



**MPA**

**Metropolitan Police Authority**

**WALTHAM FOREST  
INDEPENDENT  
CUSTODY VISITORS  
PANEL**

**INTERIM  
ANNUAL REPORT  
APRIL-DECEMBER 2007**



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# **INTRODUCTION**

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

This (interim) report covers the period from 01/04/07 to 31/12/07.

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

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

The Metropolitan Police Authority (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.

Prospective 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.

# **AIMS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Waltham Forest panel currently schedules 1 visit per week to Chingford Police Station. This is the minimum requirement that the MPA sets panels as a target. However, due to issues around commitment and membership levels this target has not been met, but recently with the assistance of ICVs from the Enfield panel, and ongoing recruitment, the level of visiting is improving.

The Waltham Forest Panel met throughout 2007 every 6 weeks, from 2008 however this is to change to meeting every 2 months, in an attempt to reduce the burden on visitors and thus boost attendance at meetings. Meetings are held 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 2007 when Inspector Pippa Mills became Custody Manager at Chingford. A positive working relationship between Inspector Mills and the panel developed, and it is hoped that this relationship with the police will continue to be maintained when the new Custody Inspector, Lisa Butterfield joins Waltham Forest Borough in early 2008. Visit reports continue to emphasise the good work and attitude of the custody staff at Chingford towards the ICVs during their visits.

# **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 2007 the Waltham Forest panel had 10 accredited members.

Name	Appointed
Gurparshad Bance	2000
Barry Brown	2004
Syed Iqbal	1998
Khaliq Mian	2000
Elaine Mahbeer (Leave of absence until 01/09/08)	2000
Willard McCarty (Leave of absence until 01/08/08)	2000
Kim Munford-Johnson	2002

## **The Following Member(s) Joined During 2007**

Mohammed A Butt	2007
Jennifer Paul-Christian	2007
Dolores Dyett	2007

## **The Following Members Resigned/De-accredited During 2007**

Michelle Edwards	2007
Mark Perry	2004
Vince Scantlebury	2001

The panel comprises of 6 men and 4 women with varying diversity in age and ethnicity.

## **Recruitment**

There are currently 2 applicants awaiting interview, and 5 applicants who were recently successful at interview going through the vetting and accreditation process.

Should all applicants be successful and accredited there will be an improved gender balance for the panel. This number of visitors is not quite sufficient, and therefore recruitment will continue in to the early Summer of 2008 to ensure the panel has enough committed members to carry out its work.

# **VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS**

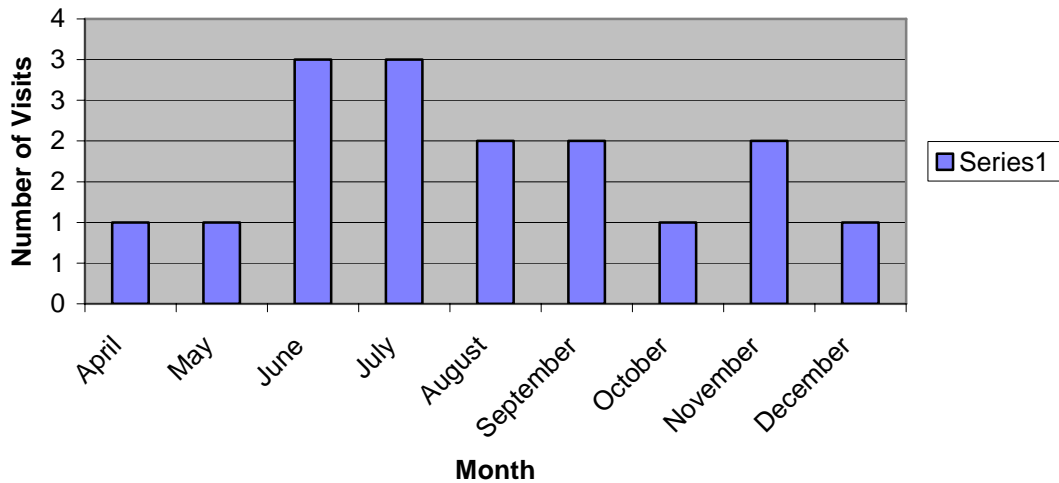
The panel have made some visits to Walthamstow station (overflow facility), as well as Chingford, when the need has arisen for Chingford to close temporarily. Good standards of care have been noted at both stations, with very few issues to note and the relationship with custody staff has continued to be very positive. ICVs have been happy with the way in which jailors 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.

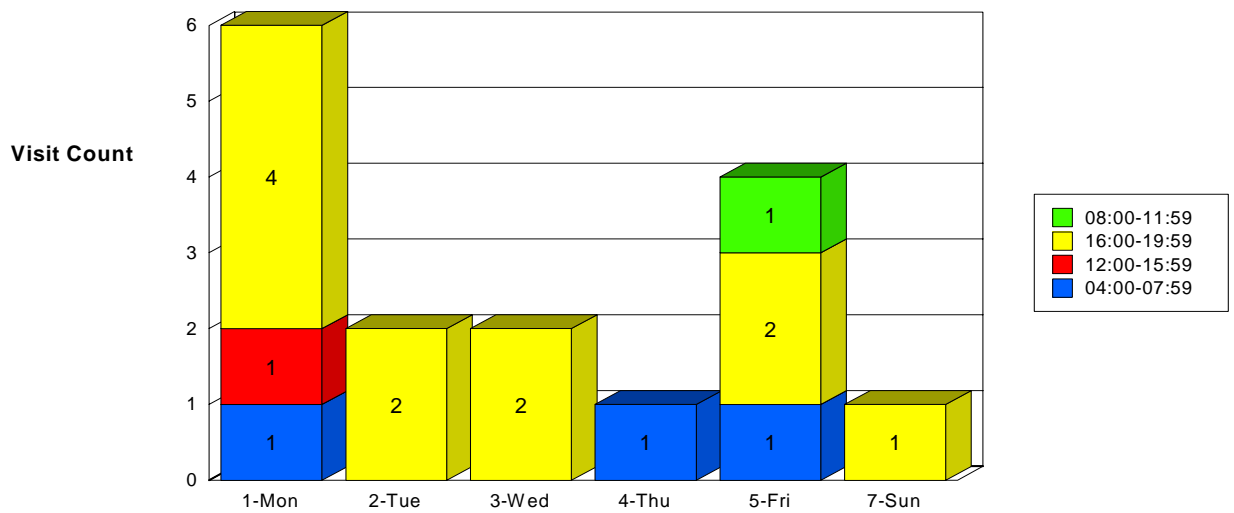
# DATA FROM PANEL VISITS

Please see attached charts for performance data on visits carried out by the panel from April to December 2007.

### Visits April-December 2007



### Times and Days of Visits April – December 2007



# PLANS FOR 2008

## Targets:

- A minimum of 1 visit per week to Chingford Police Station.
- To record the diversity of Waltham Forest's panel membership in comparison with the make-up of the borough, and how the panel reflects or not, the community it represents.
- To increase panel membership to a minimum of 12 volunteers and maintain this level of membership throughout the year to improve stability.