken including a number of visits taking place on a weekend.

Issues raised 2014-15:

Any issues raised by custody visitors are brought to the attention of the custody officer and rectified as soon as possible. Any issues arising are also discussed with the custody Inspector at quarterly meetings. This ensures any issues are addressed and guarantees custody visitors obtain feedback on their findings.

Below details any issues raised during 2014-15 separated out to each custody suite.

Hartlepool

During 2014-15 no major issues were raised in regards to the Hartlepool custody suite. The custody visitors played an important role in informing custody staff of detainees that declared during a visit that they required medication. Upon further inspection on a number of occasions it was found that detainees did not declare their need for medication at the time of booking in. By highlighting issues such as this ensures custody staff can correctly manage the welfare of detainees whilst in the custody environment.

Throughout the year custody visitors reported that cells were clean and tidy and custody staff were extremely polite and efficient.

Middlesbrough

During 2014-15 no major issues were raised in regards to Middlesbrough custody suite. Similar to Hartlepool, custody visitors played an important role in terms of addressing issues around detainees not declaring their need for medication. Again, potentially preventing any serious incidents from occurring.

One issue which did arise again and again was in regards to an Estates issue. Paint was reported to be continuously flaking from cell doors and in the shower areas. This was reported back to the Estates team and this issue has been included as a part of the on-going maintenance plan.

As above, throughout all visits custody officers were polite and accommodating to assist custody visitors in undertaking their role.

Conclusion

The Cleveland Independent Custody Visiting Scheme continues to run successfully with no major issues raised.

It is hope the scheme will continue to develop over the next 12 months. With the HMIC/HMIP Cleveland Inspection report recently published custody visitors will be interested in keeping updated on developments and are happy to assist where possible to make the Cleveland custody suites an even safer place for detention.

Hartlepool Custody Visitor Rota – 2014-15

Hartlepool co-ordinator – Tom Boumphrey



Hartlepool Independent Custody Visitors Rota					
Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6
w/c 17 March 2014	w/c 24 March 2014	w/c 31 March 2014	w/c 7 April 2014	w/c 14 April 2014	w/c 21 April 2014
w/c 28 April 2014	w/c 5 May 2014	w/c 12 May 2014	w/c 19 May 2014	w/c 26 May 2014	w/c 2 June 2014
w/c 9 June 2014	w/c 16 June 2014	w/c 23 June 2014	w/c 30 June 2014	w/c 7 July 2014	w/c 14 July 2014
w/c 21 July 2014	w/c 28 July 2014	w/c 4 August 2014	w/c 11 August 2014	w/c 18 August 2014	w/c 25 August 2014
w/c 1 September 2014	w/c 8 September 2014	w/c 15 September 2014	w/c 22 September 2014	w/c 29 September 2014	w/c 6 October 2014
w/c 13 October 2014	w/c 20 October 2014	w/c 27 October 2014	w/c 3 November 2014	w/c 10 November 2014	w/c 17 November 2014
w/c 24 November 2014	w/c 1 December 2014	w/c 8 December 2014	w/c 15 December 2014	w/c 22 December 2014	w/c 29 December 2014
w/c 5 January 2015	w/c 12 January 2015	w/c 19 January 2015	w/c 26 January 2015	w/c 2 February 2015	w/c 9 February 2015
w/c 16 February 2015	w/c 23 February 2015	w/c 2 March 2015	w/c 9 March 2015	w/c 16 March 2015	w/c 23 March 2015
w/c 30 March 2015					



Middlesbrough Custody Visitor Rota – 2014-15

Middlesbrough co-ordinator – Stan Dale

Middlesbrough Independent Custody Visitors Rota						
Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Pair 7
w/c 24 March 2014	w/c 31 March 2014	w/c 7 April 2014	w/c 14 April 2014	w/c 21 April 2014	w/c 28 April 2014	w/c 5 May 2014
w/c 12 May 2014	w/c 19 May 2014	w/c 26 May 2014	w/c 2 June 2014	w/c 9 June 2014	w/c 16 June 2014	w/c 23 June 2014
w/c 30 June 2014	w/c 7 July 2014	w/c 14 July 2014	w/c 21 July 2014	w/c 28 July 2014	w/c 4 August 2014	w/c 11 August 2014
w/c 18 August 2014	w/c 25 August 2014	w/c 1 September 2014	w/c 8 September 2014	w/c 15 September 2014	w/c 22 September 2014	w/c 29 September 2014
w/c 6 October 2014	w/c 13 October 2014	w/c 20 October 2014	w/c 27 October 2014	w/c 3 November 2014	w/c 10 November 2014	w/c 17 November 2014
w/c 24 November 2014	w/c 1 December 2014	w/c 8 December 2014	w/c 15 December 2014	w/c 22 December 2014	w/c 29 December 2014	w/c 5 January 2015
w/c 12 January 2015	w/c 19 January 2015	w/c 26 January 2015	w/c 2 February 2015	w/c 9 February 2015	w/c 16 February 2015	w/c 23 February 2015
w/c 2 March 2015	w/c 9 March 2015	w/c 16 March 2015	w/c 23 March 2015	w/c 30 March 2015		