



Metropolitan Police Authority

ENFIELD INDEPENDENT CUSTODY VISITING PANEL

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the annual report of the Enfield 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 Enfield 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 by the boroughs into one London scheme. The scheme has the full support and cooperation of the Commissioner and the Borough Commander for Enfield, 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 Enfield panel currently schedules two visits per week to Edmonton 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%.

During 2008 Enfield Panel met every six weeks at Enfield Civic Centre, but recently decided to alter this to an eight weekly basis beginning in 2009. The meetings throughout 2008 were well attended by panel members and the police, and the venue continues to be most satisfactory.

The Borough Commander, Chief Superintendent Adrian Hanstock met with panel in 2008 and discussed vision for policing in Enfield. The Borough Commander also spoke about the policing plan for Enfield which contains targets to reduce youth violence and the impact on youths as victims, reducing crime and disorder, and of course tackling the issues of Enfield residents, in particular through Safer Neighbourhood Teams. He said that this should, and will, be done in partnership with the local authority and other stakeholders.

The panel's police liaison officer, Inspector Gary Dutton, continued to assist the panel in its work, and the panel wishes to thank Inspector Dutton for his cooperation and help in investigating any concerns and observations, and in answering questions at panel meetings in a comprehensive and timely manner.

The panel set out to achieve and maintain a membership level of 12 in 2008 but, despite a large round of interviews in the spring and autumn of 2008, only three new members were recruited in the year. Unfortunately along with recruitment the panel also lost four visitors through resignation, this was slightly alleviated by the transfer of one visitor from Barnet to Enfield panel, towards the end of the year.

Membership now stands at 11 again, and the MPA has now deemed that panels with just one police station only require a membership of nine ICVs, as 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 Enfield panel, this was slightly increased over the year and became more balanced in terms of gender. However, future recruitment could focus on age groups under 40 to improve the diversity of the panel's age make up. The MPA itself also carried out a diversity monitoring exercise in 2008 and is currently processing this data to assist panels and the scheme as a whole to understand their diversity as a group.

Many panel members have busy home and professional lives, and some also maintain other community roles as well as that as an ICV. Nevertheless, attendance at meetings and visit performance has been consistently good.

CHAIR'S REPORT

This 2008 report reflects the continuing and commendable contributions made by the volunteers of the Enfield ICV panel. Within the panel there is a wealth of experience and this assists greatly in bringing in and inducting new panel members. The stability in visitor numbers over the year has meant that we have achieved high levels of visiting.

I hope the achievements noted in this report will reassure the local community about the standard of care being given in police custody suites in Enfield and that as an independent group we are checking on the welfare of people held there.

As Chair I have attended and represented the panel at a local level on Gold Groups (critical/emergency incident teams in the Met), as well as being invited to observe operations such as knife arches being used at Edmonton railway station as part of Operation Blunt. At a pan-London level I have attended meetings at the MPA along with the Vice-Chair, Peter Waterhouse. These were Chairs and Vice-Chairs meetings, cluster meetings and trainings.

As both a community member and as the ICV panel Chair I have also sat on the following panels in the borough; Independent Advisory Group and the Stop and Search Scrutiny Panel, and this helps in building up a positive profile of the ICV panel in Enfield and relationship with the local police.

The panel have made achievements this year and this would not be the case without the selfless support and commitment of the panel volunteers who give so generously of their time and talent. I would also like to thank Inspector Gary Dutton of Enfield MPS for the contributions and feedback he has provided in order to maintain good relations between the panel and the police, and also the MPA in helping and supporting the panel in its work.

I would also like to acknowledge Emma Nuttall for executing her role so efficiently and has been such an asset to our Panel. From myself, Peter Waterhouse (Vice Chair) and other panel members, thank you.

Caroline B Berry BA (Hons)
Enfield ICVP Chair

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.

