



west midlands
**office for policing
and crime**

Custody Visiting Scheme Policy and Handbook

If you have any suggestions or queries on the provisions of the custody visiting scheme or concerns arising from individual visits, please contact the scheme manager on 0121 626 5685.

November 2012.

West Midlands Office For Policing and Crime Custody Visiting Policy and Handbook

1. Introduction

This handbook sets out the West Midlands Office For Policing and Crime (WMOPC) policy and arrangements for the delivery of an effective custody visiting service.

Independent custody visiting is the well established system whereby volunteers attend police stations to check on the treatment of detainees and the conditions in which they are held and that their rights and entitlements are being observed.

2. West Midlands Office For Policing and Crime

WMOPC is the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The PCC sets the strategic direction for policing in the West Midlands and ensures that the police service is run efficiently and effectively. He holds the Chief Constable to account on behalf of local communities for the police services delivered.

3. Objectives of the Custody Visiting Scheme

The key objectives of the Scheme are to enable members of the community to:

- (a) observe, comment and report upon the conditions under which persons are detained at any police station, including the operation, in practice, of the statutory and other rules governing their welfare;
- (b) secure greater public understanding and confidence in these matters; and
- (c) provide an independent check on the way officers in custody facilities carry out their duties with regard to detainees.

The roles of the PCC, Chief Constable and custody visitors in respect of the Scheme are contained in a charter subscribed to by the PCC, the Chief Constable and each custody visitor. A copy of the Charter is appended to this handbook.

4. Establishment and Administration

The Scheme has been established by the PCC with the support of and in consultation with the Chief Constable. The PCC may delegate any aspect of the Scheme to one or more bodies or officers.

5. Recruitment

Custody visitors should be independent persons:-

- of good character
- with broadly based interests in the local community who can bring with them particular experience or knowledge, and
- capable of making informed judgements in which the community can have confidence.

Appointments of custody visitors should seek to ensure that the team for that particular area reflects the balance of the local community in terms of age, gender and ethnic origin. The Scheme will lack credibility if custody visitors are drawn from only a narrow section of the community.

6. Disqualification from acting as a Custody Visitor

Custody visitors may not be:

- Justices of the Peace on the active list;
- an officer or ex-officer of a police force (including the Special Constabulary);
- an officer of the Probation Service;
- under the age of 18 years;

Persons *may* not be considered suitable for appointment if they have:

- been convicted of an offence punishable with imprisonment within the past five years; or
- served a term of imprisonment or detention.

All appointments are subject to security vetting accordance with the policy of WMPOC.

7. Training

WMOPC will provide custody visitors with appropriate introductory training. All elements of the training must be completed successfully before receiving their formal appointment.

Custody visitors will be required to undertake refresher training after two years. Additional training may be provided periodically as appropriate.

8. Term of Appointment

The Chief Executive to WMOPC shall be responsible for the appointment of custody visitors. Once appointed, all custody visitors will be required to subscribe to the custody visitor charter as a condition of their appointment.

Appointments will be for a maximum period of three years, including the successful completion of a six-month probationary period, with the opportunity for individuals to seek subsequent re-appointment for further three year periods following re-assessment of suitability. Full reassessments of suitability undertaken by the Chief Executive will take place at regular intervals not exceeding three years.

The Chief Executive will provide an identification document to all custody visitors. This document must only be used in connection with custody visitor duties and for no other purpose.

9. Removal and Suspension from Office

Custody visitors must resign their appointment if their personal situation changes so that they would no longer be eligible for appointment as a custody visitor.

Accreditation as a custody visitor may be withdrawn or suspended, as appropriate, by WMOPC in cases of:

- misconduct including non-compliance with the provisions of the Scheme or the procedures agreed by the local team; or
- where a custody visitor is summonsed and/or arrested.

Where WMOPC suspends a custody visitor's accreditation, it may require the custody visitor to undertake successfully an appropriate training course before reinstatement.

10. Misconduct

The Chief Executive may, at their discretion, informally alert individual custody visitors to relatively minor matters of misconduct and take no further action.

