



**MPA**

**Metropolitan Police Authority**

**WALTHAM FOREST  
INDEPENDENT  
CUSTODY VISITING  
PANEL**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2008**



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# **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the annual report of the Waltham Forest Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) Panel.

This report covers the period from 01/01/08 to 31/12/08.

The purpose of this report is to give a general overview of the work of the Waltham Forest ICV Panel and:

- Evaluate the panel's performance for 2008
- Provide the local community and the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) with information about the visits made, including the treatment of those held in custody
- Set out issues and concerns that have arisen
- Set out the objectives for 2009.

The MPA is an independent statutory body, which exists to make sure that London's police are accountable for the services they provide to people in the capital. The MPA has 23 Members who scrutinise and support the work of the police. The MPA promotes equality and diversity within the police service and is working in partnership to ensure all those who live and work in the capital are treated fairly and with respect.

The MPA has a legal obligation under the Police Reform Act 2002 for a custody visiting scheme to operate in its area. In April 2007 the MPA brought together the custody visiting arrangements managed by the boroughs into one London scheme. The scheme has the full support and cooperation of the Commissioner and the Borough Commander for Waltham Forest, but is independent of the police. The MPA holds overall responsibility for the scheme's management and administration; a member of MPA staff is responsible for supporting the panel.

Custody visitors are volunteers from within the community. The MPA is responsible for recruiting, selecting and appointing all custody visitors and tries to ensure a balance of age, gender and ethnicity. Successful applicants to the scheme are given training in all aspects of a custody visitor's role and responsibilities. Custody visiting is governed by a range of legislation and guidance including the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 as well as Home Office Codes of Practice and National Standards.

# **ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Waltham Forest panel currently schedules one visit per week to Chingford Police Station. This is the minimum requirement that the MPA sets panels as a target. This year the panel managed a visiting level of 71% overall (37 of 52 visits over the year), which is a significant increase on last year's visiting level by 25%.

The Waltham Forest Panel met every eight weeks throughout 2008, at Waltham Forest Town Hall, and this venue continues to be most satisfactory for the panel.

The panel's police liaison changed in the early part of 2008 when Inspector David Partridge became one of the Custody Managers at Chingford. A positive working relationship between Inspector Partridge and the panel developed, and it is hoped that this relationship with the police will continue to be maintained now that Inspector Janne Bennewith has taken over as Custody Inspector. Visit reports continue to emphasise the good work and attitude of the custody staff at Chingford towards the ICVs during their visits.

Membership now stands at 12, and the MPA has deemed that panels with just one 24/7 police station only require a membership of nine ICVs. This allows ICVs to maintain a visiting level of one visit per month, as laid out in the scheme handbook and memorandum of understanding. Therefore the panel's target membership has been adjusted to nine.

In regards to the diversity of Waltham Forest ICV panel, there is a good balance in ethnicity and a reasonable spread across the age ranges, apart from the 18-34 age group. In terms of gender, the panel is male dominated and further recruitment may attempt to address this imbalance when it is required. The MPA also carried out a diversity monitoring exercise itself in 2008 and is currently processing this data to assist panels' understanding of their diversity as a group.

# **CHAIR'S REPORT**

I would firstly like to thank all panel members who have helped to increase the level of visiting in Waltham Forest over the last year; this has been very much appreciated by the MPA. Recruitment to the panel was very positive in 2008 and, with the assistance of ICVs from Enfield; visitors in Waltham Forest were able to get the benefit of visiting with a wider variety of experienced ICVs.

Thanks also go to the police custody staff in Waltham Forest, whose cooperation often in difficult circumstances, has been of great value to the panel. Special thanks to Inspectors Dave Partridge, Lisa Butterfield and the newly appointed Inspector Janne Bennewith for their help and assistance with panel meetings and in dealing with issues raised by the panel.

Finally we would like to thank the MPA for overseeing the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme and for providing the funds and training, so that we can perform our community role.

**Gurparshad Bance**  
**Waltham Forest ICVP Chair**  
**2009**

# **RECRUITMENT AND MEMBERSHIP**

Since April 2007, panels have been asked to adhere to recruitment and interviewing guidance provided by the MPA. The MPA expects all panels to adhere to the MPA's equal opportunities policy, recruit new panel members from all sections of the community and actively foster good relations between people of different races, genders, sexualities, abilities and age on the panel.

During 2008 the Waltham Forest panel had 12 accredited members.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
Gurparshad Bance	2000
Barry Brown	2004
Syed Iqbal	1998
Khaliq Mian	2000
Mohammed A Butt	2007
Jennifer Paul-Christian	2007

## **The following member(s) joined during 2008**

Baffour Owusu-Abeyie	2008
Christine Williams	2008
Elisabeth Davies	2008
Francis Coleman	2008
Franklin Danso	2008
Shaukat Ali	2008

## **The following members resigned/de-accredited during 2008**

Elaine Mahbeer	2000
Willard McCarty	2000
Kim Munford-Johnson	2002
Dolores Dyett	2007

The panel comprises of nine men and three women with varying diversity in age and ethnicity.

