

A Guide to Police Custody for Political Activists

Version 1.0, June 2002

1. Introduction

Ooops - you've just been detained by the boys in blue for her majesty's pleasure. Well don't panic; they've not convicted you yet, and here is a few tips on surviving the ordeal.

You may be the most innocent person in the world, but right now in their eyes you are a nasty activist. They have one aim, securing a conviction by gathering as much information from and about you as possible. You need one aim in mind – being released without giving them cause to keep you locked up, or the excuse to lock anyone else up. Here is a guide to dealing with being in police custody. By knowing what to expect, the whole process becomes a lot less scary and intimidating, making the experience easier to handle. You will be better able to make decisions which help your cause, not theirs.

Just because you don't do anything illegal does not mean you will never be arrested. You never know what sort of attitude the police might take, and the fact of attending a demonstration may be all that they need. Yes, they do go out and randomly arrest people. But it is nothing to be scared of, and if you play your cards right there might even be a tidy cheque in it. You would be surprised at how many vehicles have been purchased courtesy of oppressive police tactics. (See www.violenceinanimalrights.org.uk)

This is a guide only; different situations may require different behaviour, but we believe we give the best advice for the majority of arrests that animal rights activists and other campaigners face.

2. Arrest and transport to the police station

Okay, you have been seized by the police and not been de-arrested. Bad luck. Normally you are 'held' by several officers, maybe even handcuffed. It is up to you whether you struggle or not. Evaluate your chances and how well you can leg it. If you are not up to it, don't give them an opportunity to abuse you.

As they hold you, waiting for transport and the orders for which police station to take you to, they will try chatting to you. This will come in a variety of forms, but its purpose is to get you into talking mode and soften you up to give out information. Stay silent. You are under no obligation to speak to them, so don't. Even simple information such as where you came from or the colour of the vehicle you came in can be harmful so don't give it to them. It may not be obvious to you, but since you don't see the full picture it is best not to provide the information they are after.

Often they will try the friendly approach first (it's fun watching for all the cliches), but they normally end up drifting into sarcastic mode. However much they poke fun at you and your beliefs (and they can get very personal), do not respond or allow yourself to be goaded – just don't give them the satisfaction; it is not as if they actually care about your beliefs. Explaining the law to them will rarely work, as for the most part police are not that fussed on what the law states; they prefer leaving that to the courts.

If arrested by yourself, the best thing to do is ignore them and stare into the distance or at the ground. If you are with other people, have a laugh and a joke but don't mention names, personal details or discuss what you've just been at. It's fine to discuss the sickening nature of animal abuse and how much of a payout you are going to get when you sue for wrongful arrest.

Note what time you have been arrested at when possible, and numbers/descriptions of the various officers who did it. Also, note as many details as possible, keeping an eye on other arrests, especially where police are heavy handed. Watch out for police cameramen hiding behind vehicles, etc. This is a good reason for keeping your head down as much as possible, particularly when there is a large number of arrests, as they need photos for identification. There is no law saying that you have to pose for them at this stage in the proceedings. If they pull your hair to force your face up, scream as loud as possible – they are less likely to use a face full of pain as evidence. Likewise if they are violent in any way, scream; it will alert protestors, press and residents bringing unwelcome attention to the police.

In most cases do not give them your name. That can wait until you reach the police station. However, if you want people to be able to ask after you at the police station and get supplies into you, the best thing is to give your name out to surrounding protestors, including the people you came with (as they might not know if you are going to give a false name instead, blowing your cover).

For most occasions when animal rights activists encounter the police they are not likely to let you go, so keep your mouth shut. If you are suspected of a major crime, giving your details may alert them to who your companions are and thus get them nicked as well.

At some point you should be cautioned for the ‘crime’. They may forget, so don’t remind them as this may work to your benefit. If you are confident in your legal knowledge and the police are not too zombified it may be worth arguing the toss about the legality of your arrest. Don’t expect much though.

Once arrested you will be put in the back of a vehicle and taken to the station. Like everywhere else, don’t say or discuss anything in the vehicle, including personal details – you don’t know who is listening in. At the station you will be kept waiting, especially if there have been a lot of arrests or it is a busy time. Nevertheless, you can ask for the doors to be opened so you can get some air, and you can also ask to go to the toilet – if they refuse then threaten to piss on the floor; it encourages them to be nicer.