Where such a course of action would be inappropriate, because of a serious or repeated 'offences', the Chief Executive will follow the following process - they will:-

- bring the matter to the attention of the individual custody visitor who will be offered an opportunity to explain any background to the matter,
- bring the matter to the attention of the coordinator of the appropriate custody visitors' team and give them an opportunity to provide any relevant information;
- having obtained any information outlined above, together with any other appropriate information, consider the matter, in consultation with the PCC and take any appropriate action.

The Chief Executive has, where necessary, the following options open to them, the custody visitor may:-

- be warned about their future conduct;
- be suspended until they have successfully undergone the new custody visitors' training course;
- have their accreditation withdrawn, ie they cease to be a custody visitor.

The Chief Executive may take any past warnings and suspensions into account when determining which option should be pursued. The PCC or his representative will undertake any appeals against decisions taken under this procedure.

11. Custody Visitor Teams

WMOPC shall determine "grouping" of Local Policing Units (LPU's) and teams of all custody visitors appointed in an area shall be established.

Each team shall, within its area, be responsible for:

- meeting on a regular basis, at least three times each year to discuss the operation of the Scheme. One of these meetings must be an Annual Meeting at which the team's coordinator shall be elected.
- monitoring all aspects of the day to day operation of the Scheme;
- ensuring that all custody visitors are used efficiently and effectively;
- establishing a rota of visits to ensure all locations receive an appropriate number of visits; and
- making recommendations to the PCC in respect of the general administration of the Scheme and in respect of its individual members.

The Chief Executive will arrange for representatives of the teams to meet together at least once a year to discuss the operation of the Scheme throughout the area. These meetings are in addition to meetings of all custody visitors organised on a regular basis by WMOPC.

Where a team does not comply with the Scheme's provisions, the Chief Executive will bring the matter to the attention of all members of the team - thus, allowing team members an opportunity to address the problem.

In extreme circumstances if the problem persists, WMOPC may take over the administration of the Scheme in a particular area until such time as the administration of the Scheme can be successfully returned to local control.

12. Visiting Programme

In determining a visiting programme for its area each team must consider how often each facility in its area should be visited, having regard to the;

- individual size, location, importance and workload;
- state of relations between the police and particular sections of the community;
- views of the local commanders;
- target figures agreed by the PCC;
- need for visits to take place sufficiently frequently without impairing the administration of the station; and
- closure of facilities for redecoration/maintenance etc.

The Chief Constable will give as much notification as possible of closure (and reopening) of custody facilities to the scheme manager.

13. Visiting Rota

Each team shall compile a rota designating which specified pairs of custody visitors (the “duty pair”) will be responsible for visiting specified facilities in its area for whatever period(s) it may determine.

All custody visitors must participate and conform with the visiting rota compiled by their respective custody visitor team.

The rota shall only set the minimum number of visits to be undertaken by any pair of custody visitors. The actual number shall be at the discretion of the visitors themselves.

A custody visitor must not conduct a visit with the same partner on two successive periods of rotated responsibility.

Custody visitors may undertake additional visits during periods outside those assigned to them by their rota, so long as they co-ordinate their visit(s) with the “duty pair” in the manner determined by their team.

Where a custody visitor wishes to undertake a visit in an area other than the one to which they are appointed, they must first contact the relevant team’s co-ordinator or the Scheme Manager.

14. Minimum Number of Visits

Every custody visitor must undertake at least two visits in every three-month period. Custody visitors who are unable to fulfill this requirement will automatically have their appointment withdrawn by WMOPC (unless they have given written prior notification to the Chief Executive of their inability to visit for a period of time).

15. Special Visits

Visits will normally be unscheduled and unannounced. There may be instances, however, when there is particular tension within the local community about the treatment or well-being of one or more persons detained at a police station within the area which a visit might help to defuse and/or allay myth and rumour. If such a visit is required, the Custody Inspector will contact the Scheme Manager to make the appropriate arrangements.

The custody visitors should, in such circumstances, work closely with the Scheme Manager to communicate their independent findings to appropriate representatives of

the community at the conclusion of their visit. They should also keep the situation under review, making additional visits and reports if they, or the officer in charge of the station, consider it necessary.

When such a visit takes place the custody visitors may seek to see all persons detained at that particular time. Nothing in these arrangements is intended, however, to preclude such informal arrangements for visits as may be made, from time to time, between the police and members of the community.

