



London ICV Newsletter

June 2009

The Met drives mobile processing forward

The MPS is currently faced with a limited and fairly inflexible estate with increased financial pressure especially around custody suites. As a result investigations can be hampered by a lack of short term holding and processing facilities, which means some detainees can spend a disproportionate amount of time in custody, compared with the often minor offences they have been arrested for. In turn this can lead to an inability to deliver effective patrolling, as staff can be held up in custody waiting to process those they've arrested.

The Mobile Processing Unit (MPU) is a pilot project developed by the MPS Transport Operational Command Unit, in conjunction with Transport for London. Whilst mobile facilities are not a new concept, this approach is

innovative.

The unit's development is based on the fact that many prisoners held in custody are compliant and represent little or no risk.

The vehicle (pictured right) has been custom built in order to design out problems such as accessibility and ligature points that existing vehicles used by forces across England often have. It is also equipped with full custody technology including CCTV, a taped interview room, NSPIS and Livescan.

Principally it is designed to provide equivalent processing facilities to those in custody suites, for compliant and low risk prisoners. This has led to the development of individual seating areas rather than cells. On arrest the decision



as to whether to take a detainee to the MPU or a normal custody suite is based on a suitability check and a fingerprint-scanning device, which ensures that no one unsuitable is taken to the vehicle.

It is anticipated the unit will be used in operations and at major London events, such as Wimbledon and other festivals, to reduce the volume of people taken into custody suites, as well as provide a tailored service to detainees, which is both timely and proportionate to the crime committed.

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Jane Warwick receives Lord Scarman Civic Award



Congratulations to Jane Warwick, Chair of Lambeth ICVP, who has been awarded the prestigious Lord Scarman Civic Award by the London Borough of Lambeth for her outstanding service to the community.

Lambeth civic awards are given to people living in Lambeth who care about their local community and make a positive and selfless contribution to the lives of others. The Lord Scarman Award in particular is given to a person who has contributed to developing, increasing or promoting equality and inclusion in the areas of race,

gender, disability, age, sexuality, religion or belief and achieved or encouraged achievement in challenging circumstances. All nominations are judged by a panel of councillors and independent members of the business and voluntary sectors of the community.

Jane (pictured left, with her award) has lived and worked in Lambeth for most of her life. She worked for Lambeth Social Services from 1973 – 1985 which included dealing with children from very difficult backgrounds. She put many additional unpaid hours into this role, often at weekends. From 1990 – 2003, she was the administrator for the Lambeth Community Police Consultative Group (CPCG). During this time, when the relationship between the police and the community was often very fraught, Jane would act as intermediary between the police and sometimes very angry members of the public and helped to develop better understanding between the two parties. Jane has been involved in custody visiting since the 1980s. She was the panel's administrator until 2007 and was subsequently elected as Vice Chair and is now the Chair.

Even though Jane worked full time, she was also involved in many voluntary activities including the organisation of a knife and a firearms amnesty. From 1996 – 2000, through her work at Corpus Christi Church, Jane became aware of the large number of people with

various mental health issues in Lambeth who had nowhere to go for a chat or a welcome cup of tea. With Canon Charles Walker, Jane rented a space for them to meet in Brixton. This was named 'The Sanctuary' and was a huge success with people coming from far and wide to meet there. Jane has always been keenly interested in mental health issues and she currently sits on a mental health community and safety working group. Jane also sits on board of Lambeth CPCG and is the treasurer for Lambeth Women's Aid.

In accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), the police cannot deal with or interview a vulnerable person in detention unless they have an appropriate adult to ensure that their welfare and rights are upheld whilst in detention. From 2000 to September 2008 Jane organised a team of volunteer appropriate adults, training them according to PACE, and soon Lambeth Social Services made it known that they wished to use the scheme. The MPS has said that the scheme has had a positive and direct influence in helping them deal with vulnerable detainees speedily in interviews and releasing them as soon as possible.

Jane received her award at a ceremony on 1 April 2009 from the then Mayor of Lambeth, Councillor Angela Meader.

Training dates

Initial Training

*Mondays 22 & 29 June from 6-9pm at the MPA
(2-part training)

*Saturday 25 July from 10am - 5pm at the MPA

Please contact your Coordinator if you have not yet completed the initial training.

Diversity training

*Tuesday 30 June from 6 - 9pm at the MPA

This training is to be rolled out cluster by cluster and in the first instance this session will be offered to those ICVs in the central clusters (Camden, Islington, Hackney, Haringey, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, North and South Westminster). Coordinators will be sending information to the relevant panels.



Volunteers' Week

Volunteers' Week is a national celebration of volunteers and volunteering which takes place in the first week of June each year. This year, Volunteers' Week celebrates its 25th anniversary, and as part of that celebration the MPA decided to hold its first ICV summer social event during this week, on 4 June, in London's Living Room at City Hall from 7-9pm.

Volunteers' Week plays a huge part in raising the

profile of the millions of volunteers who regularly contribute to society, while inspiring others to get involved too.

