



INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING

Independent Custody Visitors

Independent Custody Visitors are volunteers who check on a variety of things, including the condition of police cells, and to check that people being held in custody are well treated. Codes of Practice issued by the Home Office govern how the process operates and provide a national standard. The scheme in Northumbria operates to this standard.

Custody Visiting in Northumbria

Eight custody visiting panels operate across Northumbria, each one headed by a Custody Visiting Panel Co-ordinator. Members of the Police Authority are appointed to serve as representatives on each Panel. The co-ordinator has responsibility for day-to-day arrangements, rota of visits, arrangement of panel meetings and meets with representatives from the Police Authority. Northumbria has around 75 independent custody visitors who make unannounced visits to police stations in their area. Volunteers work in pairs and carry out inspections about once a month. Inspections can take place at any time during the day or evening.

Independent Custody Visitors Association (ICVA)

This voluntary organisation promotes custody visiting nationally through advocacy, publicity, training and ongoing support to volunteers. A yearly conference is held and around eight visitors get the opportunity to attend.

Training for Custody Visitors

The Police Authority provides training for volunteers and this is open for Members and Custody Visitors to attend. The agenda and content is usually suggested by custody visitors.

Reporting to Members

Members receive quarterly reports on custody visits at the Citizen Focus Committee.

For more information about Custody Visitors contact NPA
Democratic Services Team