16. Visiting Procedures

All visits by custody visitors shall be in pairs except where a new custody visitor may accompany a pair of experienced custody visitors as part of their training.

Custody visitors may visit any police station designated by the Chief Constable under the provisions of PACE. However, where custody facilities are not being used on a regular basis, custody visitors may expect a delay in gaining access to them to conduct their visit.

17. Inspection of Accommodation

On arrival at a police station to conduct a custody visit, custody visitors must present themselves at the enquiry desk and produce their identification documents for inspection. Where circumstances allow, they will be allowed to wait out of the public area until escorted to the custody area.

On the custody visitors' arrival, the custody officer should report the current situation in the custody area.

Should, on the custody visitors' arrival at the station, the custody officer report that no persons are currently being detained, custody visitors may, if they so wish, request to and inspect, in the company of an officer, those areas of the police station in which persons are normally detained, unless the custody officer is able to provide a satisfactory reason why an inspection of all or part of the appropriate areas is not possible. Should an inspection be restricted, the custody officer's reasons must be recorded in the custody visitors' report.

Both custody visitors should have access to all parts of the police station in which persons may be detained pending interview, release or production in court including cells, detention rooms, charging areas and medical room. Custody visitors should satisfy themselves that these areas are clean, tidy and in reasonable state of repair and decoration, and that bedding in cells is clean and adequate. If interview rooms or medical rooms are currently in use the custody visitor may not interrupt, but may wait to see the detainee afterwards.

It is not necessary to inspect stores but custody visitors should establish that suitable arrangements exist for adequate stocks of such items as bedding; for the cleaning of blankets etc; and for the regular replacement of necessary furnishings and equipment.

Custody visitors may inspect empty cells and detention rooms to check, amongst other matters, heating/ventilation systems and that cells' bells and toilet flushing mechanisms are working properly. They may visit interview rooms in the custody area if unoccupied. Custody visitors may not visit CID accommodation or other operational parts of the police station, otherwise than as may be necessary to gain access to the areas to be visited.

In the interests of security and the safety of custody visitors, the custody officer or another escorting officer etc. will accompany them during visits at all times.

18. Access to Detainees

Custody visitors shall have access to all persons detained at a police station, including:-

- persons remanded to police custody in accordance with Section 128 of the Magistrates' Court Act, 1980 (as amended);
- remand and sentenced prisoners held in police cells under Section 6 of the Imprisonment (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1980;
- persons detained under the powers of the Immigration Act, 1971;
- persons bailed with the condition of residence at the police station (N.B. These persons are not held under the provisions of PACE) and;
- juveniles (but see Paragraph 24).

Custody visitors may not see detainees in the following instances:-

- where they have indicated that they do not wish to be subject to a visit;
- when a detainee is being interviewed, although custody visitors may wait for the interview to be terminated;
- persons in Magistrates' Courts cells awaiting their case being heard in court;
- where a decision by the police has been taken that a detainee should not be seen by custody visitors, or
- where detainees are not being held under the provisions of PACE and are the responsibility of a "private contractor".

The following rules apply to access to detainees:

1. A detained person is neither obliged to see custody visitors, to answer questions nor to agree to their custody record being seen.
2. The officer who is escorting the custody visitors is responsible for establishing whether or not a detainee wishes to see the custody visitors. This should be done within the hearing of visitors but preferably out of sight. The officer should read from the laminated introduction sheet to see whether or not the detainee agrees to see the custody visitors, and also to seek permission for them to have access to the detainee's custody record. A verbal agreement by the detainee is sufficient.
3. If the detainee is for any reason incapable of deciding whether to be visited, the escorting officer should allow access if the custody visitors wish to satisfy themselves of the detainee's well-being unless it is considered that their safety could be at risk.
4. If the escorting officer judges it to be too dangerous for the custody visitors to enter the cell, they may wish to talk to the detainee through the wicket in the cell door.
5. Where a detainee is known to present a special risk, custody visitors will be given appropriate information to allow them to decide whether or not to conduct a visit or in what manner to do so if they decide to proceed.
6. If a detainee is asleep the custody visitors should decide whether or not they should be woken to establish whether (or not) they wish to be visited. Custody visitors should however bear in mind the provision in the Codes of Practice under

PACE which allows a continuous period of eight hours rest. In such circumstances the escorting officer will advise that the detainee must not be disturbed.

