

Welcome to the spring edition of the INQUEST e-newsletter. This is a print version provided for those who may not have easy access to the email edition; however, more details and links can be accessed via INQUEST's website [www.inquest.org.uk](http://www.inquest.org.uk) where you can also sign up for the email edition.

## NEWS

- INQUEST pays tribute to passionate campaigner
- Counter Terrorism Bill threat to inquests
- INQUEST launches joint campaign on restraint of children with the NSPCC & CRAE

## CASES

- Inquests into deaths of four women in prison show need for urgent reform
- Inquest into the death of 16 year old Gareth Price reveals multiple failings by statutory agencies
- CPS announces no prosecutions in restraint related cases of Frank Ogboru and Victor Massey.

## POLICY

- Review of the Forum for Preventing Deaths in Custody
- Coroners Bill announced in draft legislative programme

## STATISTICS

- Deaths in custody so far this year

## ABOUT INQUEST

- Chickenshed Theatre Company fundraising benefit for INQUEST
- First Gilly Mundy Memorial Debate a huge success
- Staff Changes

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## NEWS

- **INQUEST pays tribute to passionate campaigner**  
INQUEST staff are very sad at news of the death of Pauline Campbell. We advised and supported Pauline after her 18 year old daughter Sarah died in Styal prison in January 2003 and through the long and difficult investigation and inquest process. Her grief and anger at the horrendous circumstances in which her daughter died and the insensitive way she, as a bereaved parent, was treated after the death motivated her tireless campaigning to expose the continuing death toll in women's prisons.

Pauline was found dead close to her daughter's grave in Oakhills Cemetery, Cheshire on 15 May 2008.

Pauline was committed not just to campaigning but also to helping INQUEST's work in supporting bereaved families. Pauline was one of a number of bereaved parents who turned their own personal loss into a collective response to injustice and state neglect. Details of the funeral arrangements are currently being arranged and will be available via the [tribute page on the INQUEST website](#).

- **Counter Terrorism Bill threat to open inquests**

Earlier this year the government unveiled shocking new measures which could lead to some of the most contentious death in custody inquests taking place at least partially in secret, with government appointed coroners and appointed counsel overseeing the proceedings. This would exclude bereaved families, their legal representatives and the public at large from the process. The measures were set out in the [Counter Terrorism Bill 2008](#) and introduced without any consultation.

INQUEST is strongly opposed to the proposals which we believe to be in breach of article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights and have been campaigning, undertaking press work, lobbying MPs and briefing other organisations to press for these proposals to be removed from the Bill. A copy of our latest briefing on the proposals can [be found here](#).

- **INQUEST launches joint campaign on restraint with NSPCC & CRAE**

In March INQUEST held a joint parliamentary meeting with the [NSPCC](#) and [CRAE](#) to launch a campaign to abolish the use of pain compliance restraint techniques on children across the secure estate and to ensure restraint is only ever used as a last resort. Details of the campaign can be found [here](#). The meeting attracted cross party parliamentary support and heard moving testimonies from the mothers of Gareth Myatt and Adam Rickwood, two children who died following being restrained in Secure Training Centres in 2004.

In April the government finally published their [response to the coroner's recommendations](#) following the inquests into Adam and Gareth's deaths. INQUEST believes much of the government's response is disingenuous given they have specifically extended the circumstances in which children can be lawfully restrained in the last year. This point was raised by the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights who [issued a critical report](#) in March. In February a [judgment in a judicial review](#) public interest test case that INQUEST had supported found that the decision making prior to the government introducing the 2007 STC rule change on restraint was unlawful.

- **Inquests into deaths of four women in prison show need for urgent reform**

The inquests into the deaths of four women in prison opened on Monday 7 April. The women were Vicky Robinson, aged 26, who died in February 2005 in HMP New Hall; Sheena Kotecha, aged 22, who died in April 2004 in HMP Brockhill; Lisa Woodhall, aged 28, who died in October 2006 in HMP Eastwood Park; and a 30 year old woman who died in March 2005 in HMP Holloway. Taken collectively these deaths demonstrate the grave problems in the female prison estate and evidence was heard at the inquests detailing the vulnerabilities of the women and the inadequacy of care they received whilst in prison.

INQUEST launched its major new report *Dying on the inside: Examining women's deaths in prison* in parliament a week before the inquests began. The report is the first comprehensive examination of women's deaths in prison and makes recommendations on how to prevent future deaths. The launch drew cross party support for the report and heard from families who had contributed to the project. INQUEST is now working to ensure the book's recommendations are implemented, particularly around non means-tested legal funding for bereaved families at inquests as recommended by the Corston Report. Copies of *Dying on the Inside* can be ordered online [here](#).

- **Inquest into the death of 16 year old Gareth Price reveals multiple failings by statutory agencies**

The inquest into the death of 16 year old Gareth Price who hanged himself in a segregation cell at Lancaster Farms Young Offender Institution in January 2005 found that failings by every agency Gareth came into contact with contributed to his death. Following the verdict, which came at the end of a three and a half month inquest, the coroner wrote a series of letters to no less than seven organisations and individuals including the Minister for Prisons and the Youth Justice Board with recommendations for reform and action. INQUEST has ongoing concerns about Lancaster Farms YOI in the light of a further child, 15 year old Liam McManus, taking his life there in November 2007.

