

The logo for the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) is displayed in white serif font on a dark green background. The letters 'M', 'P', and 'A' are large and bold, with the 'P' being particularly prominent.

METROPOLITAN POLICE AUTHORITY

# Barnet Independent Custody Visitors Panel

## ANNUAL REPORT 2010

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# **INTRODUCTION**

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

This report covers the period from 01/01/10 to 31/12/10.

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 2011.

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 unannounced 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, however, as the requirement is only one visit per week, for the purpose of this report, it shall be recorded as the visit level achieved is 100%.

Barnet Panel meetings were held officially during 2010 every quarter at Colindale Police Station, and were well attended by its members and the police, this frequency has reduced from the meeting frequency in 2009 due to a change in resource allocation at the MPA. However, the panel had an unofficial meeting with the police in the interim period between the official meetings, which was not attended by the MPA.

The Chair has continued to represent the panel by giving regular presentations to new police officers in the borough, on the work of ICVs. The Chair and Vice Chair have also represented the panel at meetings of the London ICV Chairs.

The panel aimed to maintain its 2009 membership level, with a minimum level of nine as stipulated by the MPA and this was achieved, with the panel having 10 members.

Regarding the diversity of Barnet panel, this has slipped to a male/female imbalance, and it is hoped that future recruitment will attract more women as well as the age groups 18 to 34 to improve the diversity in the panel's age make up.

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 Barnet custody visitors 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 service and myself. I would also like to thank them for the level of support they have provided me, as Chairman, with special thanks to the Vice-Chairman John Bailey for all his advice and assistance to me during the year.

Thanks also go to the custody staff at Colindale, whose cooperation often in difficult circumstances, has been of great value to the panel. I would like to thank our Custody Manager Inspector Kath O'Brien for all her help and assistance during the year. Special thanks also go to our police liaison officer Sergeant Peter White for his help and valued assistance during the year and his attendance at our meetings.

The panel and I would like to thank the MPA for overseeing the ICV Scheme and for providing the funds and training, so that we can perform our community role. Our special thanks must go to our new coordinator Annette Dhillon, for all her help and assistance during the year. We would also like to thank Borough Commander Chief Superintendent Neil Basu for allowing us to use Colindale for our meetings. My thanks also to Superintendent Neil Seabridge for his assistance during the year.

**Gerry Kirby**  
**Barnet ICVP Chair**  
**December 2010**

# **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 race, religion, gender, sexuality, ability and age on the panel.

At the end of 2010 the Barnet panel had ten accredited members.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
Allen Williams	1998
Evelyn Kennedy	1998
Gerry Kirby – Chair	2003
John Bailey – Vice Chair	2004
Minnette Brown	2004
Mohammed Youssef	2006
Ocho Agwu	2006
Janet Renton	2008
George Papadopoulos	2008
Ibrahim Incedal	2008

There were no resignations from the Barnet panel in 2010.

## **Diversity**

The panel comprises of seven men and three women with varying diversity in age and ethnicity. One third of the panel are non-white which narrowly exceeds 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 towards male with less than a third of the panel being female. The general population of Barnet is of a greater female proportion by 4% so this fails to meet this proportion by some way.

## **Recruitment**

The MPA stipulates a panel that visit one custody suite should have nine member's, the Barnet panel has 10 and as such is now regarded as full and has a waiting list of new applicants in operation.

# **VISITS TO POLICE STATIONS**

Barnet police station was visited once during 2010 while it was used as an overflow station.

There have been few major concerns to the panel this year. The relationship with the custody staff has continued to be positive. The panel used self introduction in 2009 and 2010 as part of an MPA pilot study and now this is being spread across all panels in London they are happy to continue with this due to its effectiveness in increasing visit uptake among detainees.

It has been rare, although it has happened on occasion, 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.

