

# **PUNISHMENT THROUGH DISTANCE: REPORTING TO THE HOME OFFICE AND THE USE OF SHORT TERM HOLDING FACILITIES**

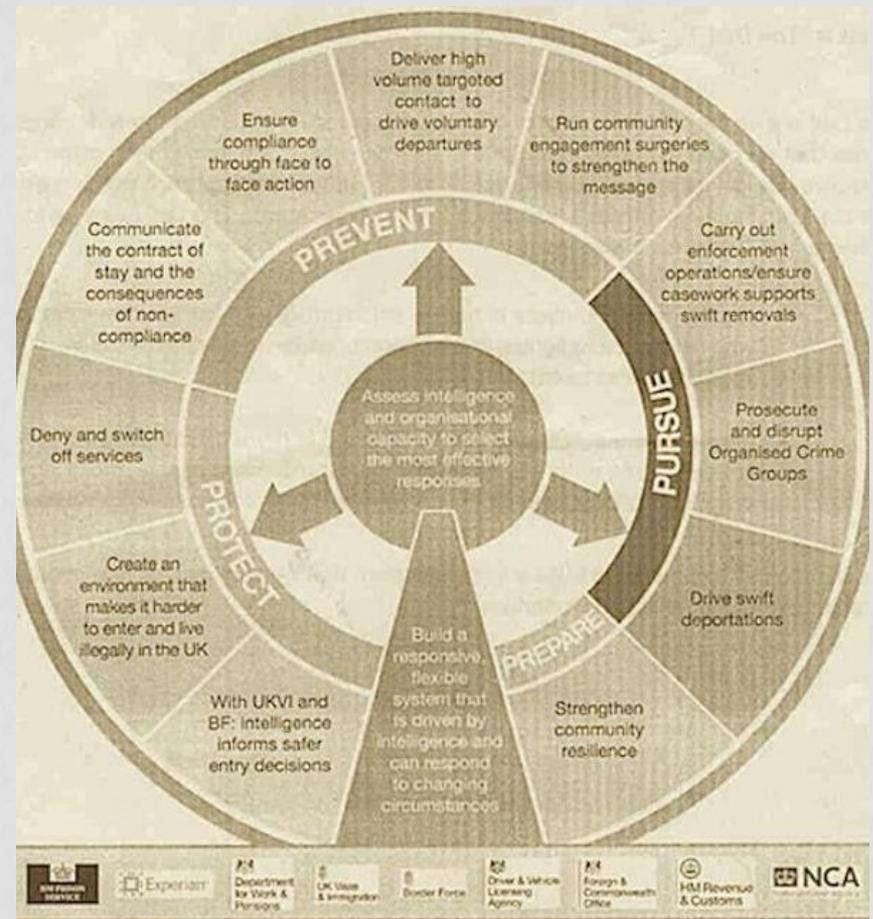
Andrew Burrige, University of Exeter

## REPORTING / SIGNING

- “These forms of state control are conceived legally as administrative practices necessary to control foreign-nationals whose status is still being adjudicated and to enforce the removal of unwanted foreign nationals”
- “...weekly or montly reporting requirements [are] common migrant surveillane strategies allied to deportation policies”
- Ines Hasselberg, 2014: Coerced to Leave: punishment and surveillane of foreign-national offenders in the UK. Surveillance and Society, 12(4), p.471

# DIALING UP HOSTILITY

- “The Dial is a visual representation of our strategic objectives showing the wide range of tactics that we need to deploy in order to effectively drive down immigration crime. Our collective use of intelligence is at the heart of the approach which we then use to select the most effective responses to any given threat...a flexible system that we can ‘dial up’ in response to emerging threats or ministerial priorities.” Home Office



# AUTHORITIES - BLURRING MULTIPLE LINES AND AVOIDING ENGAGEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY

- Home Office
  - UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)
    - *"We contribute to achieving the Home Office's priorities of securing our borders and reducing immigration, cutting crime and protecting our citizens from terrorism."*
  - Immigration Enforcement (in instances of detention)
    - *"Immigration Enforcement was set up on 1 April 2012. It is responsible for preventing abuse, tracking immigration offenders and **increasing compliance with immigration law**. It works with **partners such as the police** to regulate migration in line with government policy, while supporting economic growth."*
- Police
  - Regional Commander
  - Front desk staff
  - Custody Sergeant (in charge of 'custody suites')
- Private security – Tascor (formerly Reliance)

# SITES OF ANXIETY, FEAR AND DISAPPEARANCE

- *"I see no reason why people should be signing weekly. Two to three days before signing you can't eat. After signing you are happy, then after 3 days you start to worry again. I feel so worried for those still signing weekly. Nothing guarantees you will sign and go back home. It is very sad"*

Immigration Enforcement entering police compound parking: a likely indication that a detention will take place during the reporting session.

