



BECAUSE SUPPORT MATTERS.

Mind  
wise

## Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme

### APPROPRIATE ADULTS

ARE PEOPLE TRAINED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS AND WHAT HAPPENS IN A POLICE STATION, TO BE THERE WHEN POLICE QUESTION YOU AND TO ASSIST YOU THROUGH THE PROCESS.

### BEEN ARRESTED? IN A POLICE STATION? FRIGHTENED, CONFUSED, ALONE?

IF YOU ARE A YOUNG PERSON UNDER 18 OR MENTALLY VULNERABLE PERSON WHO WILL NOT FACE THIS ALONE, AN APPROPRIATE ADULT CAN BE THERE WITH ADVICE, SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE.

## Annual Report 2018-2019

To the Department of Justice,  
the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme (NIAAS)  
Delivered by MindWise



## Introduction

The Department of Justice is accountable for ensuring the effective provision of the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme (NIAAS). The Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme is managed by MindWise who are responsible for delivery of the service.

## Reporting

The statistical information is drawn from a data base which provides an insight into trends and patterns of service delivery. Records of the NIAAS are retained for inspection and audit purposes.

This report is in respect of the period 1st December 2018 – 30th November 2019.

## MindWise

MindWise is a membership charity which supports those affected by severe mental illness and other mental health difficulties and promotes early intervention.

Our mission is to transform lives and develop new visions for mental health by challenging stigma and discrimination, and by providing quality services and support. We believe in dignity and respect for each individual, fair treatment, partnership working and most importantly, in recovery to achieve a quality of life for those affected by mental illness.

## NIAAS Manager's Introduction

**As the Manager of the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme, I am pleased to present our 2018-2019 Annual Report.**

### Service delivery

This report provides statistical information of the work carried out by the Northern Ireland Appropriate Adult Scheme. Confidentiality prevents this report from including specific challenges and case complexities; neither can it reveal how particular vulnerable people were navigated through a series of processes that were intimidating and alien to them.

However I can say our support staff ensure that young people and vulnerable adults in custody who may be facing a mental crisis are supported and assisted to understand what is happening to them and why, and to assist them to make informed choices when helping police with their enquires. They deliver this support in a compassionate and caring manor to the highest of standards, focusing on the quality service provided irrespective of public holidays and unsocial hours.

The NIAAS service was delivered throughout Northern Ireland 365 days of the year between 08.00 hours and 23.00 hours, with an out of hour's call out facility between 23.00 hours and 08.00 hours when circumstances necessitated attendance. The 'out of

hours' call out service was utilised on 313 occasions in this reporting period.

As the NIAAS manager I can report the staff team responded to 3,771 requests to attend PSNI stations this reporting year which was 216, 9.4% more than the previous year's attendance.

We acknowledge the professionalism of the PSNI custody staff, and we have found them to be courteous and compassionate towards the people we are called upon to support. I express my gratitude to all those officers who took time to make positive comments upon our service delivery report forms. I know the NIAAS team appreciate those officers who take time out during a difficult case to record a positive comment about the Appropriate Adult who attended at the station or the scheme in general, and some of those comments are reflected within this report.

**Stanley Booth MBE**

Manager NIAAS

## Risk Management

Strategies to minimise risks are outlined within the NIAAS Risk Management Plan, which is regularly reviewed and updated by the NIAAS Manager who is responsible for all aspects of risk analysis, and is supported by the MindWise Senior Management Team. The Scheme is compliant with the DoJ security framework, reporting regularly against Key Performance Indicators, relating to Governance; Health and Safety and ICT. These form part of specific performance indicators across a range of issues, such as service delivery, health and safety, ICT, risk management and finance. The CEO of MindWise, upon being satisfied the service is meeting the governance directives, provides assurance statements of compliance with HMG standards and DoJ security framework contractual standards.

We provide quarterly reports to our governance board representatives as part of our reporting process. All risks (including information and IT security risks) are assigned an owner. Our governance body are advised that a copy of the MindWise Risk Register is available for viewing on request. Travelling to and from police stations requires both route planning, and the use of 'Guardian 24' which is a lone working support and monitoring system which played a role in staff safety when they become available to attend at another PSNI station.

## The role of the Appropriate Adult

The Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 Codes of Practice require that a parent or legal guardian is always the first to be contacted. On occasions a Trust may be a legal guardian when a care order exists, or the child is a looked after child (LAC), meaning the Trust is the corporate parent under the Children (NI) Order 1995.

