



MPA

Metropolitan Police Authority

**BARNET
INDEPENDENT
CUSTODY VISITING
PANEL**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2008**



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the annual report of the Barnet Independent Custody Visitors 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 Barnet ICV Panel and:

- Evaluate the panel's performance
- 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 in each borough into one London scheme. The scheme has the full support and cooperation of the Commissioner and the Borough Commander for Barnet, 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 Barnet panel currently makes two scheduled visits per week to Colindale Police Station, which is above the minimum requirement of one visit per week per 24/7 custody suite, that the MPA sets panels as a target. Therefore, visiting targets for the borough have been exceeded by around 60%.

Barnet Panel meetings have been held every month at Colindale Police Station, and are well attended by its members and the police. The venue continues to be most satisfactory, and the panel wish to thank the Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Stephen Kavanagh for allowing it to meet there.

The Borough Commander takes a personal interest in the affairs of the Panel, and the Deputy Borough Commander is also always available to the Chair for consultation, should the need arise.

The panel's police liaison officer, Sergeant Peter White, continues to assist the panel in its work, and thanks go to Sgt White for his cooperation and help in investigating any concerns and observations, and in answering questions at panel meetings.

The Chair has continued to represent the panel at meetings of the Barnet Community and Police Consultative Committee (CPCC), and is also a member of the CPCC Executive. He is also involved with the Colindale Street Duties Team, and gives regular presentations to new police officers on the work of ICVs. The Chair and Vice Chair have also represented the panel meeting of the London ICV Chairs and at Cluster meetings.

The panel aimed to recruit and maintain a membership with a minimum level of 12 in 2008. This was achieved until late autumn when one member transferred to Enfield borough. However, the MPA has deemed that panels with just one police station only require a membership of nine ICVs, as this allows for 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 Barnet panel, this was increased over the year and became much more balanced in terms of gender. However, future recruitment could focus on the age groups 18 to 34 to improve the diversity in the panel's age make up. The MPA also carried out a diversity monitoring exercise in 2008 and is currently processing this data to assist panels and the scheme as a whole understand their diversity as a group.

Despite many panel members having busy home and professional lives, with some also maintaining other community roles, attendance at meetings and visit performance has been consistently good throughout the year.

CHAIR'S REPORT

I would like to thank all panel members who have maintained the level of visiting during the year. Their cooperation and sense of duty has been very much appreciated by the MPA, Barnet borough police management and I.

I would like to thank all panel members for the level of support they have provided me, as Chair, with special thanks to the Vice-Chair John Bailey who was elected at the AGM.

Thanks also go to all police custody staff, whose cooperation often in difficult circumstances, has been of great value to the panel. Special thanks to Inspectors Jason Moseley and Jason Wu, and to our police liaison officer Sergeant Peter White for his help and valued assistance.

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. Our special thanks also go to our coordinator Emma Nuttall, as without her assistance we could not function as well as we do.

Gerry Kirby
Barnet ICVP Chair
January 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.

At the end of 2008 the Barnet panel had 11 accredited members.

Name	Appointed
Allen Williams	1998
Evelyn Kennedy	1998
Gerry Kirby – Chair	2003
John Bailey – Vice Chair	2004
Minnette Brown	2004
Mohammed Youssef	2006
Ocho Agwu	2006
Ellen Woodhouse	2007

The following member(s) joined

Martin Mikula	2008
Janet Renton	2008
Pamela Littman	2008
George Papadopoulos	2008

The following members transferred/resigned/de-accredited

Henry Cohen (transfer to Enfield)	2005
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The following members resigned/de-accredited

Jack Galaun	2004
Michael Christie	2004
Martin Mikula	2008

Diversity

The panel comprises of six men and five women with varying diversity in age and ethnicity. Approximately just under 25% of the panel are non-white which is close to the borough's own make-up of 30% according to the most recent 2007 Data Management and Analysis Group (DMAG) statistics from the Greater London Authority (GLA) for 2007. The gender breakdown is weighted slightly to the male whereas the general population of Barnet is of a greater female proportion by 4%.

Recruitment

With success over 2008 in recruitment, the panel is now regarded as full and a waiting list will operate for any future applications, to be considered if the need for new members arises.

VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

Along with regular visits to Colindale Police Station, the panel have also made some visits to Whetstone custody suite, as this has been used in recent months for Operation Safeguard¹. Good standards of care have been noted at both stations and particularly at Whetstone, where police have to staff the small and aged facility on an overtime basis.

There have been few major concerns to the panel this year. The relationship with the custody staff has continued to be positive and the panel are happy with the way in which jailors have explained the ICV role to detainees.

It has been rare for there to be a delay in entering the custody suite, even though visits are often 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 Colindale.