There are cases where they hold you (see other factsheets), and they may promise to let you go if you give your details. They will threaten to arrest you if you don’t give details. This is a question of knowing the law, but for the most part, if you are not going to be arrested, it is up to you what you tell them.

2.1 Being Searched

This is a non-trivial point and we refer you to fact sheets on the law. However, if you are not arrested but being searched, they have to give a reason why they are doing so and tell you what they are looking for. If they are letting you go afterwards, such as when they search people entering a demo, then they have to provide a written record, or the details of the police station where you can request a copy of the search. They also have to give their name and the police station where they are based. You do not have to give them any details about yourself, including name & address, no matter how much they bluster.

This doesn’t apply if you have been arrested, when they can search you. If you are being taken to a police station, you will normally not be searched other than a cursory attempt to pat you down for anything dangerous. Instead they will wait until you are at the police station (see below).

Regulations surrounding being searched are

- a) Females can only be searched by a female officer; if otherwise happens, you have grounds for a serious complaint.
- b) Only outer layers can be searched in public view; if they want to probe deeper then they must take you to somewhere out of view; this can include the back of a police van.

2.2 Witnessing an Arrest

If you are a witness to an arrest there are several things you can do. The police may let the person go if they feel there are too many people around and to continue arresting may inflame the crowd. It may also stop the police assaulting the person if they know they are being observed.

If that is not the situation, then take as many details as you can, noting the behaviour and the lapel numbers of the police officers (these numbers are very important). Ask the police why they are arresting and what police station the person is to be taken to. Ask the person if they want to give their name but don't push the issue. Whenever possible take as much video/camera evidence as possible, including faces of the police so they can be identified later in case of suing for assault. Let friends of the arrested person know where they have been taken to and give them you details in case you are needed to act as a witness on their behalf.

3. The custody desk

INITIAL PROCESSING

Once in the police station itself, you are lead by yourself to the custody desk. This is the centre of operations as far as you are concerned. It is where the custody sergeant resides; they are the police officer with responsibility for you while you are their guest. This also means that he is the person who makes the decision to release you.

Here, you will be formally arrested and processed. The processing involves them asking you a lot of questions about you and your physical appearance. What you are required to give is a name and address. **You do not have to give your date of birth.** It is up to you to tell the truth or not (but see below under 'Giving false details'). All other questions you can refuse to answer – which you should do. The date of birth is requested so they can distinguish between people if there are two 'criminals' of the same name, so watch out for it popping up repeatedly during your stay in custody. The address is so they know where to find you. The rest is information gathering you are not obliged to help with.

In fact, you don't even have to give them your name and address, and they will still have to let you go eventually if they don't charge you. Beware that this can also be used against you to keep you in longer on the grounds that they need to confirm your identification, especially if they are planning to charge you. This is up to you, but think it through.

It is worth playing the custody sergeant carefully. Be polite and co-operative, so avoiding them becoming irritated, but don't give into their demands to answer all their questions. They may try and bully or scare you into doing this; the best thing is to state outright that you are giving them your name and address, but that you are not answering other questions as you are not obliged to. They will bluster, but if you hold your ground there is nothing they can actually do other than write down descriptions they take themselves. Watch out for them asking questions in an odd order, which can trip you up.

A tricky point here is when they take your height. It is not unusual for them to force you to stand against a stick on a wall in order them to do this. They are not allowed to do this, but it may not be worth contesting too much if it is going to really upset the custody sergeant. And you can always stand badly, skewing their reading, eg by spreading legs or raising heels.

You will be asked to sign some forms and indicate that you have understood certain questions; for the most part there is nothing really gained from refusing to do this. Likewise, you will be asked questions about being on medication, self-harm & drugs; again there is little harm in answering these. If you are

vegan or such, now is the time to point out things like allergies and food intolerances (they are more likely to pay attention to medical requirements for food than ethical ones, but don't count on it).

As when you were first arrested, the police will try and drag you into conversation. Be polite or silent, but resist. They are still not your friends and you should take heed to their standard warning that everything you say will be noted and taken down – and as the warning goes, they will take note of everything straight out and will use it as evidence. Even if they do not use it against you, they may use it against someone else. The conversation, if played right, may serve to chill them out as well, and may cause them to mark you down as being mostly harmless (ego aside, this is good).