When the PSNI have difficulty contacting a parent or family member, to perform the role of Appropriate Adult they turn to our scheme. Our Appropriate Adults ensure that Police adhere to the Police and Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989 (PACE) and the PACE codes of practice. This is a complex role which demands and encompasses an understanding of the rights of the detained person as well as a clear understanding of the Appropriate Adult role and its boundaries. Good interpersonal and communication skills, being conversant with police procedures and fully appreciating the various mental health conditions that can impact upon a person's vulnerability are all important skills necessary to carry out this role.

The Appropriate Adult has specific rights to ensure they can fulfil their role, examples which include:

- To inspect the custody record of the detained person upon arrival at the police station, and at any time during their detention.



- To intervene in an interview if it is necessary in the interests of the detained person to facilitate effective communication with the police.
- To request a break in any interview for the detained person to seek legal advice or consult with the detained person (particularly if the interview is a lengthy one, or if the detained person is distressed or ill).

## **Safeguarding, Children and Vulnerable Adults**

MindWise have a clear safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures, as well as Child and Adult Safeguarding Champions within the organisation. Our staff team are trained to be alert to safeguarding issues regarding children and vulnerable adults and to report any concerns. In this reporting period staff identified two safeguarding issue that were passed to PSNI for investigation.

## **Looked after Children (LAC)**

Following discussions with PSNI custody management and the delivery of Appropriate Adult training to Trust staff, the trust engage with a looked after children and NIAAS involvement is with a looked after child is quite rare.

## **Periods spent within PSNI stations**

PSNI processes and procedures within police custody are identical however the cases are not the same and the circumstances of a case may be unique. It's important for our staff to be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of our service users through these cases and respond appropriately to their mental condition as they move through a difficult process.

An array of procedures may occur during the detention period which impact on the length of time an Appropriate Adult may be inside a police station. We may be required to wait for the outcome of a detainee's medical examination, or guide a detainee through identification procedures, fingerprinting, DNA sampling, and not least the interview. These and other aspects of the investigation can all impact on the total length of time an Appropriate Adult is in attendance at a police station, and when they become free to attend at another PSNI station.

Within PACE, a person may be detained by police for a maximum of 96 hours, occasionally in the most serious of cases we are called upon to support a person throughout this detention period, the average period staff spend engaged with a case in a police station remains unchanged from last year at three hours per case.

## Voluntary Interviews

A voluntary attendee can appear at a station with their solicitor when requested by police to do so, and interviews can be conducted on a voluntary basis. These enquiries are usually short but occasionally they can last for days, with people returning each day to be interviewed until matters are cleared to the satisfaction of the investigators.

## Arrival times

This year we responded to 3,771 calls, these calls are divided between planned calls and unplanned calls.

## Planned / Unplanned attendances

These are calls to attend a police station however immediate arrival is not necessary, this is because a particular activity must occur before an interview can take place. For example the detained person must be examined by a Forensic Medical Officer (Doctor) or they cannot be interviewed until they are sober, or the detainees Solicitor is presently in court and will attend once their court business is completed.

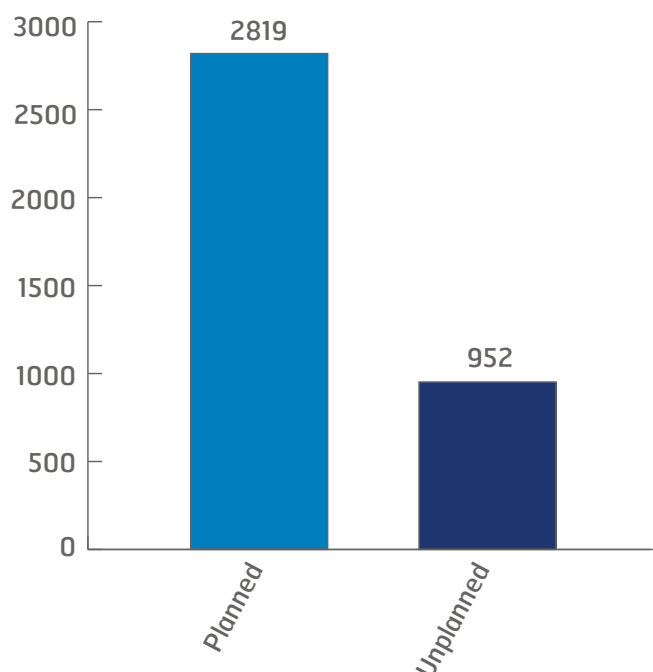
There are a variety of legitimate reasons why an interview may not proceed immediately upon a person's detention and we are required to ensure our availability meets the police requirements. Custody Sergeants in conjunction with investigators routinely arrange for the Appropriate Adult to

arrive at the custody suite at a given time which often ties in with the arrival of the Solicitor as part of the efficient running of the custody process, and the Appropriate Adult must be able to respond to a fluid situation where for a number of reasons the timings may change, such as the detainee being taken ill.