7. In exceptional circumstances, the police may judge that it is necessary for a detained person or a bailed person residing at a police station (resident informant) not to be seen by custody visitors in order to avoid any possible risk of prejudicing an important investigation. Any decision to deny access to a detained person should be taken only by the duty officer, or if that officer is not available, another senior officer, of Inspector rank or above. An explanation of the reasons for refusal should be given to the custody visitors on each occasion and recorded in the custody record and custody visitor's report. The decision to deny access should be taken in each case in the light of all relevant circumstances. There should be no presumption that access should be denied to any particular category of detainee or that because a decision has been made that a person should be held incommunicado.

8. Conversations between detainees and custody visitors should normally take place in sight, but out of hearing, of the escorting officer. If for some reason the police decide that the escorting officer should remain within hearing, this decision must be taken by the duty officer or some other senior officer at the police station and recorded in the custody record and custody visitors' report.

9. If a detainee indicates that they might harm themselves or any other person, this must immediately be brought to the attention of the custody officer.

10. Custody visitors should bear in mind that some detained persons may be violent and/or under the influence of drink or drugs and that the presence of the police officer may deter or frustrate assaults on the custody visitors.

11. The facilities provided to remand prisoners detained in police custody are the responsibility of the Chief Constable. Custody visitors will appreciate, however, that it will not be possible for the police to provide all of the facilities which a remand/sentenced prisoner might receive if detained in prison. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least being that police cells were designed to hold people for relatively short periods and do not therefore incorporate some of the facilities which would be normal in a prison.

12. Should the remand/sentenced prisoner(s) concerned consent to see custody visitors, for reasons of security, this will take place in the cell area and within the sight and hearing of the escorting officer. This is because some remand/sentenced prisoners may be charged with, or convicted of, serious offences and the presence of a police officer will be necessary to ensure the custody visitors' safety.

13. Custody visitors must declare an interest as soon as they are aware that a detainee is known to them. In the interests of impartiality, custody visitors must not visit friends or relations who are in custody.

14. If the detainee is unable to understand due to a disability or language issue consideration should be given to utilising appropriate interpreters/Language Line. If this is not practical the presumption should be in favour of allowing visitors to examine the custody record.

15. Custody visitors at the conclusion of their visit should leave the premises and must not seek to gain access to other areas of the station or police premises.

19. Objectives of Visits

Custody visitors are concerned only with custodial welfare. Discussion must focus on checking detainees have been offered their rights and entitlements under PACE and that conditions are adequate. They are not concerned with any aspect of legal or evidential matters related to the circumstances of arrest and/or detention.

The objectives of individual custody visits to police stations are:-

- to obtain a proper picture of what is taking place at the police station;
- to examine custody documentation relating to detainees;
- to inspect accommodation and facilities to ensure that they are of an adequate standard;
- to monitor the welfare of all detainees;
- to ensure that all detainees have had their statutory rights explained to them and have been given written notice thereof;
- to ensure that all detainees have received all the facilities to which they are entitled under Code C of PACE; and
- to highlight and report any deficiencies and/ or problems.

If a detainee seeks to make admissions or otherwise discuss an alleged offence, the visitor must tell them that the relevant contents of the visit may be disclosed in legal proceedings (see paragraph 28).

In conducting their visit all reasonable care should be taken by custody visitors to ensure that they conduct themselves in an independent professional manner. Special care should be taken that they are not perceived to be overly friendly with anybody with whom they come into contact. Not to do so may result in casual observers to call their independence into question.

20. Detainees' Rights

Detainees' rights are defined in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984. Under Section 66 of the Act, the Secretary of State has issued a Code of Practice covering such matters. All custody visitors should be familiar with these provisions, and the Codes of Practice must be readily available at all police stations for consultation by police officers, custody visitors, detainees and members of the public.

All persons arrested in the West Midlands police area are taken to 'Designated Police Stations'. That is one designated by the Chief Constable as being suitable for the reception and detention of prisoners. Each designated police station must have a "custody officer", who is at least the rank of Sergeant.

