



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg yn ogystal â Saesneg.

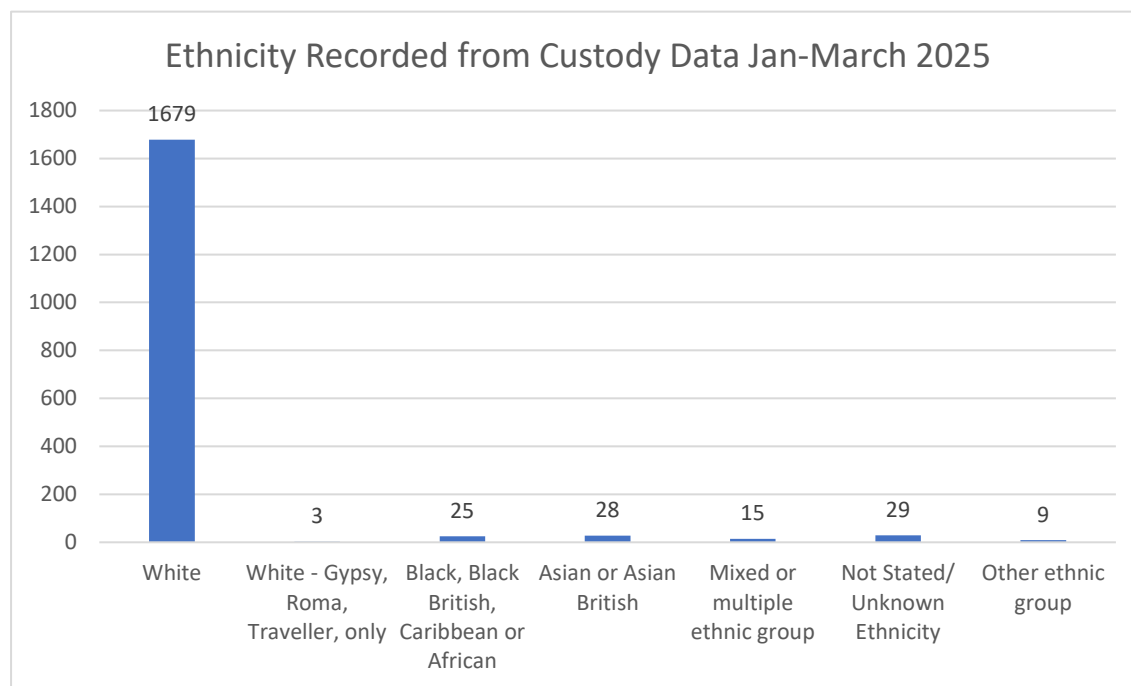
This document is available in Welsh as well as English.