Don't give them any information about what you were doing or about yourself. Stick to this pattern and your time in custody will be easier, especially when it comes to handling the interview. Should you find yourself dragged into a conversation, for example about football, (questions about your favourite team often get followed up with "Oh, you come from there then" in an effort to provoke such details about you), parents (a crude scare tactic) or ethics (which then becomes, "oh, where you at such and such a demo"), you need to be able to come back with an appropriate response.

If you suddenly clam up in the middle of a conversation they know they've hit a sore spot and use it against you, or that they've hit an element of truth. The best responses are ambiguous, such as "well you're the coppers - that up to you to find out", or turn it back on them by referring to a copper well known for taking a very keen interest in a particular campaign (eg, "You'll have to ask Inspector Pettit for such classified information") as often these keen policemen are well disliked by the rank and file police doing the leg work. If you are not able to fend off questions, shrug your shoulders and stay quiet.

If arrested while involved in a liberation or very serious action where a number of people have taken part, it is sensible to not give your details either when arrested or at the custody desk for at least 12 hours. Once they know who you are, police intelligence may be able to identify who your companions were. Delaying this allows your companions to get out of the area and alibis set up. Unfortunately for you, you will be denied pretty much all your rights, and will be held for considerably longer; but it is preferable in the long run.

PROPERTY CONFISCATION

Next they will remove all the property from your pockets, and search them. You have no choice here, though they may let you retain some items, including any books you have brought. Some of it may be taken away as evidence, but most is itemized on a form and put in a plastic bag, then sealed with a tag. They should count out any money in front of you.

You will be asked to sign the form listing your property. Some people prefer not signing this, especially if there has been stuff found on them that they are not keen to be associated with. It is up to you; in most cases it is not an issue so you can sign. An advantage to signing, is that before you fill in the signature at the bottom, you can sign your name directly under the list of items; though it might annoy the police, it stops them adding anything incriminating to the list afterwards when you are not there. Some police forces sensitive to dodgy police now provide stamps to go at the end of the list with a place for your signature. Remember to read the list and cross out anything they've wrongly inserted. If you refuse to sign, they will make a note of the fact.

YOUR RIGHTS

Finally, you will be told of your rights and be asked to sign to say that you have understood them. There are four basic rights you have while in custody and you should use them all.

I. PACE

You are entitled to a copy of a booklet called PACE (the Police And Criminal Evidence Act). Every police station must have copies and by law provide it on request at any time. We recommend requesting it straight away. This indicates that you are relatively clued up so they are less likely to attempt pulling a fast one on you. It will help you sleep, and it is a good opportunity to catch up on your rights.

II. Solicitor

See Section 5 below.

III. Right to have someone informed

You are entitled to have someone informed of your arrest at any point during your stay in custody. This is normally, but not necessarily, in the form of a phone call. This right is so you can notify someone that you have been arrested. It is completely separate from any conversations you have on the telephone with your solicitors. You are allowed to make this notification by law, which you can take at any time while you are in custody, unless you have been arrested for a serious arrestable offence. Any more phone calls are at the discretion of the custody sergeant, though it is probably best to arrange it through your solicitor. As they will have confiscated your money by this stage, the call is at police expense.

This phone call is not private. The situation will depend on the police station, but you can pretty much assume that they will be listening to it. In many cases, the telephone you'll be given to use will be on the custody desk itself. All warnings given so far still apply. It is worth trying to insist on having a private conversation under the respect for private correspondence section of the Human Rights Act, but it is best to assume that they are listening anyway.

You may also want to consider whom you ring, depending on the circumstances of your arrest. Ringing someone who has just legged it from the area, or a campaign number will tip the police off to the fact that they are involved in some way and you could cause someone else's arrest. The best thing, if in doubt, is to ring someone out of the area, preferably on a landline, or a prisoner support organisation.

If you stand a chance of being raided then ring someone you can trust to go to your address so the police do not cause damage or take things they shouldn't. This is especially the case if you have animals. If you are involved in a serious action, have this arranged before hand. You can only have your house raided if you've been nicked for an "arrestable offence".

IV. Pen & Paper

You have the right to writing materials. This is useful to keep yourself from getting too bored & demoralised. It is a good time to catch up on all those letters you've been planning to write or to make notes from PACE relevant to your situation. Again, all the caveats about being careful apply. Don't put on names and addresses, and certainly don't write your statement. Police don't normally look at what you've been writing, but there is nothing to stop them from doing so. There are ways of smuggling sensitive papers out of a police station. Sometimes the police will refuse to give them to you, but your solicitor should be able to argue your case to get them to you.