Custody visitors should note that the custody and welfare of all persons detained in a police station are the sole responsibility of the custody officer and all enquiries concerning detained persons should be directed to that officer.

21. Documentation

It is important that accurate and up to date custody records are in place for every detainee. Custody visitors should, if granted access, satisfy themselves that the custody record fully and properly records the action taken in connection with detainees while in police custody.

Where a detainee agrees for custody visitors to have access to their custody record, they may see the whole of the record on a computer screen or on paper. However, that part of the record which details the chronology of the detainee's stay should usually be sufficient for custody visitors to conduct their responsibilities.

Custody visitors may not see other police documents or medical records relating to detainees.

22. Medical Conditions

The custody record should include all relevant information about necessary medication for a detainee and the frequency of its administration. Custody officers are responsible for ensuring that medication is given at appropriate times.

Custody visitors should pay particular attention to detainees who are suffering from any form of illness, injury or disability. They should satisfy themselves that, if appropriate, a medical examiner has been called and establish from the custody officer what instructions for medical treatment have been given by consulting the custody record that these instructions have been carried out.

Custody visitors may visit detainees (but not persons released from custody) in hospital, whether or not under police guard, subject to the agreement of the hospital authorities. To prevent a wasted journey it may be advisable to establish, via the hospital authorities, whether the detainee is willing to talk to custody visitors. Access to the custody record can be permitted only if the detainee has given his consent at the police station in the normal way. If hospitalisation of a detainee appears to the police to have caused tension in the local community, the appropriate team co-ordinator should be notified.

23. Deaths in Custody

All deaths in custody are the subject of an inquest by one of HM Coroners to which the police report formally. The Chief Constable should however make appropriate arrangements, out of courtesy, to notify the co-ordinator of the appropriate team of the death of a detainee in a police cell or where the death has occurred in hospital following transfer from a police station.

It is not necessary to notify a death which occurred after release from custody unless the detainee was transferred to hospital from a police station and died in hospital shortly following a formal release from custody.

Custody visitors are not allowed to view the body in the cell, or have access to the relevant custody record.

24. Juveniles

A juvenile may be visited with their consent, they may also give consent to custody visitors' access to their custody record.

Juveniles should not be placed in cells unless no other secure accommodation is available and the custody officer considers that it is not practicable to supervise them if they are not placed in cells or the custody officer considers that a cell provides more comfortable accommodation than other secure accommodation at the station. A juvenile should not be placed in a cell with a detained adult. If a juvenile is kept in a cell, custody visitors should seek an explanation from the custody officer and check that this has been recorded on the custody record and also record it in their report.

25. Appropriate Adults

Custody visitors may act as appropriate adults but they must not switch between the roles during a visit.

26. Complaints by Detainees

Custody visitors must distinguish between complaints by detainees about their general treatment or conditions of detention and a complaint of misconduct by a police officer. The former will include such complaints as detainees have not been notified of their statutory rights or not receiving entitlements under the PACE Codes of Practice. Such complaints are for custody visitors to pursue with the custody officer or to discuss with the Scheme Manager.

A complaint of misconduct by a police officer, which includes instances of allegations of assault, must be dealt with under the statutory complaints procedures contained in Part IX of PACE. Custody visitors have no role to play in these procedures. If a detainee complains to a custody visitor of misconduct by a police officer, they must be advised to make the complaint immediately to the duty officer. The custody visitor may advise the detainees to consider seeking legal advice about the complaint, or if an allegation of assault has been made, to ask to see a doctor. In the interests of maintaining their impartiality, custody visitors should not take up individual cases or make representations on behalf of detained persons. There is no reason, however, why they should not notify the duty officer that a detainee wishes to make a formal complaint. It is hoped that the police would be willing to notify the custody visitors, in due course, of the outcome of any investigation into a complaint.

Remand and sentenced prisoners held in police stations may seek to complain about conditions in prisons or the treatment they have received there. Custody visitors must not involve themselves in such matters. There are recognised grievance procedures open to prisoners such as writing to or petitioning the Home Secretary; or writing to their solicitor or Member of Parliament.

