



🏠 Location: Keynsham/Patchway/Headquarters
📅 Date: 6th/11th/12th November 2025
🕒 Time: 10:00-14:00hrs

ICV Panel Meeting - November Minutes

➤ Guest Speaker Input; The Appropriate Adult Service (TAAS)

Regional Manager: Leanne James / Team Leader: Sue Edwards

For our final meetings of 2025, we were joined by guest speakers from the Appropriate Adult Service (TASS), who provided an overview of how the scheme operates and answered questions from ICVs.

The scheme has been running for over 20 years and is structured as a company rather than a charity.

Full details of the scheme are included in the attached document.

➤ PCC attendance at Keynsham ICV Meeting

Clare attended the first half of the Keynsham ICV meeting. She mentioned the Panorama Documentary. She explained that the ICV role is focused on transparency and oversight within custody, and she would not expect ICVs to identify covert issues highlighted in the recent programme. Those matters fall within internal work being undertaken by Avon & Somerset Police to strengthen leadership and ensure effectiveness across the organisation.

The Chief Constable has emphasised ongoing work around **service leadership**, with the intention of refocusing the organisation to better support frontline officers and staff. This is part of a broader effort to ensure leadership is effective and aligned with operational needs.

A key challenge remains - the wider public sector issue of resourcing: **how do we make the best use of limited resources to support frontline leadership?** This involves reviewing priorities and ensuring that every element of the organisation works in service of those delivering care and safety on the ground.

➤ OPCC Update

Panorama Documentary (Undercover in the Police):

Discussion following the documentary and the fact that ASC does not recognise it to be anything like that in our force area. OPCC and Chief Constable confirmed actions by officers shown were unacceptable. Attempts to identify ICV Scheme Manager for shared learning, awaiting response. ICVA assisting.



- 🏠 Location: Keynsham/Patchway/Headquarters
- 📅 Date: 6th/11th/12th November 2025
- 🕒 Time: 10:00-14:00hrs

ICVA position following the Documentary:

- Advocating stronger Home Office Code of Practice: immediate custody access, private detainee interviews, custody record access.
- Emphasizing early detection of cultural issues.
- Seeking funding for a national reporting tool for consistent data and early identification of concerns.

ICV Recruitment:

- Keynsham: +3 (total 10)
- Patchway: +5 (total 13, subject to changes)
- Bridgwater: +5 (total 11)

Training: So far, only 4 of the 13 new ICVs have completed vetting. Subject to vetting being finalised, training sessions for new ICVs are scheduled for **22 January** and **25 February 2026** at HQ. A big thank you to those ICVs who have already volunteered to support the training.

Custody App: Work on Version 2 with Formation Media is ongoing, with several areas under review and development. Becky & Dee, alongside our Co-Ordinator's met colleagues from Humberside who have developed a new app, which we are currently reviewing as a potential model. However, we are cautious about moving to a different version of the app until it has been fully tried, tested, and proven effective in practice. In the meantime, we will continue with Version 1 of the Custody App which does serve our needs adequately.

QAF/ICVA Conference: ICVA is launching a new e-learning platform designed to provide ICVs with flexible, accessible training resources. The platform will allow ICVs to complete modules online at their own pace, covering core topics such as custody processes, detainee rights, and best practice guidance. This will complement existing face-to-face training and help ensure consistency across all schemes.

Becky and Dee will be attending the launch event on 19 November to learn more about the platform and how it will be rolled out.

Please note: **Consent is required to share ICV email addresses** so they can be registered and given access to the e-learning system.

Volunteer Survey: Will be circulated in December; closes end of January. Feedback will be anonymous, but please do share your views on the scheme, what is working well and areas for improvement.

➤ Items raised with Custody (questions/concerns/observations)

Sleeping Reviews – ICVs concerned that DPs were not being kept routinely informed. Ongoing concern across all sites, is dip-sampling taking place?

Police: *Everyone should be told each time a sleeping review is conducted. There are various reasons why this doesn't happen. Often, an Inspector is running all 3 units and having to do reviews for all. This can be difficult to manage, and the staffing of Inspectors impacts detainees being told about their sleeping reviews. It has improved since the HMIC report.*

DOs can highlight when a detainee is awake, however, this sometimes gets lost in translation.

Custody Sergeants can let detainees know, however, they will often not see them again after booking in.

Detainees only come back in front of custody sergeant if rights need to be read / need fingerprinting.

The practicalities of sergeants notifying detainees that a sleeping review has taken place are difficult.

Custody Assurance Board – This was a quarterly meeting attended by Becky and Dee alongside key custody stakeholders, including the Head of Custody, LaDS, and the Mental Health Team. The meeting served as an important forum to share updates on progress, changes, and concerns, with Scheme Managers able to contribute as needed. Unfortunately, the meeting was disbanded abruptly, and there is an open question about whether it will be reinstated in the future.

Police: *This meeting will be restarted in the future. The current Head of Custody (Dan Ashfield) will be picking this up as a piece of work. The timeframes are unknown currently.*

Neurodivergence – What else is being done in terms of detainees that are neurodiverse, what reasonable adjustments are made? It has been noted that people utilize the exercise yard which helps calm them down, but they are not always notified that they can have access to it.

Police: *Detainees go through a risk assessment when they come into the custody setting. They should get offered a fidget toy, be placed into a vulnerable cell, have higher level observations and can be placed in a cell with different lighting.*

Training in this area forms part of a 3-and-a-half-week custody course. We have a new custody trainer whose background has been working in custody; therefore, he has a very good idea of what needs to be delivered as part of the training to staff. The organisation in general is very aware of neurodiversity and how it can affect people, so there has been a lot of communication about it. There is a question set on the booking in form which will give a snapshot of information if a detainee is neurodivergent. Everyone is screened by the mental health team when they come through custody to see if they are already known to any services.