During the week there is a burst of activity as events take place across the country to increase awareness of the UK's volunteers.

The MPA will be handing out awards at the summer social event to publicly thank our volunteers and highlight their contribution to local groups and the wider community. There will be a variety of awards presented for both individuals and panels.

A full round up of the awards and pictures from the event will feature in the next issue of this newsletter, out in August.

FACEBOOK - Become a fan of independent custody visiting

The ICV team is the first at the MPA to utilise the world of social networking sites to publicise its work.

Senior Management at the MPA gave its approval to the proposal in March, and development got underway immediately.

The 'page' will launch during Volunteers' Week and allows members of Facebook to become a 'fan' of the page.

The aim of the page is to raise awareness of the London ICV scheme, particularly with the 18-

30 years age group. It is hoped existing ICVs will become fans and encourage their friends to join them, thus spreading the word about ICVs.

If you who are unaware of what a Facebook page can do, you're not alone. It means that the MPA can upload information about the scheme, along with publicity and pictures for conferences and events, and share this with others on the networking site.

The page for the MPA scheme is entitled 'ICV London' and you can use the search facility to find it.

If you're not a member of Facebook and would like to sign up you can create a profile for free at www.facebook.com

However, if you don't want to sign up please encourage your friends who may already be members of Facebook to become a fan and spread the word about independent custody visiting.

Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook, Inc.

MPA Direct e-zine

The MPA's Stakeholder e-zine is published following the monthly full Authority meetings. This electronic newsletter is designed to inform stakeholders, and those with an interest in the Authority's

work, of all the latest MPA policy decisions and projects.

The e-zine is available on the MPA's website, and is emailed where possible to as many of the MPA's stakeholders and contacts, including

ICVs.

If you have an email address that you have not provided to the ICV scheme, and you'd like to receive this publication by email, please let your Coordinator know.

Safer detention matters

The Custody Directorate hold regular working party meetings, which the ICV Scheme Manager also attends, around safer detention matters.

At a recent meeting they discussed the need for improved pre-release risk assessments for detainees. It was decided that a leaflet would be produced that could be given to all detainees on release, containing the contact details of various support agencies in London. The leaflet is due to go live soon, but there is also a possibility of a further form for referrals being brought out. This would enable the police to pass on the details of a detainee

(with their consent) to outside support agencies who can then engage with them on release.

From the 1 July this year the prison service is launching a new, updated Prisoner Escort Record (PER) form. The form is similar to a detention log and follows a detainee when they are transferred or moved from police stations to court or prisons, by prisoner escort services.

Records of all actions and movements are noted for each prisoner, including risk assessments and property in possession. The new form will contain more details about the detainee and their associated risks, with more staff accountability and will be in use from July.

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Missed visits

The MPA is this year putting together a compendium annual report for the London ICV scheme, and this has meant collating the visiting statistics for all London panels.

The scheme aims for each 24/7 custody suite to be visited once a week, but unfortunately this is not happening in every borough.

In order to try to ensure visits take place we would like to remind all ICVs that if they are unable to carry out a visit, for whatever reason, they should try and make arrangements for cover. Ideally this should be in advance of the visiting period, but where this is not possible, ICVs should try and find cover by calling their colleagues on the panel, or the panel Chair. Coordinators should also be informed if visits are missed.

Also to assist in the allocation of visits for rotas, please let your Coordinator and/or Chair know of dates you are unable to carry out visits so that you are not asked to visit during that time.

Community TV

The MPAs ICV poster is now being displayed on the Community TV service in Richmond.

Sites are located at RFU rugby stores, Richmond College, Twickenham Station, Richmond Civic Centre, Teddington Memorial Hospital walk in centre, Hampton open air pool, Richmond Station, Marks and Spencer stores in Richmond and Kew Retail Park, and Sheen Lane Centre. The MPA is looking into other sites that operate a similar service across London with further roll out in the coming months.

Mental health provision report

In late 2007 Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, the Rt Hon Jack Straw, commissioned the Rt Hon Lord Bradley to review the current provisions for those with mental health problems and learning difficulties in the criminal justice system. The long awaited report has now been released and can be found at

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_098694

The Department of Health website says 'This independent review was commissioned to examine the extent to which offenders with mental health problems or learning disabilities could, in appropriate cases, be diverted from prison to other services and the barriers to such diversion.

'The review has kept a broad remit and incorporated the range of mental health problems and learning disabilities across the whole of the criminal justice system, and made recommendations to government including the organisation of effective liaison and diversion arrangements and the services needed to support them.'

It has been welcomed by Justice Minister David Hanson who said "The government recognises the need for reforms on this area, and accepts the direction set out in Lord Bradley's Report.... the government will establish a Health and Criminal Justice National Programme Board, bringing together the relevant departments covering health, social care and criminal justice, for children and adults. The board's first priority will be to consider Lord Bradley's recommendations in detail and to develop a national delivery plan by October 2009."