In 2007 the Enfield panel had 11 accredited members, and the level of membership remained the same in 2008.

| Name | Appointed |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Caroline Berry (Chair) | 1994 |
| Leo Duberry | 1999 |
| Alice Evans | 1999 |
| Lorna Logan | 1999 |
| Peter Waterhouse (Vice-Chair) | 2000 |
| Elizabeth Akinlade | 2005 |
| Janet Brown | 2005 |

The following member(s) joined

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Henry Cohen (transfer from Barnet) | 2005 |
| Dennis Johnson | 2008 |
| Orla Roberts | 2008 |
| Juliette Johnson | 2008 |

The following members resigned/de-accredited

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Gladys Maimbolwa | 2003 |
| Waleke Munthali | 2005 |
| Sandra Baah | 2007 |
| Norma Leon | 2007 |

The panel now comprises of four men and seven women with varying diversity in age and ethnicity. This equals around a 37% make up of male volunteers which does not reflect the borough's own population make up of 48% males¹. In terms of ethnicity the panel draws around 64% of its members from non-white communities, this is a massive difference from the borough's projected ethnicity breakdown for 2007 of a 70% white population.

Recruitment

With some success over 2008 in recruitment, and changes to the minimum level of membership to nine, the panel is now regarded as full and a waiting list will operate for any future applications to be considered if a need arises.

¹ From the projected figures for 2007 from Data Management and Analysis Group based in the Greater London Authority. They in turn originate from Office of National Statistics data. These projections have been drawn because the original 2001 census data are so out of date.

VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS

As well as Edmonton police station, the panel have also made some visits to Enfield custody suite, as this has been used in recent months for Operation Safeguard² and good standards of care have been noted at both stations.

There have been few major concerns this year. The relationship with the custody staff on the whole has continued to be positive and the panel are happy with the way in which staff have explained the ICV role to detainees. Issues that have arisen and have been addressed, include the response to ICVs by new staff to custody and those staff working elsewhere within the station.

It has been rare for there to be a delay in entering the custody suite, even though visits are often at busy times, and it is a source of satisfaction to the panel that there have been few complaints, if any, from detainees on how they are treated in Enfield and Edmonton stations.

Some ICVs in Enfield have also assisted with visits in other boroughs where membership levels were not sufficient to carry out the required number of visits. Peter Waterhouse has assisted in Kensington and Chelsea borough, and also in Waltham Forest borough, along with Alice Evans, Lorna Logan, Janet Brown and Caroline Berry.

² 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 up until 30 October 2008.