Offering the use of the exercise yard doesn't always form part of the conversation with the detainee for several reasons, one being that it isn't something that's on the system when booking detainees in. Food and drink must happen at certain periods throughout the day; however, this isn't the case for the exercise yard.



- 🏠 Location: Keynsham/Patchway/Headquarters
- 📅 Date: 6th/11th/12th November 2025
- 🕒 Time: 10:00-14:00hrs

Samaritans - This was previously raised with the former Head of Custody, but we didn't get a chance to revisit it. Is this something Avon and Somerset could facilitate in custody, would there be sufficient resources to support Samaritans making live visits to custody?

If not is there signposting, leaflets, posters and telephone call availability during detention?

Police: *We don't currently have this in custody. Any concerns with mental health will go through to the LaDs team. They issue leaflets with the Samaritans number on along with various other safeguarding information to assist. We don't necessarily facilitate phone calls with Samaritans, but that's because people don't generally ask for that. If there is a concern that the person will come to harm on leaving custody, we will ensure that measures are put in place to prevent any harm coming to that person. We would of course be receptive to receiving the Samaritans into custody but would need to discuss more about how it would work in practice.*

Translation Tablet – There appears to be some lack of knowledge on how to effectively use the tablets and occasionally there are issues with using it in certain cells due to connections issues.

Police: *We are happy to assist ICVs with how to effectively use the tablet to converse with detainees. Please ask your escorting officer if you would like them to run through a demo with you before you begin your visit. A message will be disseminated to custody staff to make them aware that they may be asked to do this. If you find that there is a certain cell where the tablet doesn't work properly, and you are particularly keen to speak with a non-English speaking detainee, then please ask if you are able to speak to them in one of the side rooms. This can be facilitated on a risk assessed basis.*

➤ Custody Update

The **Broken Journeys report** is a thematic report published by the Lay Observers in October 2025. It examines the impact of poor transport arrangements for people being moved to and from court custody.

A full copy of the report can be found here: [Broken-journeys-broken-system-LO-transport-thematic.pdf](#)

Key Findings:

- Detained people are being incorrectly transported to court when their attendance is not required and when they are deemed unfit to stand trial on arrival. Additionally, those with disabilities are being sent to inaccessible courts.
- The efficiency of court operation is being disrupted by the late arrival of detained people, which affects the ability to schedule hearings effectively and leads to unnecessary delays or cancellations of court proceedings.



🏠 Location: Keynsham/Patchway/Headquarters
📅 Date: 6th/11th/12th November 2025
🕒 Time: 10:00-14:00hrs

- Detained people are spending excessive periods of time on prison vans with extended journey times due to detours being made to other establishments and long waits outside prisons prior to admission.
- Women are often being transported with men charged or convicted of sexual offences. Men, women, and children are regularly being transported together in the same vans, particularly from police custody.
- The routine use of handcuffs is near universal where vehicle bays are unsecured. In some courts this occurs in full view of the public, undermining the dignity and right to privacy of the detained person.

HCPs in Custody

How many HCPS we have, are likely to have?

- Target is 5 per station - 15 HCPs and 3 Seniors.
- At Bridgwater we currently have 4 in situ & 1 in vetting.
- At Patchway we have 3.5 in situ, and 1 full time cleared vetting starting 1st December and 0.5 cleared vetting start date January 2026.
- At Keynsham we have 4 in situ (inc. 1 on maternity leave), 1 cleared vetting start date November.
- We have 3 seniors in situ. This will bring us to being fully staffed.

Custody unit data Jan 2025 – November meeting date 2025

Keynsham:

Arrests: 5549; 254 of those were children, and of the 254, 53 were female.

Average wait time: 20mins.

Average Detention length: 15hrs 11mins.

Patchway:

Arrests: 6384; 259 of those were children, and of the 259, 42 were female.

Average wait time: 26mins.

Average Detention length: 15hrs

Bridgwater:

Arrests: 6032; 386 of those were children, and of the 386, 75 were female.

Average wait time: 25mins.

Average Detention length: 14hrs 36mins

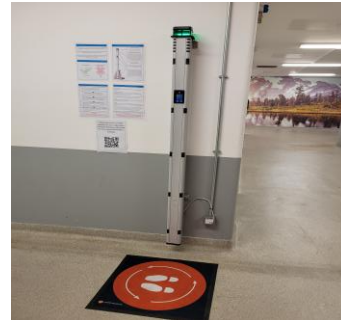


- 🏠 Location: Keynsham/Patchway/Headquarters
- 📅 Date: 6th/11th/12th November 2025
- 🕒 Time: 10:00-14:00hrs

Metal Detectors

A new supply of metal detectors are now in situ at each unit (2 for each suite). Most in custody have had training on how to use the device and a video is being produced to show others how to get the best out of the machine when it is being used.

For those that haven't yet seen the device; this is what it looks like:



Custody Reviews – Information Refresh

Under PACE Code C, detainees must have their detention reviewed regularly to ensure it remains lawful and necessary. Reviews are carried out by an Inspector or above, and the detainee should be informed each time a review takes place.

Key Timings (PACE Code C):

- First review: No later than 6 hours after detention begins.
- Subsequent reviews: At intervals of no more than 9 hours thereafter.
- Reviews can be conducted in person or remotely, but detainees must be told the outcome.