- **CPS announces no prosecutions in restraint related cases of Frank Ogboru and Victor Massey.**

The CPS announced that it found there to be "insufficient evidence" to warrant criminal prosecutions after the highly contentious restraint-related deaths of Frank Ogburo and Victor Massey.

Frank Ogboru was restrained by four police officers in Woolwich in 2006. He was sprayed with CS and pinned down after a row on the street. CCTV footage captured him losing consciousness after shouting "I can't breathe. I can't breathe" and appears to show one police officer's knee over his neck as his head dangles over the kerb.

Victor Massey was restrained by police officers at King's Mill Hospital, Nottinghamshire in 2006. Following an alleged disturbance in a bathroom, police were called to restrain him during which CS spray was also used and Victor died shortly after. INQUEST has ongoing concerns about the failure to learn from previous restraint-related deaths and the continuing reluctance of statutory agencies to bring any appropriate criminal charges over the use of excessive force by agents of the state.

On 27 May 2008, after significant delays, the inquest opens into the restraint-related death of Kurt Howard in Cefn Coed Hospital in June 2002. INQUEST is supporting Kurt's family who have been waiting almost six years for the inquest into his death.

## POLICY

- **Review of the Forum for Preventing Deaths in Custody**  
Following ministerial commitments during the debates on the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, an independent review of the Forum for Preventing Deaths in Custody was undertaken and reported earlier this year. The review, known as the Fulton report, can be downloaded [here](#) and recommends substantial changes to the current forum including replacing it with a board that has ministerial level involvement and creating two additional structures with additional resources.

INQUEST sits on the current Forum but has long criticised its lack of resources, independence and ability to affect change. We contributed to the review, calling for a more interventionist body with statutory powers to be created. INQUEST is currently working on a short project developing its proposal for a Standing Commission on Custodial Deaths. The government have indicated they will respond to the Fulton report in June.

- **Coroners Bill announced in draft legislative programme**  
A Coroners Bill has once again been included in the government's draft legislative programme published this week. The Bill, which has been dropped two years in row from successive Queen's Speeches, represents a significant step forward in reforming the archaic inquest system. However, in light of the government's repeated false promises for reform in this area INQUEST remains sceptical about its inclusion this time

round, though we will be doing everything we can do ensure it will form part of the actual legislative programme.

Earlier this year a reformed draft Coroners Bill was published by the government with some slight policy changes following consultation. Measures were also introduced to improve the rule 43 powers of coroners as an interim measure to a reformed system.

## STATISTICS

- **Deaths in prison so far in 2008**

<i>Classification</i>	<i>Number</i>
Self-Inflicted	25
Non-Self-Inflicted	37
Awaiting Classification	6

- **Deaths in police custody so far in 2008**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>
Custody deaths	11
Pursuits	5
Road Traffic Accidents	2
Shootings	1

Source: INQUEST casework and monitoring  
Further statistical information can be found [here](#)

## ABOUT INQUEST

- **Chickenshed Theatre Company fundraising benefit for INQUEST**  
The Chickenshed Theatre Company are hosting a benefit for INQUEST with a special performance of their critically-acclaimed play ...*As the mother of a brown boy...*, on 5 June at Toynbee hall,. The performance will be followed by a panel discussion with families of those who have died in custody, INQUEST patron Linton Kwesi Johnson will be reading from his work and there will be a food and drinks reception. More information about this exciting event and how to book tickets is available on our [website](#). Tickets are selling fast so book your place now!

As a small charity your support is always needed to enable us to continue our work. Please visit our [website to make a donation online or better still, set up a standing order](#).

- **First Gilly Mundy Memorial Debate a huge success**  
The first Gilly Mundy Memorial Debate was held on 23 April 2008 at SOAS in London and was attended by over 280 people. Organised in

memory of Gilly's political work by the Newham Monitoring Project (and supported by INQUEST) the *Question Time*-style event focussed on the issue of *Racism and the State of Britain*. Panellists included Benjamin Zephaniah, Yasmin Alibhai Brown, Moazzam Begg, Gareth Peirce and Nick Hardwick. The event was a marked success with lively audience participation combined with passionate debates.

On March 17 exactly one year after Gilly's sudden death, hundreds of people gathered at the opening of the Gilly Mundy Memorial Community School in Haryana, India. In just 12 months, the Buwan Kothi International Trust, of which Gilly was a founder, has raised over £50,000 to build the school close to the village of Buwan Kothi.

- **Staff Changes**

Naomi Lumsdaine will be leaving INQUEST at the end of May to take up a position at the Prisoners' Advice Service. Naomi has been an excellent locum caseworker and we would like to thank her for her contribution to the INQUEST team.

For more information on any of the issues contained in this newsletter please contact [yasminkhan@inquest.org.uk](mailto:yasminkhan@inquest.org.uk)