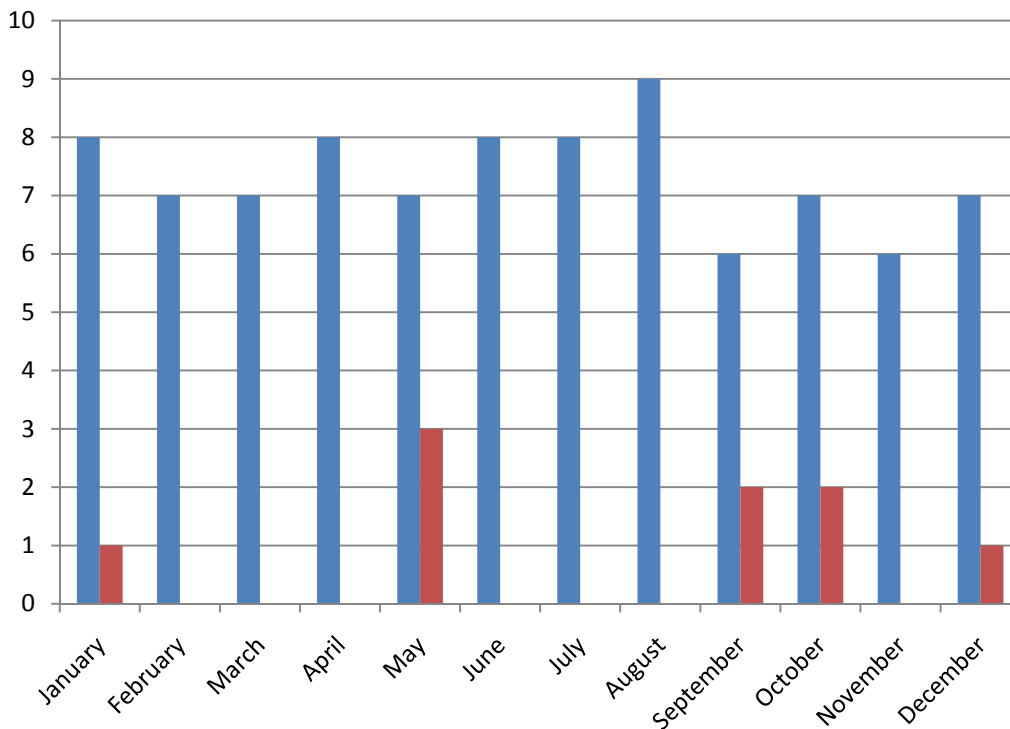
DATA FROM PANEL VISITS

Visit figures for 2008

1. Number of visits

| Station | Annual no. of visits | % of Annual Target* |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Edmonton | 88 | 169% |
| Enfield | 9 | 75% |
| Total | 97 | N/A |

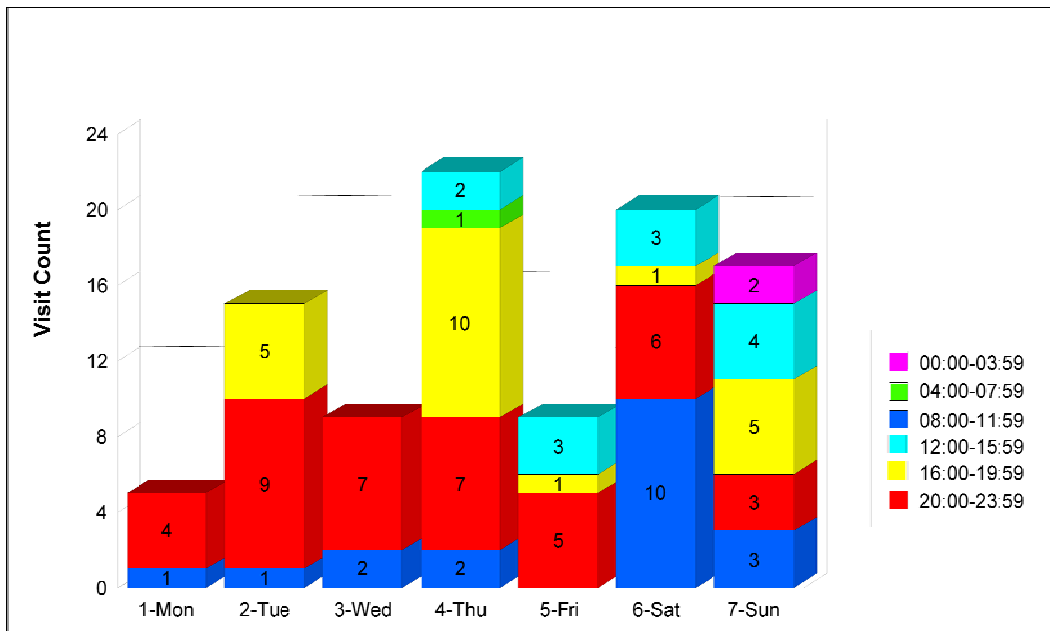
*MPA Annual Target is 52 visits per 24/7-custody suite and one per month to overflow sites.



2. Time and day of visits

| Time period | Annual no. | % of all visits |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| 0000 – 0359 hrs | 2 | 2 |
| 0400 – 0759 hrs | 1 | 1 |
| 0800 – 1159 hrs | 19 | 19.5 |
| 1200 – 1559 hrs | 12 | 12.5 |
| 1600 – 1959 hrs | 22 | 23 |
| 2000 – 2359 hrs | 41 | 42 |
| Total | 97 | 100% |

| Day | Annual no. | % of all visits |
|--------------|------------|-----------------|
| Monday | 5 | 5 |
| Tuesday | 15 | 16 |
| Wednesday | 9 | 9.5 |
| Thursday | 22 | 23 |
| Friday | 9 | 9.5 |
| Saturday | 20 | 21 |
| Sunday | 17 | 16 |
| Total | 97 | 100% |



3. Total number of detainees in custody during visits

| | |
|--|------------|
| No. held in custody during visits January – December 2008 | 777 |
|--|------------|

