



## **HOUNSLOW COMMUNITY GROUPS VISIT FELTHAM MAGISTRATES' COURT FOR 'INSIDE JUSTICE WEEK'**

A wide range of local groups are taking part in events at Feltham Magistrates' Court for 'Inside Justice' week, happening nationally from the 17 to 23 of October. This will enable local people to find out how the justice system works and why we all play an important role in making our communities safer places to live.

Each morning from Monday 17 to Friday 21 of October the court will open its doors to groups, which include the Disability Network (Hounslow), the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, the Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, the Hounslow Synagogue, Asian Women's Centre, Age Concern, Outwest, and local resident's groups.

The groups will spend two hours observing live court proceedings, then join Magistrates, court staff and members of other Criminal Justice Agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service, police, probation and defence lawyers, to ask questions about what they have seen and understand how the system works.

Hounslow Bench Legal Manager and Chairman of the Borough Criminal Justice Group, Jane Lynam said: "This exciting new initiative is about reaching out to local people and showing them what goes on in their magistrates' court. We hope they will encourage others to visit and may even consider becoming magistrates themselves."

Jenny Kerr, Justice of the Peace and local "Magistrates in the Community" co-ordinator added: "This is a great opportunity for the local community to see how our legal system works. It is also a great opportunity to meet the magistrates and legal advisers who will be there to answer questions. They will discover that magistrates are members of the local community too, and are ordinary people who have undergone careful training in order to fulfil their roles."

**-ENDS-**

**More...**

## Notes to Editors

1. Events for '**Inside Justice**' week are happening across the country, from the 27 to 23 October 2005. To be most effective, the Criminal Justice System (CJS) needs communities and individuals to engage in the delivery of justice – we need your help.
2. '**Opening up justice to the public**' is the theme for this year's Inside Justice Week (IJW). The week comprises seven days of events and media opportunities taking place across England and Wales, in order to involve communities in the CJS. A key focus for IJW 2005 is 'youth'.
3. **Inside Justice Week aims to:**
  - increase public awareness and understanding of the CJS
  - publicise improvements within the CJS
  - encourage individuals and communities to engage with the CJS
  - show people how they can help deliver justice and why it matters.
4. Local Criminal Justice Boards, including in the capital the London Criminal Justice Board, and CJS agencies are 'opening up' to the public in imaginative and interactive ways, for instance with 'open days', roadshows and events with schools and other community organisations.
5. **The Criminal Justice System contributes to a safer community by:**
  - preventing crime from happening in the first place
  - working together to bring offenders to justice
  - improving ways to turn offenders away from crime
  - reducing re-offending
  - protecting the public
  - supporting victims and witnesses.
6. **Individuals and communities can make a difference by engaging in the delivery of justice including:**
  - reporting crime and anti-social behaviour
  - acting as witnesses and being prepared to give evidence in court
  - participating as jurors
  - volunteering on youth offending panels, as magistrates, special constables, prison visitors, victim support, witness service, community service volunteers, mentors, and helping on youth diversion projects
  - considering a career in the CJS.
7. **Her Majesty's Courts Service** manages all courts in England and Wales, except the House of Lords. London is one of 7 HMCS Regions and has responsibility for over 20% of all court business.
8. **The London Criminal Justice Board (LCJB)**, comprising the chief officers in the capital's criminal justice system, from the police and CPS to courts and prison service, Victim Support London and the Legal Services Commission, was formed two years ago (2003) so that criminal justice agencies could work together to deliver justice more effectively. Their goal is to bring more offences to justice and increase public confidence in the criminal justice system.

**For more information or to arrange a photo-opportunity/ interview for 'Inside Justice Week' at Feltham Magistrates' Court, please call Suzanne Halls Tel: 020 7217 3664 or email [suzanne.halls@gnn.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:suzanne.halls@gnn.gsi.gov.uk)**