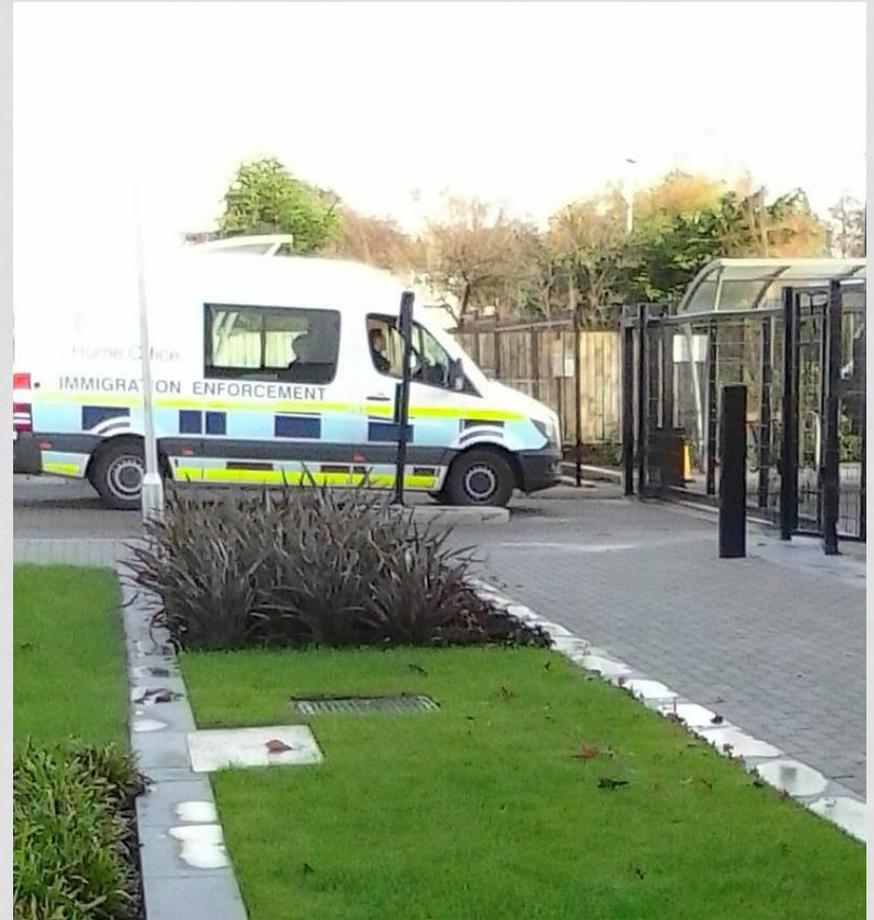


Photo: author

# RACISM AND FEAR - 'FOREIGN CROOKS ROAMING THE STREETS'

1. Northumbria House, North Shields (*The Chronicle*, 05.06.15);
2. BNP regional organiser outside Dallas Court Home Office, Salford