January – March 2025

## Independent Custody Visiting Quarterly Update:

### January - March 2025- Data from Custody

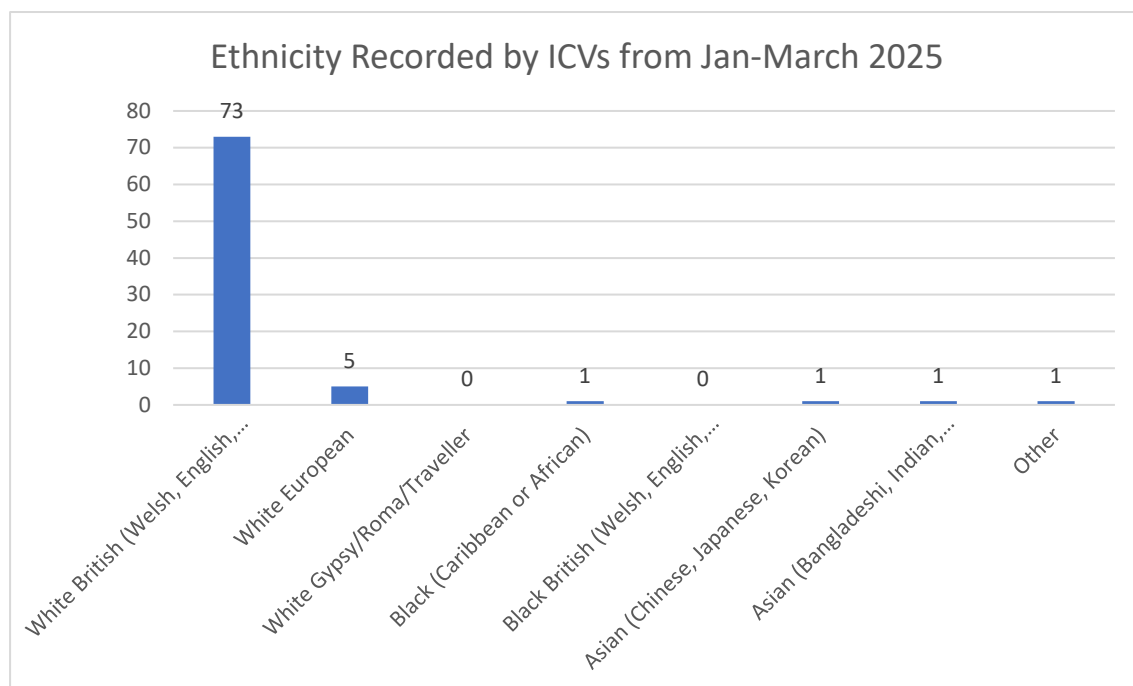
Total number of adult detainees through custody	Total number of juvenile detainees through custody	Total number of detainees through custody	Total number of males	Total number of females	Total number of intersex	Total number of unknown
1714	74	1788	1444	326	1	17



January – March 2025

### January - March 2025- Data from ICVs

Number of ICV visits	Total number of detainees in custody at time of ICV visits	Total number of Adult detainees	Total number of juvenile Detainees	Total number of detainees unavailable	Number of detainees observed	Total number of detainees visited	Total number of male detainees	Total number of female detainees
39	95	90	5	20	21	60	51	9



#### Active ICVs: 17

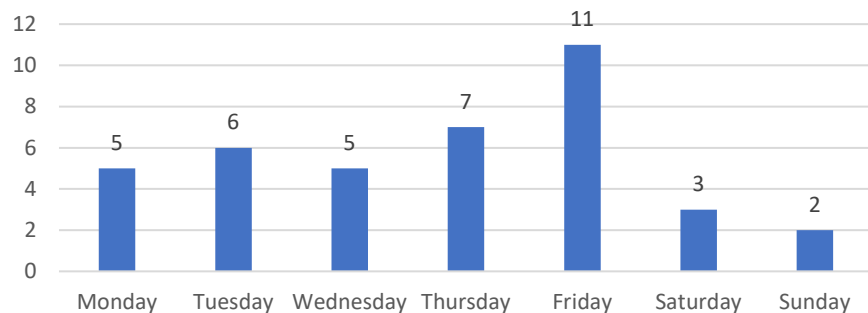
- Pembrokeshire: 5
- Powys: 4
- Ceredigion: 2
- Carmarthenshire: 6

*Currently there are two new applicants that are in the process of being vetted. There are also three volunteers taking a temporary break from the scheme.*

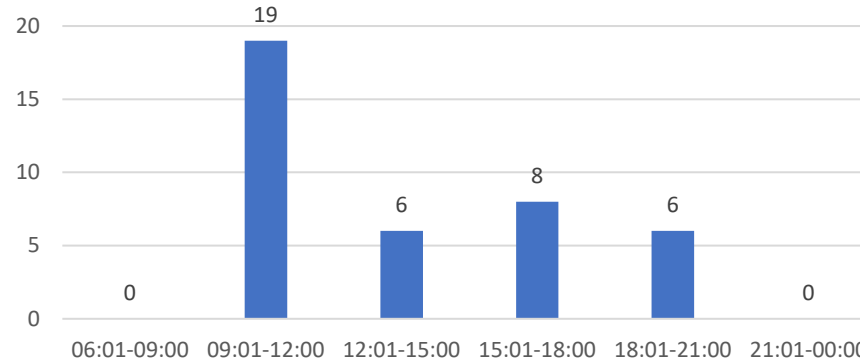
January – March 2025

Timings of Visits:

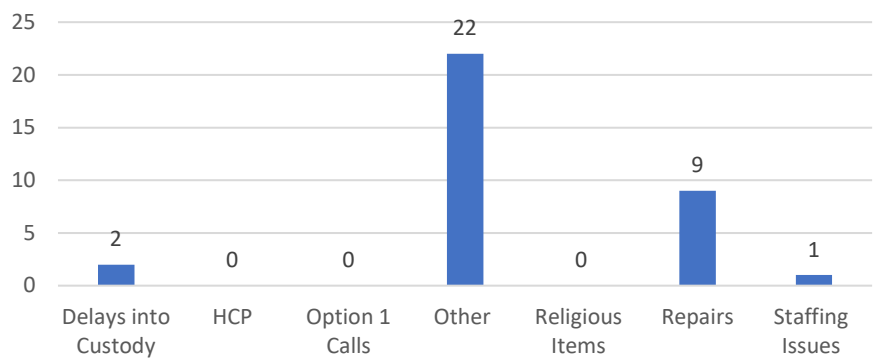
Frequency of visits conducted from Jan-March 2025



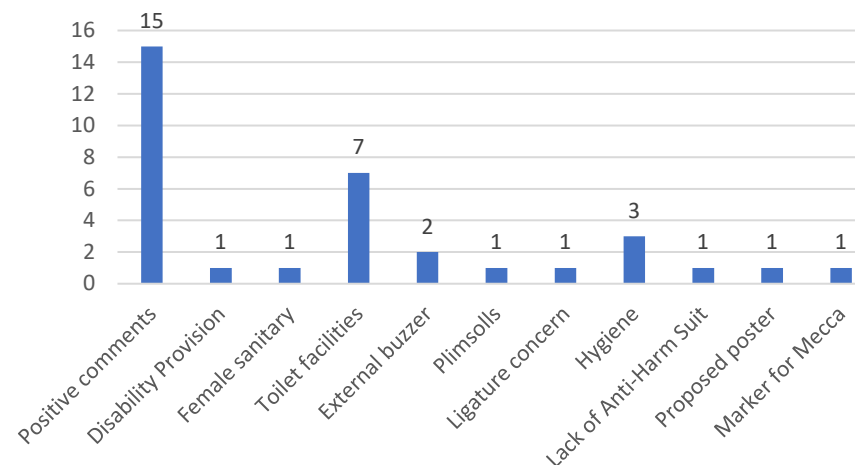
Timings of visits from Jan-March 2025



Themes Issues Raised Jan-March 25



Breakdown of 'Other' Issues identified Jan-March 2025



January – March 2025

Scheme Update:

**Staffing Issues**

- Only one visit raised issues surrounding with staffing. This was raised in Haverfordwest whereby ICVs noted that the lack of staff available had impacted on detainees' rights on being able to utilise the exercise yard and to access the showers.

**Health Care Professional (HCP), Option 1 Calls and Religious Items**

- There were no issues raised relating to HCP, Option 1 calls or Religious items over the last quarter.

**Repairs**

- Repairs was the most prominent issue highlighted by ICVs over the past quarter. These repairs included:
  - **Haverfordwest**- inadequate heating for the cells.
  - **Brecon**- Lights in cell two and in the bedding store.
  - **Aberystwyth** – Custody main door broken and the fire damper system in cell 1 was faulty. There were also issues highlighted in relation to the staff toilet (please see *Toilet Facilities for further details*).
- For Brecon and Aberystwyth, the repair duration lasted almost on average a month. Is there an issue with Estates progressing repairs at certain custody suites?

January – March 2025

### Toilet Facilities

- ICVs noted at Aberystwyth, that the staff toilet was out of order from the 8<sup>th</sup> January and remained out of service throughout their follow up visits from the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 where staff were still reporting issues with it. The concern was raised that staff were having to gain authorisation from an inspector to permit staff to find someone to cover whilst they needed to go to the toilet.
- ICVs then noted that the glass toilet room in Aberystwyth was being used as storage for the cleaner's equipment.