3.1 Giving false details....

In the past, people have been known to get away giving false details, particularly if the name didn't turn up on the Police National Computer [PNC – a national database of convicted people]. Note, changing small details such as spelling will not work with the PNC once someone is on it. An issue with giving

false details is remembering to be consistent; if the police become suspicious then they may demand proof of habitation at the address given.

One way used to get around this is was having a pre-arranged address, where if they did call around, the inhabitants confirmed it was the prisoner's home under the assumed name. Later the residents would say that the person moved on, or never lived there at all. However, they may be hit with liability for perverting the course of justice or wilful obstruction; and also a police search depending on what the person has been arrested for.

Given the quality of police evidence it is advised that you do not give false details as the consequences can be much more serious than the offense arrested for. The choice is up to you, but there it is not a decision to be taken lightly.

4. The police cell

This is where you will spend most of your time while in custody. It is generally a small, very bare room painted a horrible vomit-yellow, containing a bench and pathetic mattress. Some have toilets.

Each cell has a buzzer used for calling the custody sergeant, or who ever has been given the duty of looking after the needs of prisoners. They may not immediately answer, but give it five minutes before trying again. Repeated pressing will only lead them to ignore you, even though they are not supposed to.

The door has a spyhole (not necessarily covered up) and a larger gap for passing stuff through. They may check up on you every hour, so don't get your hopes up every time you hear noises outside.

The only people you normally see are the police and your solicitor. It is possible that the custody sergeant may allow some one else to come and visit you, but this is very rare.

There is a requirement to feed you at mealtimes (one main meal and two light meals). However, if you have dietary requirements it is best to state them early on, and also let your solicitor know about them. This can be a hassle, and it may be worth requesting the actual boxes the food came in to check the police are not lying. Some police stations used to dealing with animal rights activists automatically stock vegan food now. Beans on dry toast is usually the best to go for. You can request drinks at any time, but note in many stations the tea & coffee comes pre-prepared cups with milk powder in so check first.

The worse part is boredom and not knowing what is happening. Plus, there is the disorientation as they usually take your watch. Nowadays people are normally put in single cells. This is part of the technique for softening you up for interviews. Thinking in these terms will help see you through. There are a number of things you can do to keep yourself occupied and stop you from getting demoralised. Think of it as a space to catch up on stuff, never as them having won.

- a) As mentioned above, request both PACE and writing materials, as is your right.
- b) Try and get some sleep: police stations will have blankets, and reading PACE is particularly good at inducing sleep.
- c) Dance, exercise or do Tai'Chi. Again these will help you sleep, and it is a good chance to catch up on that practice you have been meaning to do for ages.

There is no harm going over the events leading up to your arrest, especially to get them clear in your mind, sort out what you did wrong, and mentally plan a statement. However, don't dwell on it too long or it will drive you up the walls. Pacing is a technique people use to kill time but watch out for it getting too repetitive and leading to a feeling of hopelessness. Thinking about time is a very bad move.

Another tip is to not pay any attention to any noises you hear going on outside the cells, such as footsteps and jangling keys. These will lead to false hopes. The majority of them are not going to be for you; the only time to start paying attention is when you hear the locks of the door moving. As they have to keep checking on you, some of the noises will simply be them looking through the spyhole at you.

Six hours is the general length of time for your stay, as, if you are not charged, extra hours tend to be expensive for the police for when you sue for wrongful arrest. However, don't expect to be let out after six hours. They can keep you for longer if they need to, even overnight (see below). This is another reason for not bothering to watch time go by. Your solicitor will be able to tell you why they are keeping you in after a review. Often it is simply that there have been too many arrests for them to deal with, or they haven't finished preparing for the interview, so extra time is required.

After your first six hours your stay in custody has to be reviewed. After this, the review will happen every nine hours. Before charging the review has to be by an officer of at least the rank of inspector who is not directly involved in the investigation. After charging it is the custody officer.

The last thing is, in the case of sharing cells with other prisoners, to be careful what you say. It is not unknown for them to inform on you to the police, or even to be police themselves. It is good to have company, but take care. Likewise, assume that the police cell is bugged. If your companion is persistent tell them that you are too paranoid to answer certain questions or discuss what you've been arrested for (other than what you've been accused of being doing) in the cell.