We may also be requested to delay our attendance until a specific time. An overnight call at 3 am may request an Appropriate Adult for 9 am to ensure the detained person has appropriate rest before questioning. Planned calls can also be for future dates, when people are granted police bail to return in the future, or forensic evidence may not be available for many months, therefore the scheme ensures there is an Appropriate Adult available and in attendance at the given time and place, which facilitates the police to continue their enquiries.

This year 2819 calls fell in to the planned category making up 75% of our attendances and resulting in a ZERO wait time for police, which helps the scheme achieve excellent arrival statistics. (Table 1)

Calls which required attendance forthwith created the greatest challenge; in 2018 we launched our on line booking system which facilitates officers and custody staff to arrange an Appropriate Adult any time of the day and from any device. This has played a key part in the advance booking being 75% this year. NIAAS staff is still required to attend at any PSNI custody suite without advance notice, this year these unplanned calls occurred

**TABLE 1: PLANNED/UNPLANNED ATTENDANCES**

on 952 occasions being 25% of all our calls which is the lowest unplanned attendance figure to date.

## Total arrivals

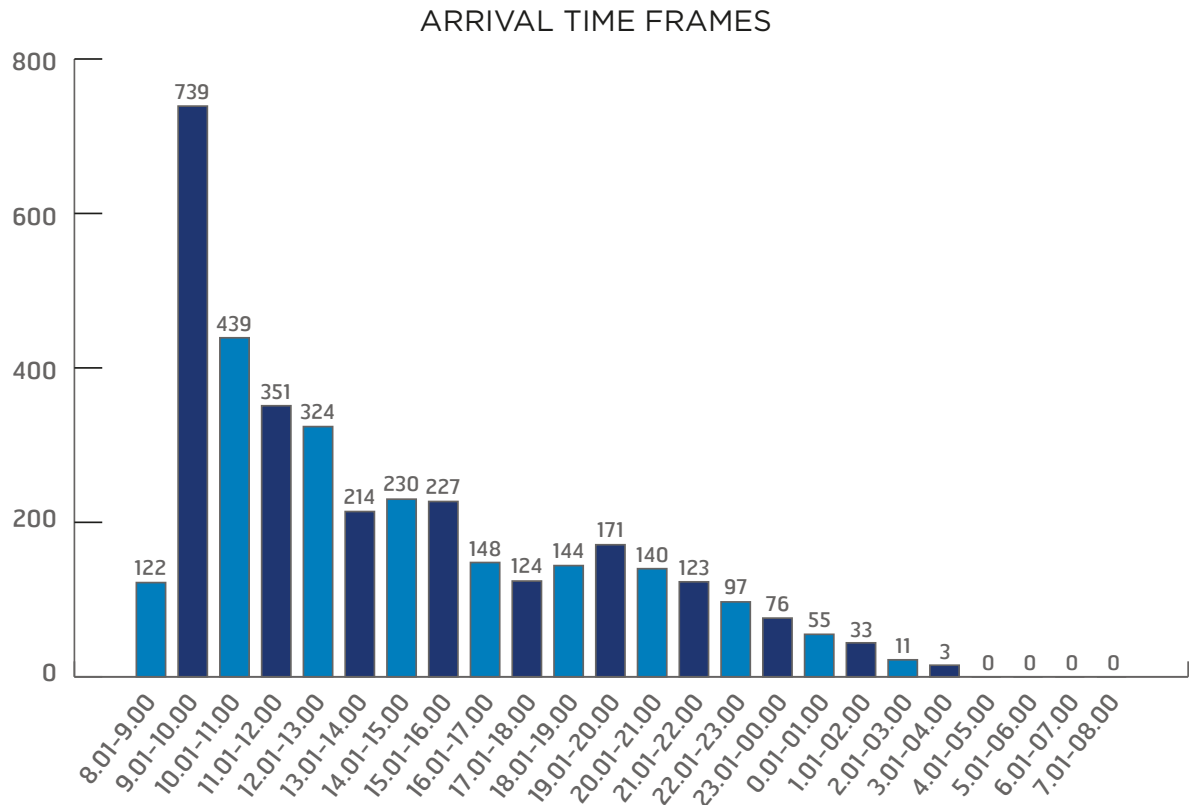
When both planned arrivals and unplanned arrivals requests to attend are collectively counted NIAAS staff team arrived when they were expected to arrive in 98.9% of all requests, this is directly attributed to advance on line bookings a new more responsive call handling system and having staff on site at Musgrave street PSNI station.