¹ Operation Safeguard is the way the Home Office address the shortage of prison spaces, by housing prisoners in spare police cells. The Met provided up to 50 cells per night to the Home Office on a full cost recovery basis until 30 October 2008.

DATA FROM PANEL VISITS

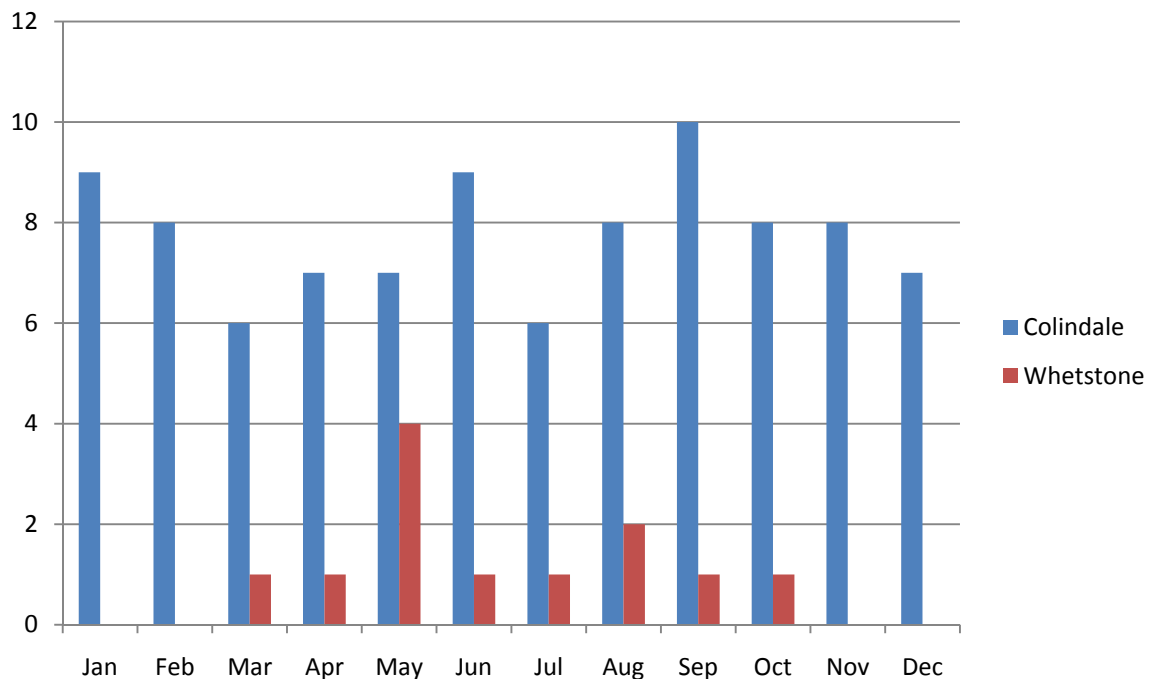
Visit Figures from 1 January to 31 December 2008

1. Number of visits

Station	Annual no. of visits	% of Annual Target*
Colindale	93	179%
Whetstone	12	100%
Total	105	N/A