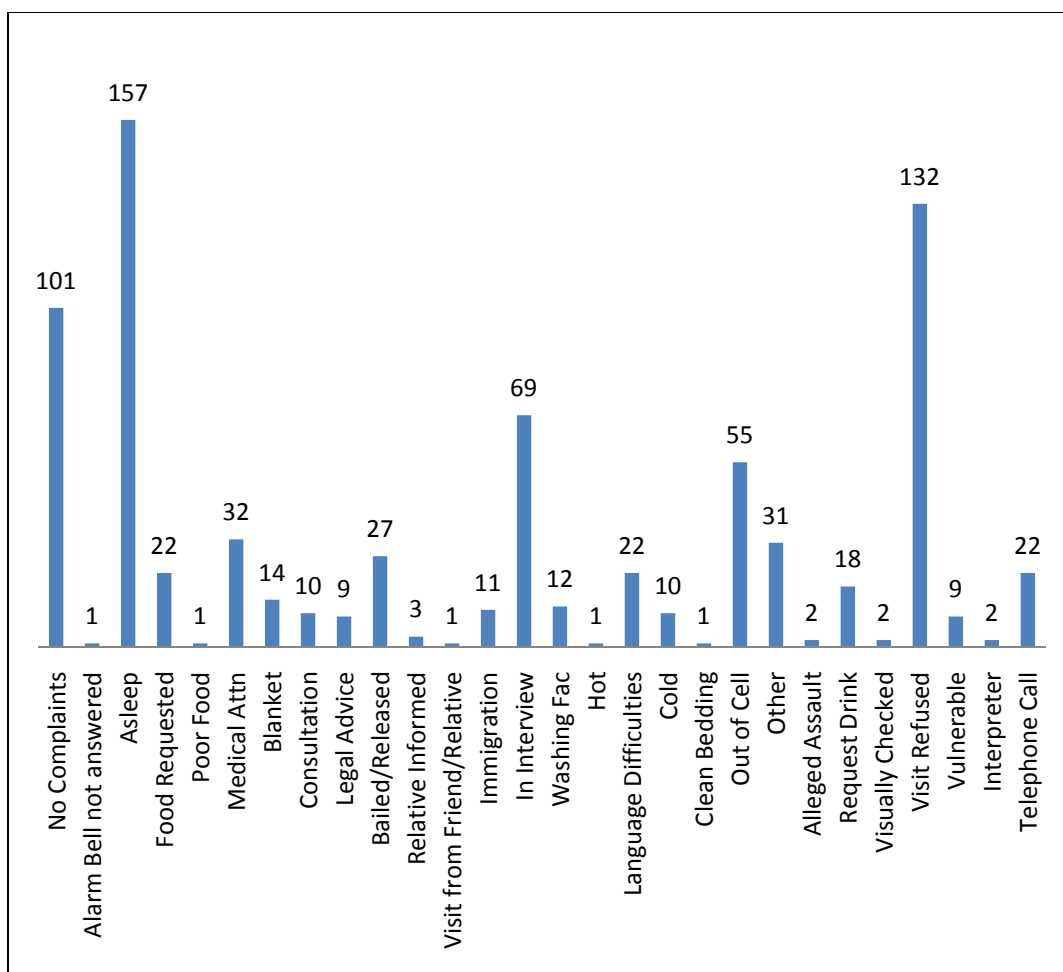
4. Details of visits

| Reason Detainee was seen or not | Annual no. | % of all DPs* |
|--------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Detainees seen | 325 | 42% |
| Detainees who refused to be seen | 132 | 17% |
| Detainees not seen for other reasons | 320 | 41% |
| Total | 777 | 100% |

*% of all DPs in custody at time of visit

Issues raised

(one issue or situation recorded for each detainee held in custody during ICV visits)



5. Overall detainee total held in police custody in Barnet

| | |
|--|-------------|
| No. held January – December 2008 in Enfield | 7804 |
| No. held in custody during independent custody visits - 2008 | 777 |
| % of total custody figure in detention during ICV visits - 2008 | 9.9% |

PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Targets:

- A minimum of one visit per week to Edmonton Police Station.
- A weekly visit to Enfield 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.