Arrival outside this time can be due to several reasons mainly because the staff are already fully committed in custody suites elsewhere or within the

same suite, and are unable to proceed to the next station or detainee until the present matter is concluded, or a high volume of calls arrive at the same time which exceed the number of staff available to respond immediately, which mean PSNI wait until the next appropriate adult becomes available.

## The pattern of Appropriate Adult attendance

The NIAAS service delivery is on a 24 hour per day, 365 days per year basis. We attend at PSNI stations as and when required to do so. Whilst the normal service period is between 08.00 hours and 23.00 hours we can see a pattern of attendance emerge throughout the reporting period.

**TABLE 2: PATTERN OF ARRIVAL TIMES**

The main attendance period for the NIAAS was the morning period between 08.00 hours and 13.00 hours, with 1975 attendances, which made up 52% of all our attendances with a peak at 09.00 hours which is largely impacted by staff being on site at Musgrave street Monday-Friday 8am-5pm and ready to deal with a matter at 9am immediately after the detainees has had breakfast, seen a doctor, met their Solicitor etc.

## Overnight attendance

This year we saw the overnight staff being called out after midnight on 102 occasions, which averages approximately 2 overnight callouts per week, in order to meet specific PSNI requests. This may relate to an interview, or it may be a non interview procedure, such as the urgent need to obtain forensic samples, to compare with samples found at a crime scene.

The attendance of an Appropriate Adult's after 22.00 or 23.00 hours can take them in to early hours of the morning before a matter is concluded, therefore it is not uncommon for staff to arrive at a station at 22.00 and leave at 01.00 or 02.00.



## Custody staff comments

When staff attend at difficult or complex calls, or attend during unsocial hours or public holidays or late at night they value positive feedback from custody staff. We capture written comments in our reporting process, and I'm delighted to copy a sample of these comments in to this report.



## Mentally vulnerable

On arrival at a police custody suite a Custody Sergeant is responsible for identifying people as being mentally vulnerable. He/she communicates with the detainee and forms an opinion as to the person's condition assisted by a police computer program for booking in detained people. From this the need for an Appropriate Adult is established.

An examination of the detained person by a Forensic Medical Officer (FMO) or Health care Nurse at Musgrave street may also result in the requirement for an Appropriate Adult being established.

Our engagement with Custody Sergeants training courses and the Custody Duty Officers (CDO) training courses has helped enhance the officers' understanding of the Appropriate Adult role and mental health issues.

On arrival at a PSNI station our staff identified a range of mental health issues, either from a known diagnosis or from information provided to custody staff by the detainee, or identified by the Forensic Medical Officer, or other professional in the health care field.

On 3,292 occasions issues were identified but on 479 occasion's staff were not able to specifically identify a condition, this is because some young people were vulnerable due to their age only by being under 18 years of age. However during consultation with our staff many young people were identified as having issues that require

support for reasons more than their age.

Vulnerabilities can be listed under specific categories; we have this year created a specific category of head / brain injury following our contact with the brain injury association.