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment was successful in 2008 and has meant the panel is operating at maximum membership. Therefore any further applications received are being held on a waiting list until the need for new members arises. Hopefully the panel now has enough committed members to carry out its work at a sufficient level, and build on the visiting levels of 2008.

# **VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS**

The panel have made some visits to Walthamstow station (alternative and overflow facility), as well as Chingford, when the need has arisen for Chingford to close temporarily.

Good standards of care have been noted at both stations, with very few issues to note. The relationship with custody staff has continued to be very positive, and towards the end of 2008 Waltham Forest borough recruited a significant number of Dedicated Detention Officers (DDOs) in line with the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) Operation Herald. This Met wide project aims to reduce the need for police officers to work in custody, by employing civilian jailers, thus releasing officers for other duties.

ICVs have been happy with the way in which jailers have explained their role to detainees, and answered their queries during visits.

Delays in entering the custody suite are rare, even though visits often take place at busy times. It is a source of satisfaction to the panel that there have been few complaints, if any, from detainees on how they are treated at Chingford.

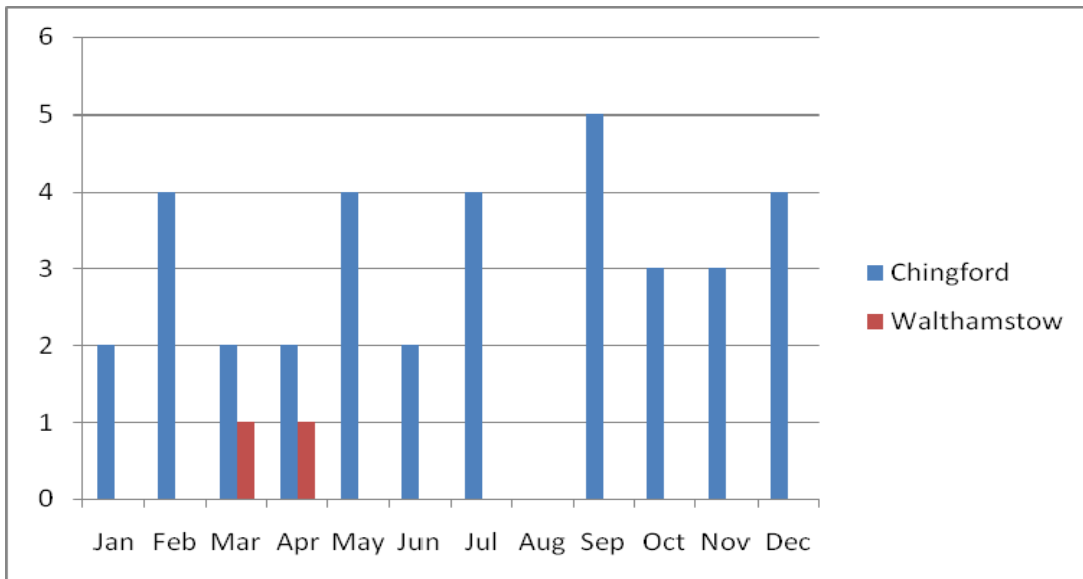
# DATA FROM PANEL VISITS

Please see attached charts for performance data on visits carried out by the panel during 2008.

## 1. Number of visits

Station	Annual no. of visits	% of Annual Target*
Chingford	35	67%
Walthamstow	2	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>71%</b>

\*MPA Annual Target is 52 visits per 24/7-custody suite.