27. Impartiality

Custody visitors must not involve themselves in individual cases to the extent of offering advice about whether or not detainees should make a statement or otherwise co-operate with police inquiries. Such advice would be inconsistent with the custody visitors' independence from the processes of investigation.

Custody visitors must decline therefore to discuss more than conditions in which persons are detained and their treatment, even though some persons will naturally wish to ask advice about their possible defence, particularly if they have not already received legal advice.

Custody visitors must not convey messages from detained persons however innocuous they may seem at first sight, they may have a pre-arranged meaning. In the interests of impartiality, custody visitors must not visit friends or relations who are in custody.

28. Custody Visitors Giving Evidence in Criminal Proceedings

Conversations between custody visitors and detainees are not privileged and it is open to a court to issue a witness summons requiring the attendance of a custody visitor to give oral evidence or to produce documents such as a report on a particular visit.

Custody visitors are under no obligation to give evidence or produce documents otherwise than in response to a court order, but are obliged to respond to such an order.

29. Confidentiality

Custody visitors will acquire considerable personal information relating to detainees and the security of police stations, this must be protected against improper and/or unnecessary disclosure. Custody visitors will therefore be required to give an undertaking (included on the visit report form) not to release the identity of or information capable of identifying any detained person (except where a visit has been arranged exceptionally (see Paragraph 15)) in connection with the treatment of a particular person.

It is desirable, in the interest of the strict application of the principles of confidentiality, but subject to Paragraph 15, that custody visitors do not name or otherwise identify persons in custody even in reports to or in discussion with fellow custody visitors, their team or WMOPC.

Breach of this undertaking may make a visitor liable to civil proceedings by the detained person concerned. Custody visitors will also need to be aware that the unauthorised disclosure of the facts concerning police operations or the security of police stations may constitute an offence under Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act 1989.

30. Reports and Follow-up Actions

A special report form is kept in each police station in order that custody visitors may make a record of their findings. At the end of each visit the custody visitors should complete their report form and forward the original to the Scheme Manager in the internal post. Custody visitors may ask custody staff to photocopy a copy for their personal records.

Any issues which are considered unsatisfactory during the visit must be included in the report, together with any other comments about the conduct of the visit. All such comments must be drawn to the immediate attention of the appropriate Custody Inspector. This action should be taken, for example, if a detained person makes a complaint of assault or ill-treatment, or appears to have sustained an injury which is not recorded on their custody record or the custody visiting procedures etc. have not been followed.

The Chief Executive shall monitor all reports submitted by custody visitors, together with any necessary action arising. The Chief Executive shall also report to the PCC comments and/or matters of particular importance.

31. Funding

Travelling expenses will be payable to all custody visitors. WMOPC will not pay any claim that is over 12 months old at the time of submission for authorisation.

Funding is also available to cover reasonable administrative expenses of the day-to-day operation of the Scheme, including such items as recruitment of new members, publicising the work of custody visitors and administration of teams.

32. Change of Address

Each custody visitor must inform the Chief Executive of any change of address and/or telephone number(s), or change in personal circumstances which would affect their appointment.

When a person ceases to be a custody visitor they must return their identification document and Handbook to the Chief Executive.

33. Insurance

WMOPC will arrange appropriate insurance cover in respect of custody visitors' voluntary work, including their periods of travel to, from and between designated stations and other associated meetings.

34. Review of Custody Visiting Policy and Handbook

WMOPC will regularly review this policy and handbook, at least every three years.

CUSTODY VISITORS CHARTER

This is an understanding between the West Midlands Office for Policing and Crime (WMOPC), its custody visitors and the Chief Constable of the West Midlands Police outlining the expectations and requirements of all parties in the efficient and effective operation of the WMOPC custody visiting scheme.

WMOPC undertakes to:

- Publicise the Scheme throughout the West Midlands to ensure that its existence and objectives become better known and to generate appropriate volunteers to join the Scheme.
- Produce and regularly update a handbook detailing all aspects of the provisions of its Scheme, together with any appropriate additional relevant information.
- Provide appropriate initial and additional training to custody visitors.
- Provide opportunities for custody visitors to share learning and experience.
- Provide appropriate central support to the Scheme and custody visitors.
- Regularly review the provisions of its Scheme in the light of national and local developments.
- Provide appropriate resources to support the Scheme.
- Ensure that insurance cover is provided for custody visitors in the course of their duties.
- Review the Scheme's smooth, efficient and effective operation.
- Review, act upon and report-back on appropriate matters raised by custody visitors.
- Reimburse custody visitors reasonable travelling expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

West Midlands Police undertakes to:

Support the objectives and provisions of WMOPC'S custody visiting scheme.