# DATA FROM PANEL VISITS

Visit statistics covering 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010

## 1. Number of visits

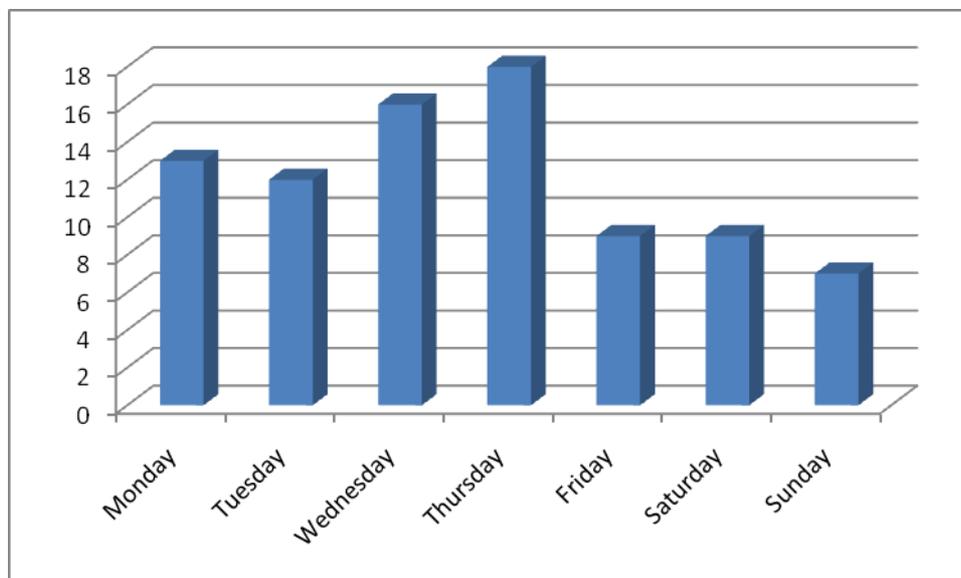
Station	Annual no. of visits	% of Annual Target*
<b>Colindale</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Barnet</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

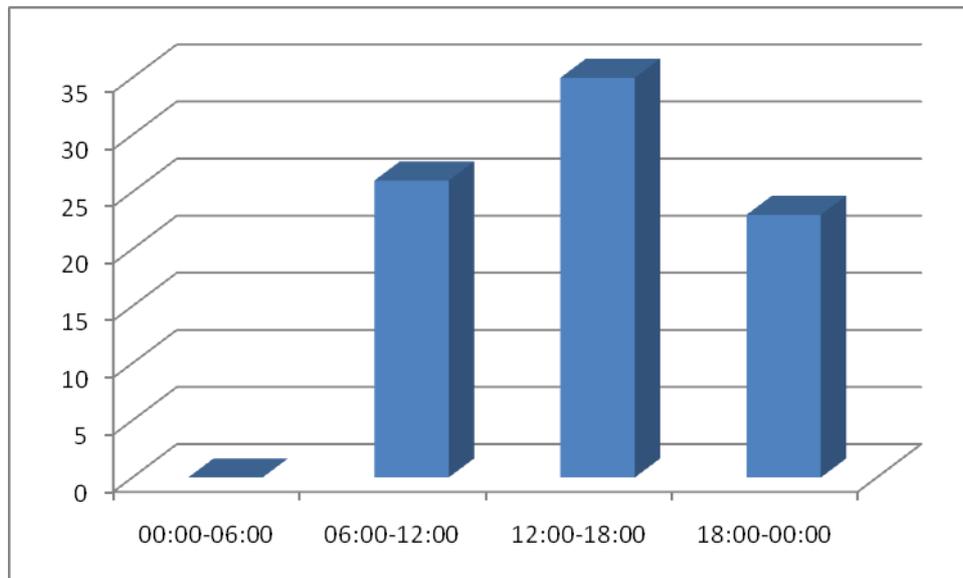
During 2010 the panel made 83 visits to Colindale and one to Barnet, so in total there were 84 visits. This is above the one visit per week stipulated by the MPA and therefore the panel have exceeded their target, however, for the purposes of this report the visit level achieved has been recorded as 100%.