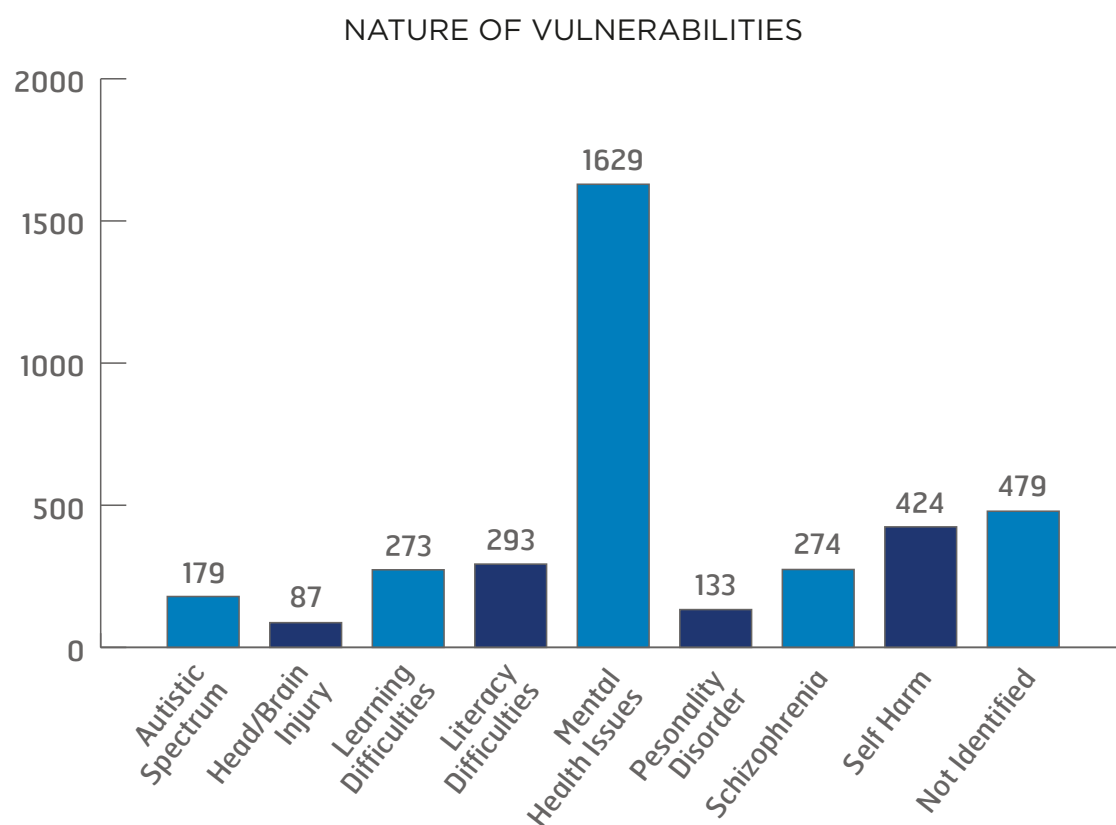
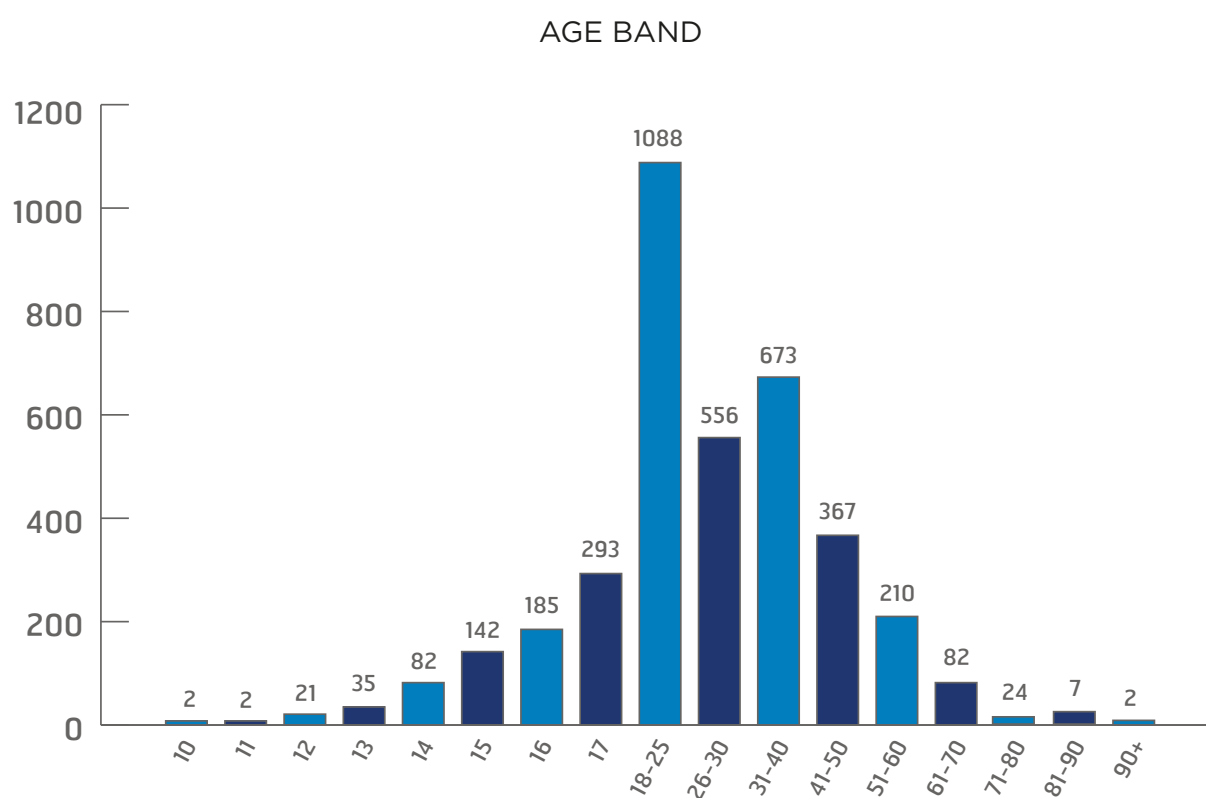
The term mental health issues is a wide all embracing term incorporating depression, anxiety, bi polar disorder. We have a specific category of schizophrenia due to engaging with a significant number of people with this diagnosis.