Issue an appropriate form of identification to enable custody visitors to gain access to police stations in the course of their duties.

- Admit custody visitors immediately to custody facilities upon their arrival at a police station's Enquiry Office - except where this would place them in personal danger or where a detainee being processed does not consent to be seen.
- Have an officer accompany custody visitors at all times to ensure their safety, whilst affording them appropriate privacy when conducting a visit.
- Give custody visitors free access to all appropriate parts of a police station in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme.
- When seeking the consent of individual detainees for the custody visitors to conduct a visit ask, in a positive manner, the detainee (within hearing but out of sight of the custody visitors) if they wish to see custody visitors and/or give them sight of their custody record.
- Where possible, to resolve any issue raised by custody visitors at the time it is raised.

- Where appropriate, to respond to custody visitors' comments on their report form within 10 working days.
- Review, act upon and report-back on appropriate matters raised by custody visitors in the course of their duties.

The Custody Visitor undertakes to:

- Act strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme and any appropriate decision of their custody visitors' team.
- Undertake appropriate additional training that WMOPC may determine from time to time.
- Keep their custody visitor's identification safe and only use it in the course of their official duties.
- To undertake any minimum number of custody visits that WMOPC or their team may determine from time to time.
- Maintain confidentiality of any specific information gained whilst acting as a custody visitor, subject to the necessity to report to the community as a result of a "special" visit undertaken at the request of the Force.
- To report, as appropriate, in general terms on their visits to their custody visitors' team.
- Try to attend all meetings in respect of the Scheme to which they are invited.
- Ensure that they complete fully their report in respect of each visit they undertake, including any responses made to their comments by custody staff.
- Ensure that WMOPC's copy of the custody visitors' report form is forwarded immediately to it on the conclusion of the custody visit.
- Inform WMOPC of any changes in their personal details which may affect their status as a custody visitor.
- Return their official identification and other documentation on ceasing to be a custody visitor.

**DESIGNATED CUSTODY SUITES – All 24 hour unless indicated.
Telephone 101 for all stations**

Birmingham East Local Policing Unit

Stechford Police Station
Station Road
Birmingham B33 8PR

Kings Heath Police Station
High Street
Kings Heath
Birmingham B14 7SP

Birmingham North Local Policing Unit

Sutton Coldfield Police station
Lichfield Road
Sutton Coldfield
B74 2NR

Birmingham South Local Policing Unit

Bournville Lane Police Station
341 Bourneville Lane
Birmingham B30 1QX

Birmingham West & Central Local Policing Unit

Birmingham Central
Steelhouse Lane
Birmingham
B4 6NW

Aston Police Station
Queens Road
Aston
Birmingham B6 7ND
(Standby site)

Handsworth Police Station
Thornhill Road
Handsworth, B21 9BT
(Standby site)

Coventry Local Policing Unit

Willenhall (Coventry) Police Station
Chace Avenue
Coventry CV3 3PS

Coventry Central Police Station
Little Park Street
Coventry CV1 2JX

Dudley Local Policing Unit

Brierley Hill Police Station
Bank Street
Brierley Hill
DY5 3DH

Sandwell Local Policing Unit

Smethwick Police Station
Piddock Road
Smethwick
B66 3BE

Solihull Local Policing Unit

Solihull Police Station
Homer Road
Solihull
B91 3QL

Chelmsley Wood Police Station
Ceolmund Crescent
Chelmsley Wood
B37 5UB
(Standby site)

Walsall Local Policing Unit

Bloxwich Police Station
Station Street
Bloxwich
WS3 2PD

Walsall Police Station
Green Lane
Walsall
WS2 8HL
(Standby site)

Wolverhampton Local Policing Unit

Wolverhampton Central
Bilston Street
Wolverhampton
WV1 3AA

Wednesfield Police station
Alfred Squire Road
Wednesfield
(Standby site)