## 2. Time and days of visits

The graph below shows the days that visits were carried out on and as it shows visits were spread fairly evenly throughout the week, however, there were fewer visits on Fridays and at the weekend.

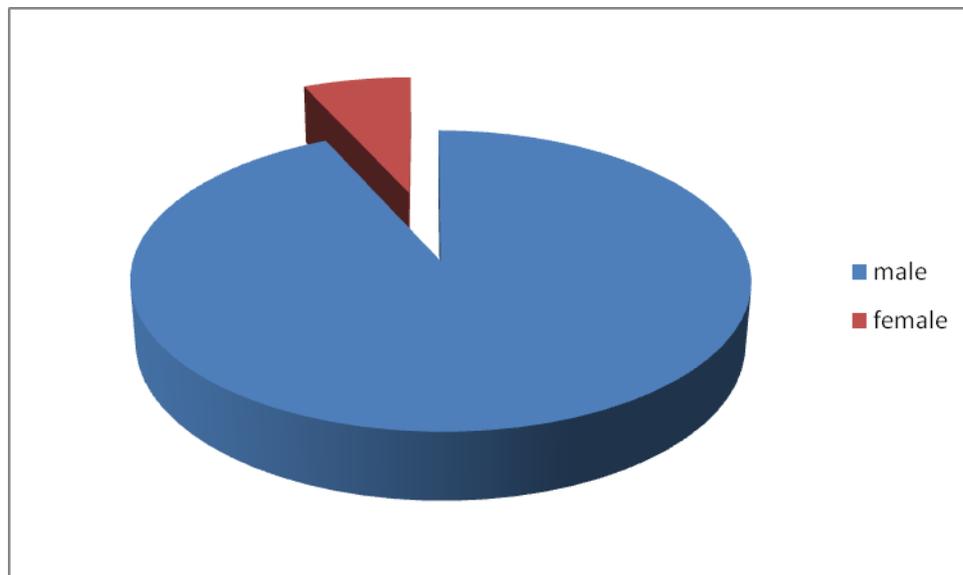


The graph below shows the times periods throughout the day that visits were mainly carried out in. As can be seen the most popular time for visits was in the afternoon and very early evening, there were no visits carried out in anti-social hours.

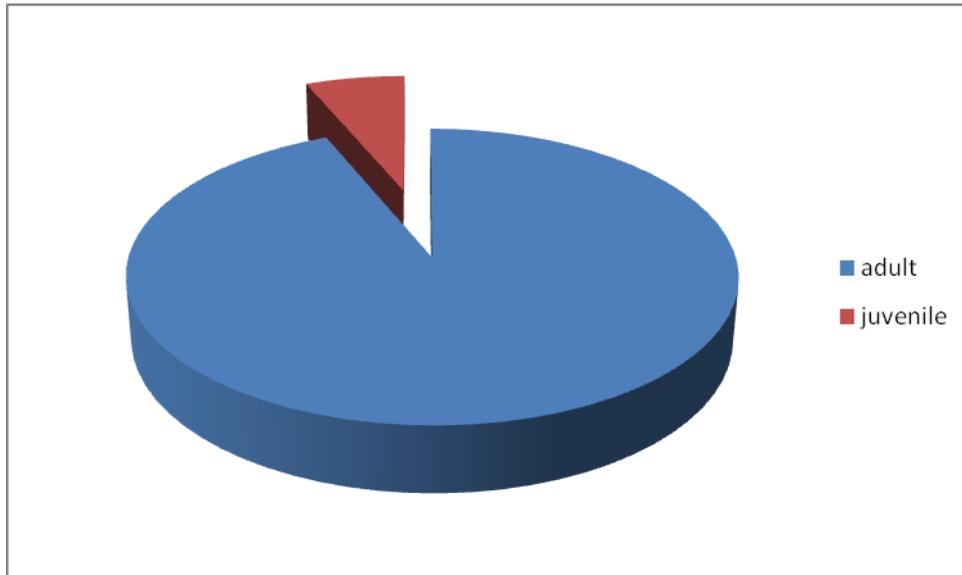


### 3. Demographics of detainees

The pie chart below shows the gender of those detained in Barnet. As it shows, most of those detained in police custody in Barnet were male.