5. Solicitors

Request one straight away, the moment you have been processed. This is one of your most important rights and should always be exercised. Even if you are experienced in the ways of police custody, it always helps to have someone acting on your behalf while you are locked up. You can only be refused a solicitor if you have been arrested for a 'serious arrestable offence'.

Unless you are very confident about handling yourself do not use a duty solicitor. They will not do their best for you, and you cannot trust them not to let information slip to the police on purpose or inadvertently. In towns the police and duty solicitors all know each other, and you never know an unknown solicitor's own opinions; an example is when some arrested sabs took the duty solicitor who turned out to be a hunt supporter. Many duty solicitors are ex-coppers! There are a number of solicitors who will represent people arrested for animal rights and other political protests; use them. Preferrably sort out details before you do the demonstration or action. At least have a name of a legal firm and the town where they are based; the police will be able to contact them from these details.

If your chosen solicitor is unable to come directly, you will be given the chance to talk to them on the phone first, and they will arrange for another solicitor to come instead, who will still be better than the duty solicitor. What you need is someone who is willing to fight on your behalf to get the best possible deal and give you the best advice as opposed to someone who is bored and sees their duty as just guiding you through the process with minimal effort.

Remember not to say anything incriminating to your solicitor while in the police station. Assume every room and phone is bugged. If an inexperienced solicitor starts asking you questions, whether to get your version of events or ones that would cause you to give away certain personal details, simply say that you don't want to talk about it now and state that you don't trust the police not to be listening in. Most

animal rights solicitors will not put you in this position. If your solicitor is persistent, then that is all the more reason for not answering.

Finally, asking your solicitor to ring someone on your behalf obliges them to tell the police that they are doing so, including who and why. There is little way around this. If the police are listening in they can end up causing your solicitor trouble over this, even though they are not supposed to know.

6. Interviews

See the guide to handling interviews. The main point to make is: ***do a no comment/silent interview regardless of what shit they throw at you.*** Make sure you have a solicitor present and let them know before hand that you do not intend to answer their questions.

In animal rights and environmental protests, it is expected that no-one talks. Interviews have one purpose: gathering information to convict you and your companions. If your talk, no matter how innocent it may seem at the time, leads to the conviction of someone else then you will be considered a grass, the fact published and can expect yourself to be ostracized.

The only exceptions to no comments are:

- a) when a group of you have agreed before hand what you are all going to say, AND everything else has gone to plan; or
- b) you have done an action by yourself and you can argue easily enough that you were not committing a crime, for example when doing a trespass, which is a civil offence, but you have been arrested on a criminal charge. This has been known to get people freed without charge, but make sure you know what you are doing in advance, or you could end up with the criminal charge of aggravated trespass instead.

Most convictions come from statements arising out of interviews; it is the easiest way to a successful prosecution for the police, so they will try and pressurize you. A solicitor present will help stop the more outrageous pressures, plus all interviews have to be taped and sealed by law, which stops them from tampering with them. You will be asked to sign the tapes at the end; if you have done a no comment/silent interview, then there is generally no harm in this. You may need to give it some consideration if you have given false details.

Despite anything said about it harming your defense at trial and ‘special warnings’, there are good reasons for no comment/silent interviews. No comment tapes rarely come to court. Reasons you can use in court to justify your refusal to answer are:

- a) “under advice from my solicitor”;
- b) you were not presented sufficient evidence that you felt you could evaluate the situation;
- c) you were too tired and/or bruised to feel that you could do yourself justice in the interview.

You should ask your solicitor to say to the police at the start of the interview that you intend to go no comment/silent. It is up to you whether you state your name at the start or not. It is best not to speak to the police from the moment you enter the interview room. An interview can last up to two hours, and there can be any number of them. They may ask you to speak to confirm your presence in the room – again you do not have to.

Listen to the questions they are asking you, even if you are not answering them. It often gives you a good idea of what sort of lines of inquiry they are going down.

You can stop an interview at any time to confer with your solicitor, should you feel the need; however the police may see this as a sign that they are getting to you.

A simple technique to avoid being intimidated by the police in an interview room is to pick a point on the floor or wall, and simply stare at it for the entire proceedings. This will also help you not to give away information through body language.

7. Charging and processing

When they have finished interviewing, you are returned to your cell while a decision will be made on what to do with you; whether to keep you in to continue their enquiries, try to have you remanded or let you go. If they are letting you go they will normally charge you, or release you on police bail (not a proper charge, but an order to turn up at the police station at a later date). They have to either charge you or let you go within 24 hours of arriving at the police station. This period can only be extended if you are being held on suspicion of committing a “serious arrestable offence”.