### Disability Access

- ICVs noted the 'Hearing Loop' sign in Haverfordwest was not situated where it can be easily seen by detainees.
- There were no other reports on disability access reported this past quarter.

### Positive comments

- There were a number of positive comments made by ICVs over the past quarter which include:

*-“Level of care was very high... Detainee in cell L6 stated that he suffers from anxiety and he felt he couldn't breathe. Custody had supplied him with distraction items, given him access to the exercise yard and were displaying professionalism & care when interacting with him. Similarly, the Detainee in cell R2 also displayed expressions of anxiety, which he attributed to his need to smoke some weed. He too had been offered the opportunity to use the exercise yard and offered distraction items' Both detainees had seen the HCP.”*

*-“Staff happy to discuss matters. Showed us the braille notes for blind detainees and BSL DVD for deaf detainees.”*

*-“The detainee was in interview when we arrived but then became available for us to see. She has ADHD and is on the autism spectrum. An appropriate adult was present during her interview. She made positive comments about the way she had been looked after.*

## January – March 2025

*“ICVs received a very warm welcome and there were excellent levels of communication. It is impressive that custody staff have produced a menu for detainees to choose meals from - this is on display at the custody desk, along with a hearing loop sign.”*

*“Custody Sergeant was responsive to detainee's needs. Detainee mentioned that he had asked for his sister to be made aware that he was in custody - the detainee stated that no attempt had been made last night, and this morning he had been told that his sister was not answering the phone. Custody Sergeant was informed and, as we were about to finish the visit, was able to confirm that he had spoken to the detainee's sister.*

*The detainee also said that he did not feel like eating due to stress (not specifically caused by his detention). As soon as we had finished interviewing the detainee, the Custody Sergeant spoke to him and was able to persuade the detainee to have a drink and some crisps.*

*The detainee had expressed some concerns about his wellbeing. The detainee was to be interviewed shortly and the Custody Sergeant confirmed that a fitness for release assessment would be made.”*

- ICVs referenced custody staff politeness and helpfulness on 7 occasions which illustrates the strong relationship between the ICV scheme and the Force.

### **‘Other’ Issues Identified**

- **Female sanitary products:** questions were raised in relation to the storage of these products at Haverfordwest.
- **External buzzer-** Issue is raised with Aberystwyth whereby entry to custody can only be obtained via the main reception area. Out of hours is causing issues for ICVs to gain instant access as they are required to contact 101 whereby long delays are experienced either speaking with the call handler or for the call handler to contact the custody. ICVs suggest that an external buzzer for external organisations including legal representation, interpreters and Appropriate Adults to gain access.
- **Plimsolls-** Detained persons (DP) are routinely asked whether they would like plimsolls if they are asked to remove their footwear. In Haverfordwest, ICVs had a discussion whereby they were not being offered as once they are opened, they are discarded. As such the Force will not be adopting an automatic issue of plimsolls to detainees as this has significant cost implication.

January – March 2025

- **Ligature concern-** ICVs queried whether it is necessary to remove possible ligatures of laces and/or chords of clothing from complaint detainees who are on level 1, 30-minute observations from staff. ICVs referred to the College of Policing which states at level 3 to 'remove ligatures'. Is this risk adverse culture compromising detainees' rights and dignity?
- **Hygiene-** ICVs noted an issue with the bins provided in Haverfordwest. ICVs questioned the hygiene of these bins as it requires the press down function to open the bin to dispose of waste. Pedal bins were sourced by the Force and provided to custody after receiving this feedback.
- **Lack of Anti-Harm Suit (AHS)-** ICVs discussed the proposed plan of removing the AHS from custody and shared some concerns raised by staff in relation to resources available to mitigate individual risk. ICVs proposed whether AHS could be phased out to assist custody staff and whether any decision to use them would require inspector authorisation.
- **Proposed poster-** Newtown & Aberystwyth custody staff have indicated that they would like a poster that states that abuse from detainees towards staff will not be tolerated.
- **Marker for Mecca-** A marker on the wall of a detention cell has been proposed by ICVs to point towards Mecca for Muslim detainees to assist with the direction for their prayers. Custody inspectors have indicated that Muslim DPs have the compass on their prayer mats, but it needs to be established whether the compass is stitched into the matt or whether it is a live compass.