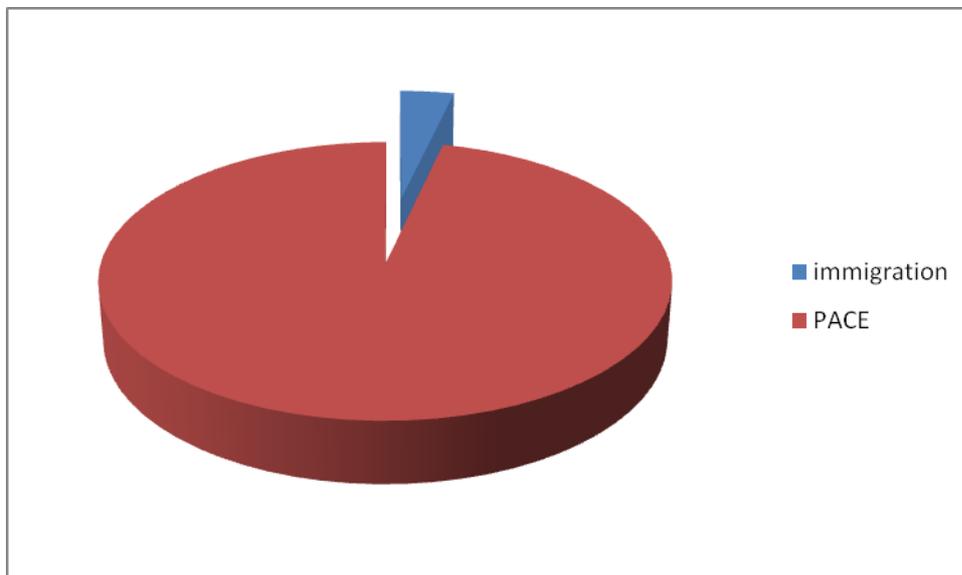


The pie chart below shows the ages of those being detained. As can be seen, the vast majority were adult (over 18).



#### 4. Categories of detainees

The pie chart below shows the percentages of the categories of people held in police custody in the Borough of Barnet. As can be seen the vast majority were held under PACE, with only a small number of immigration detainees.



## **5. Issues raised during visits**

When visitors speak to detainees they record any concerns that detainees raise with them.

Visitors do not wake detainees if they are asleep, however they will usually check through the wicket in the door to check that all looks well in the cell. Visitors check concerns raised by detainees against their custody record (where permission has been gained from the detainee to do so), and will bring matters to the attention of the police if they remain concerned about any aspect of the detainee's treatment or welfare. Most minor concerns can be resolved during the visit and only more major or more complicated concerns are discussed at a meeting of the whole panel. Requests such as those mentioned above have often not been denied, more so the detainees did not know they could ask, or they may not have been present when other needs were being offered such as food and blankets etc. In raising these concerns on behalf of detainees, their questions, queries and requests are often met.

# **PLANS FOR THE FORTHCOMING** **YEAR 2011**

## Targets:

- A minimum of one visit per week to Colindale Police Station (as stipulated by the MPA).
- Carry out visits to Barnet Station as and when in use.
- To maintain panel membership at nine (as stipulated by the MPA).
- To improve links and feedback between the panel and the local Community Engagement Group.
- To raise the profile of the panel and scheme across the borough through wider circulation of the annual report and publicity materials.