## 2. Time of visits

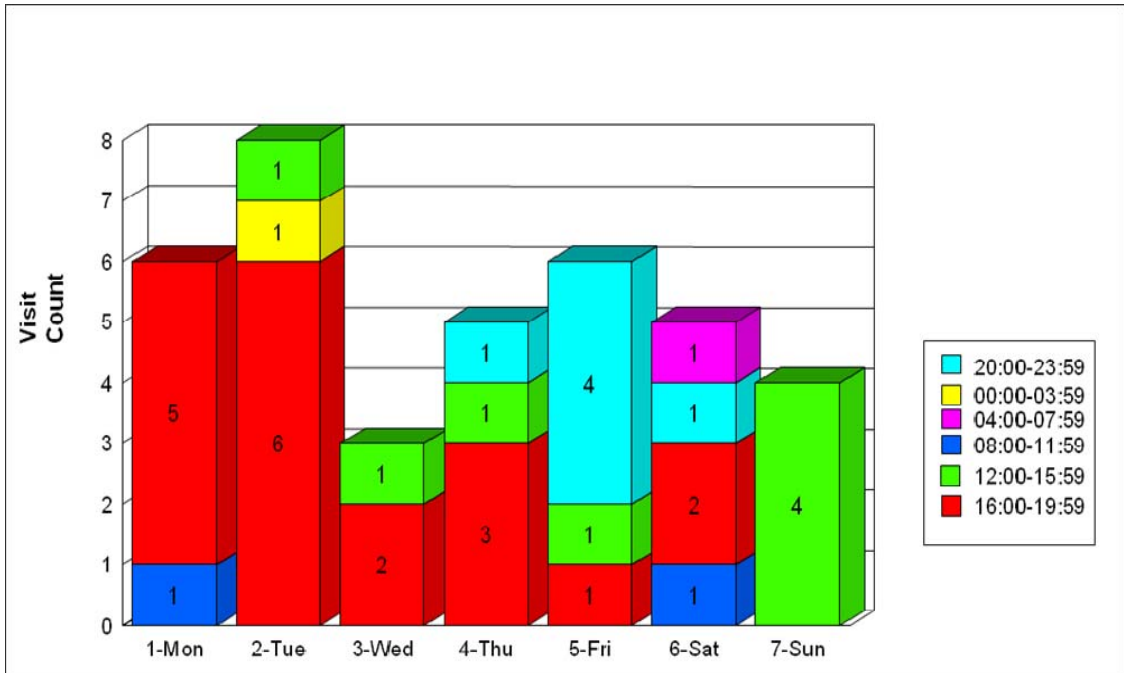
Time period	Annual no.	% of all visits
0000 – 0359 hrs	1	3%
0400 – 0759 hrs	1	3%
0800 – 1159 hrs	2	5%
1200 – 1559 hrs	8	22%
1600 – 1959 hrs	19	51%
2000 – 2359 hrs	6	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>

### Days visits took place

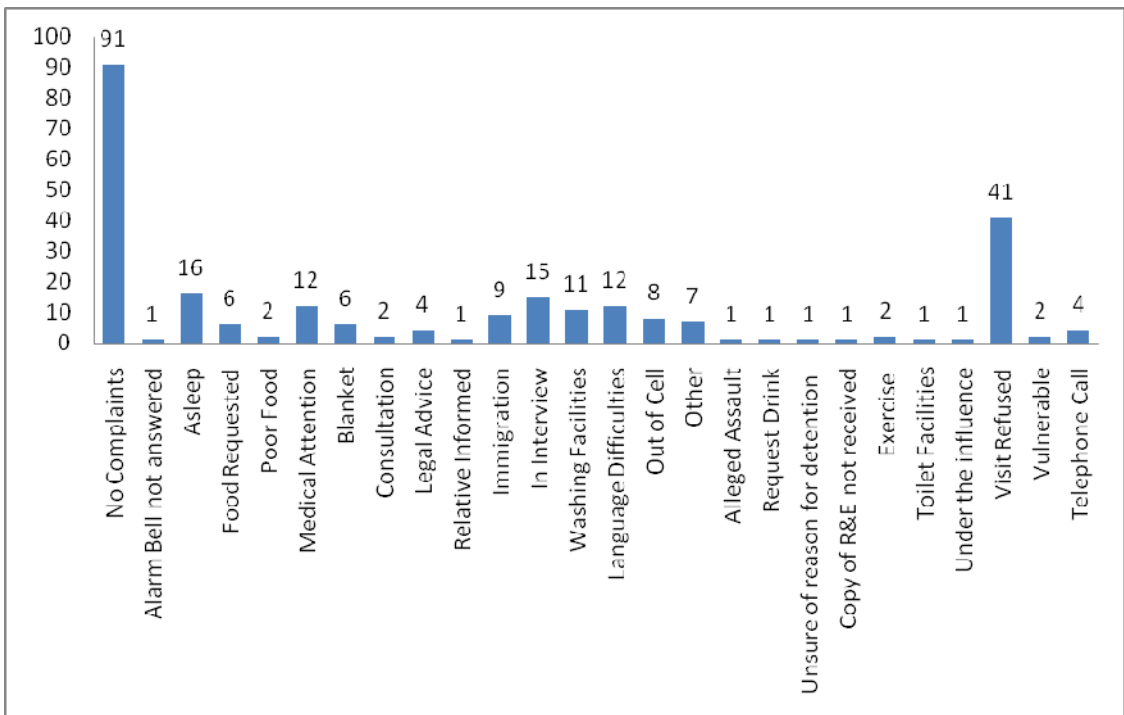
Day	Annual no.	% of all visits
Monday	6	16%
Tuesday	8	22%
Wednesday	3	8%
Thursday	5	14%
Friday	6	16%
Saturday	5	14%
Sunday	4	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



**Time of visits continued..**



**3. Main issue/concern recorded for detainees in custody when visit took place (or reason they were not visited)**



# **PLANS FOR 2009**

## Targets:

- To build on last year's visiting level and aim to carry out visits once a week to Chingford police station.
- A weekly visit to Walthamstow station when it is in use.
- To maintain panel membership at a minimum of nine (as stipulated by the MPA).
- To improve links and feedback between the panel and the local Community and Police Consultative Group.
- To raise the profile of the panel and scheme across the borough through wider circulation of the annual report and publicity materials.