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

Number of visits to Barnet stations by month



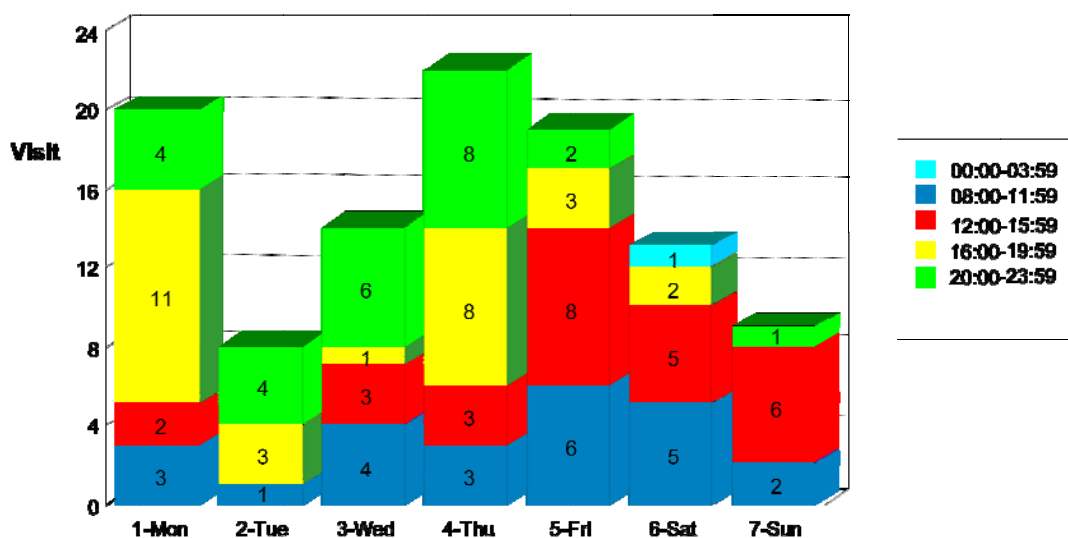
2. Time of visits

Time period	Annual no.	% of all visits
0000 – 0359 hrs	1	<1%
0400 – 0759 hrs	0	0%
0800 – 1159 hrs	24	23%
1200 – 1559 hrs	27	26%
1600 – 1959 hrs	28	27%
2000 – 2359 hrs	25	24%
Total	105	100%

3. Days visits took place

Day	Annual no.	% of all visits
Monday	20	19%
Tuesday	8	8%
Wednesday	14	13%
Thursday	22	21%
Friday	19	18%
Saturday	13	12%
Sunday	9	9%
Total	105	100%

Time and days visits took place



4. Total number of detainees in custody during visits

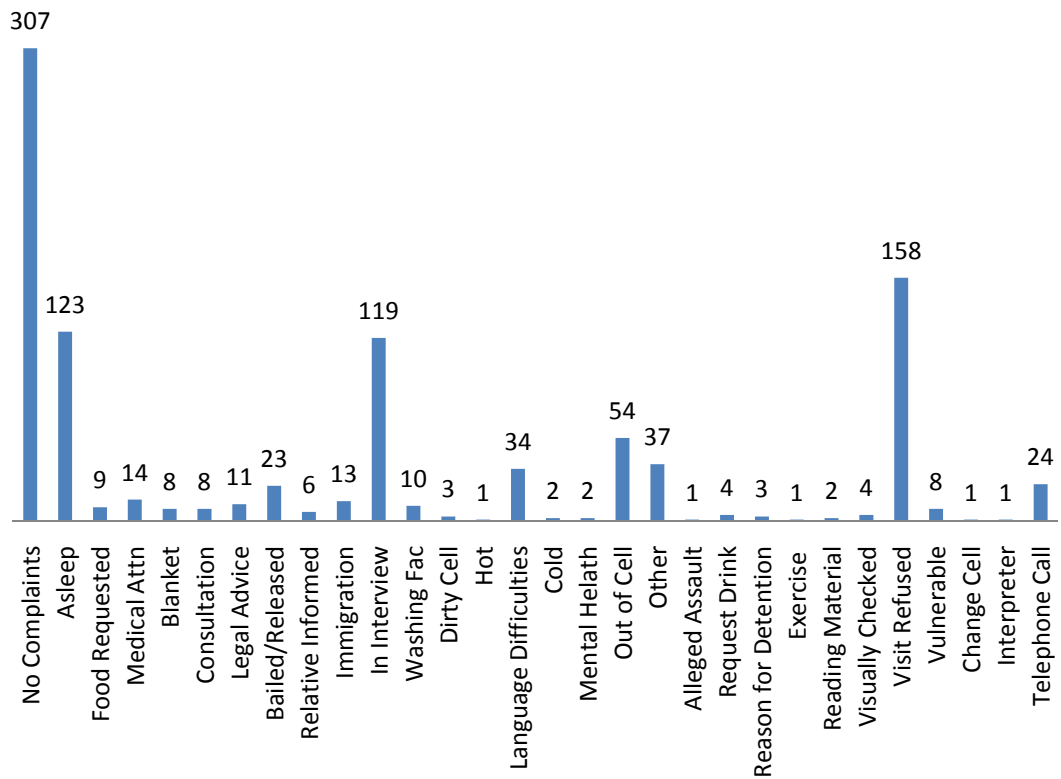
No. held in custody during visits January – December 2008	991
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5. Details of Visits

Reason Detainee was seen or not	Annual no.	% of all DPs*
Detainees seen	506	51%
Detainees who refused to be seen	158	16%
Detainees not seen for other reasons	327	33%
Total	991	100%

*% of all DPs in custody at time of visit

Issues raised during interviews with detainees (only one issue recorded per detainee)



6. Overall detainee total held in police custody in Barnet

No. held January – December 2008 in Barnet	9858
No. held in custody during independent custody visits - 2008	991
% of total custody figure in detention during ICV visits - 2008	10%

PLANS FOR THE FORTHCOMING **YEAR 2009**

Targets:

- A minimum of one visit per week to Colindale Police Station.
- Carry out visits to Whetstone Station as and 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 Committee.
- To raise the profile of the panel and scheme across the borough through wider circulation of the annual report and publicity materials.