If you are being charged & released then you will be told the details of the charges, informed about bail conditions, and then processed before being released. You are asked to sign to say you have been informed of the charges and the bail conditions imposed, and be given a copy.

You can refuse the bail conditions, but it is likely that they will keep you in overnight and bring before the magistrates the next day, who will probably impose the same bail conditions anyway. The decision is up to you, and needs to be evaluated according to the situation. For most people, it is a case of accepting the bail. It is when the restrictions imposed will far outweigh the alleged crime that you refuse to accept them, but seek advice from your solicitor. Sometimes, refusing bail has resulted in people being simply chucked out of the police station, as the police are not prepared to deal with the extra paper work and hassle you will cause them, but don't bet on it. Also you can ask the custody sergeant to alter the bail conditions giving reasons why – he may accept, particularly if a solicitor speaks on your behalf. Most people accept even draconian bail conditions and apply to have them dropped at the court appearance.

Processing involves them taking your fingerprints, photo and DNA. You can resist, but they are allowed to use ‘reasonable’ force to take them. In the case of fingerprints, this can be forcibly seizing your hands to get your prints. For DNA they normally use sterile disposable toothbrushes to gather cells from the inside of your mouth. If you refuse then they can rip some hair out of your head. The DNA sample is then sealed in a bag and labeled; watch them label it; they must get your name, date of birth and time of sampling correct – if they don't then it may be inadmissible in court. If they ask for your date of birth, don't answer (this is where the tactic of no conversation comes in particularly useful). They are now allowed to take your photograph by force, even before charge. They can sometimes forcibly take your fingerprints and DNA before charge if an Inspector reasonably suspects that they will tend to prove or disprove your involvement in an offence. This has to be by way of a written authorization.

At some stage earlier in the proceedings they may have nicked your clothes to run forensic tests on them or to use them to identify them from CCTV. They are allowed to do this, though the rules of searching still apply. They can take all items they determine as being necessary to their investigation. In return they are supposed to supply an ‘adequate’ replacement. This can either be tracksuit & pumps or, worse, a paper jumpsuit.

They must return all property that they are not using in evidence against you. Make sure you don't leave without it. You will then be directed to leave the police station. Hopefully your friends will be waiting

for you, or have made arrangements for you to be met by someone. Your solicitor may be willing to help you with this.

8. Over night stays & remand

If they think you have been a very bad person who doesn't deserve to go free, or you have refused bail conditions, or simply want to continue questioning you the next day (as when they haven't collected all the statements & evidence they feel they need to interview you properly) they can keep you in overnight. Other reasons for refusing you bail is that they think you will re-offend while out free, maybe break your bail conditions, or that you will not turn up at court to answer the charges. This could be because you are on bail for other offences or have previous convictions.

If they do then you have the right to be fed properly and to 8 hours uninterrupted sleep. Though they will check up on you to ensure that you are still alive. You can ask to be provided with blankets.

If the reason for keeping you in is not for further inquiries, you are normally taken to the nearest magistrate's court first thing the next day. You may have to wait all day for your case to come before the magistrates - however, you still have right of access to your solicitor who, if they are on your side, will have been keeping a track of the situation. You really do not want an unknown duty solicitor representing you when your freedom is at stake. The magistrates will either decide to release you subject to bail conditions, giving you a date when to return to court, or have you sent to prison to await trial. In the vast majority of cases, it will be the former. If you are remanded, you will be able to re-apply for bail at your next court appearance, which is always 7 days later.

Once free, your solicitor will stay in contact with you regarding the case, help you with Legal Aid and any queries you have.

9. Making complaints

It is not unknown for the police to make arrests simply to justify their presence at a demo, or because they dislike activists and feel like harassing you. If your charges are dropped then you have the right to sue. Even if you do not want to put in the time and energy required for suing, then you still have the right to put in a complaint. This they hate and if enough people do it then it can have a significant effect. It is important that you take this sort of action, as it discourages police attempts to stifle legitimate protest. See the separate leaflet on how to put in complaints and sue the police.

10. Resources

For more information on anything you have read in this leaflet contact Free BEAGLES at PO Box 155, Manchester, M60 1FT; email beagles@protest.co.uk

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