#### Custody Performance Meeting

- On a monthly basis, the OPCC has been invited to attend the Custody Performance Meeting, held by Chief Inspector Jenna Jones, which is the forum held with local custody inspectors to discuss areas of good practice and areas of improvements. Within these meetings, there is considerable focus on:
  - Children in custody
  - Females in custody
  - Health care Professionals (HCP)
  - Sleeping reviews

## January – March 2025

- Information learned from these meetings are disseminated to ICVs within their weekly updates for vigilance purposes.

### IOPC ICV Event

- Within the month of February, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and in collaboration with Independent Custody Visitor Association (ICVA), provided a video event for ICVs. The purpose of the event was to educate and empower ICVs into their role and explain who the IOPC are and background information with regards to the police complaints process.

### Welsh Language Training

- As part of the OPCC's Welsh Language strategy for 2024/2025 ICVs were offered the opportunity to improve their Welsh language skills. The OPCC, in collaboration with the Force's Welsh Language Tutor, supported ICVs and other volunteers with level one Welsh over the past quarter.

### ICV Panel Meeting

- An ICV Panel Meeting was held on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025 online where custody provided a progress update on the HCP coverage from the new provider, progress in relation to Drugs Testing on Arrest (DTOA) for the pilot with Dyfed Drugs and Alcohol Service (DDAS) and amendments in the rota for custody staff to improve staffing resilience.
- The OPCC provided updates in relation to a new scheme manager taking over Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion area and highlighting an open invitation for any ICV interested in becoming the new ICV Chair who will facilitate future Panel meetings.

### Recruitment

- Two new members have been included to our ICV scheme. They are currently supporting Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion regions.

January – March 2025

- The OPCC has just received a further four applications which will support North and South Powys, as well as Carmarthenshire areas.

### Force Response:

In relation to the observations above, these are the thoughts of Inspector Andrew Rogers, who is commenting on behalf of Dyfed Powys Police with regards to his reflection over the past quarter:

*“I am pleased to see that the strong working relationship is continuing between ICVs and DPP Custody Staff. It is especially pleasing to see so many positive comments made by ICVs in relation to the welcome they received from custody staff, as well as the positive comments from detainees passed to ICVs regarding their treatment in custody.*

*I note there has only been one issue raised regarding staffing, which is positive considering that staffing was raised as an issue more frequently on previous reports.*

*HCP provision is also a positive and the new medical contract has regularly delivered 100% coverage across all custody suites and ensures that we can provide a high level of medical care to all detainees. “Visionable” is currently being piloted in Brecon Custody, which is the only custody suite without embedded medical provision, and this is being monitored and amended accordingly following feedback received from custody staff at Brecon.*

*The concerns regarding repairs being conducted swiftly have been noted and I recall discussing this issue with ICVs during the recent ICV Panel Meeting. This matter has been raised with Estates Department and, I believe the above issues have now been resolved. This will continue to be monitored and any further delays will be discussed with Estates.*

*In relation to “other concerns raised”, there are updates to be provided for several of these concerns. In relation to the removal of laces, cords, etc; this is no longer being completed automatically by custody officers. Custody officers are being asked to risk assess accordingly and evidence more effective risk management within the content of their care plans. During audits, we are now regularly seeing detainees being allowed to remain in*

#### January – March 2025

*their own clothing/footwear following risk assessment by the custody officer. In relation to the use of Anti-Harm Clothing (AHC), the decision has been made by chief officers that AHC is to be removed from all custody units with immediate effect and they are no longer to be used within DPP. This decision was not made lightly and was made following extensive research into the use of AHC in DPP over an extended period of time and a review of the reasons for it being used. Prior to this decision being made, AHC had not been used within DPP since November 2024 and it was clear that more effective risk management was evident in the decisions being made by custody officers and other alternatives to AHC were being considered.*

*I would like to thank the ICVs for their continued feedback, support of our Custody Units, and attendance at Custody Scrutiny Panels which allow us to remain accountable and transparent in our treatment of detainees.”*