# LOCATING REPORTING SITES: HOME OFFICE BUILDINGS AND POLICE STATIONS

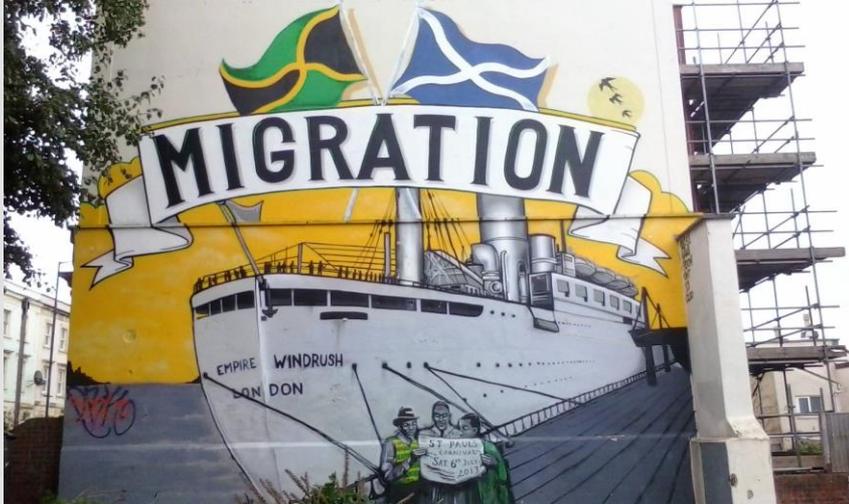
1. Trinity Road Police Station, Avon and Somerset Police, Bristol;
2. Waterside Court, Home Office, Leeds

## SIGNING SUPPORT GROUPS

*“Some people phone a friend when they are entering the reporting centre, with instructions for what to do and who to contact if they are detained. **If the friend does not get a call within an hour or two to say they are safe, the friend can call their lawyer and/or support group if they have one. In some areas, local support groups have set up systems to help with this. The person going to report will check-in with the group first, who keep a record of everyone’s contact details and emergency instructions of what to do if they do not come out.***

*A system like this can save valuable time: friends/supporters can start finding out exactly where the person is, what has happened, and what can be done to help straight away. **A signing support system also means that the person going to sign knows people are looking out for them, and that there is a plan in place if things go wrong and they are detained. This can reduce the psychological burden of reporting/signing at the Home Office.***”

# BRISTOL: CITY OF SANCTUARY AND DETENTION



## Welcome to Bristol City of Sanctuary

Bristol officially launched as a City of Sanctuary in June 2011, and since then has been working hard to keep the momentum created from this going. We celebrate and welcome the diversity that makes up our city, believing it should be something to be proud of and that should be applauded.

We invite you, whether you are a business, a local organisation or an individual to pledge your support and get involved in any way that would suit you. Please check out our links to find out about different initiatives that we are running and all of our upcoming events. Together we can work to make sure that our status as a City of Sanctuary is deserved, uniting to create a place of safety and sanctuary for refugees and asylum-seekers.

City of Sanctuary is a national network, a movement of local groups made up by businesses, community organisations and individuals, all with one thing in common; their belief that sanctuary seekers should be welcomed, and that their contribution to society should be celebrated.



1. Windrush mural, St. Pauls [photo: author]; 2. BRR Welcome Centre at the Malcolm X Community Centre, St Paul's [photo: BRR]

# BRISTOL SIGNING SUPPORT

- *“I [was] really feeling sad when I heard what happened. Bristol is a City of Sanctuary but it is not safe for asylum seekers. We are feeling unsafe, nervous and stressed when we go to sign at the police station.”*

Flash protest by BRR members and Signing Support outside Trinity Road Police Station, following 8 detentions in one morning, 2012 [photo: Dignity for Asylum Seekers]

# THE NEW 'CUSTODY SUITE' AT PATCHWAY

# LONG WALK CAMPAIGN

Long Walk to ~~Patchway~~ Freedom

Protest:

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December

9.30am - 1pm

By Primark, Broadmead

Opposite bus stop people use for Patchway

Our campaign aims are:

- End Signing for asylum seekers and migrants at Patchway Police Centre
- Reduce Signing frequency

Solidarity with people signing

Speakers Drumming Dancing Art

Bring snacks and hot drinks to share

[Asylumseekersinbristol.blogspot.co.uk](http://Asylumseekersinbristol.blogspot.co.uk)

[asylumisnotacrime@mail.com](mailto:asylumisnotacrime@mail.com)

1. Campaign flier. 2. BBC article showing new police station, 17.12.2014

## KEY POINTS

1. Distance used as a form of punishment and way to create non-compliance, or another way to wear people down; also affects solidarity efforts and organising
2. Reporting is an understudied and largely unknown component of detention, deportation, and its role in creating irregularity/deportability
3. Support campaigns and groups run the risk of further shoring-up such systems and making them more efficient through ensuring compliance and avoiding conflict; while also at the risk of criminalisation by authorities
4. Closure of police stations and H.O. centres needs to be understood in terms of impact upon asylum seekers, in relation to dispersal, and connected with broader processes of austerity