Learning difficulties includes attention deficit hyper activity disorder (ADHD). The category 'Nothing Identified' relates to young people who are supported purely by virtue of their age and no other co-existing problem is identified. (Table 3)

## Age band

NIAAS capture age data for all age groups we support in police custody; this year we supported 2 x 10 year old, 2 x 11 year olds, 21 x 12 year olds and 35 x 13 year olds, and 82 young people aged 14 years.

Each year we see the 18-25 year old age band accounting for the majority of all our attendances, this year the 18-25 age band accounted for 1088 ( 29% ) of all requests for our support. At the other end of the age scale we supported people aged between 71 -80 years of age on 31 occasions with 2 people aged 90+ years. (Table 4)

**TABLE 3: VULNERABILITIES****TABLE 4: AGE RANGE**

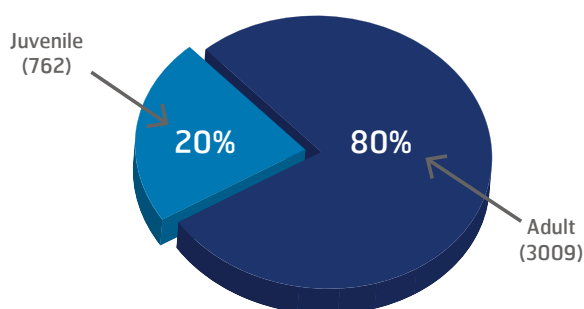
## Juveniles

The juveniles we supported accounted for 762 (20%) of all our attendances, with the 14-16 year age band within this group accounting for 409 (11%) of all our attendances. The 17 year olds alone accounted for 293 (8%) of all our attendances, during this reporting period.

## Adult/Juvenile ratio

This year we supported 3009 adults (80%) and 762 juveniles (20%) which is a steady year on year demand for juvenile support. This requirement arises when a parent cannot attend a police station due to their circumstances, i.e. no transport or they choose not to attend for a variety of personal or domestic reasons, or it may be inappropriate for them to attend such as when they are the complainant or witness in the case. (Table 5)

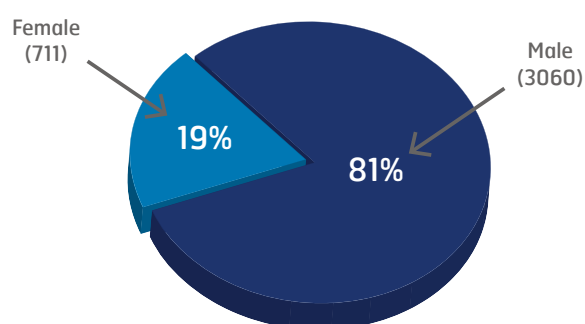
**TABLE 5: ADULT/JUVENILE RATIO**



## Gender

The gender figures show that out of 3,771 requests for support, 711 (19%) of these requests refer to female detainees, compared to the 3060 (81%) requests relating to male detainees. When this figure is read in conjunction with the age chart, it becomes evident that young men in their late teens and early 20s are a specific group in need of our services. (Table 6)

**TABLE 6: GENDER**



## PSNI stations

The attendance at particular PSNI stations depends entirely upon police requirements, the NIAAS staff team attends as and when they are requested to attend.

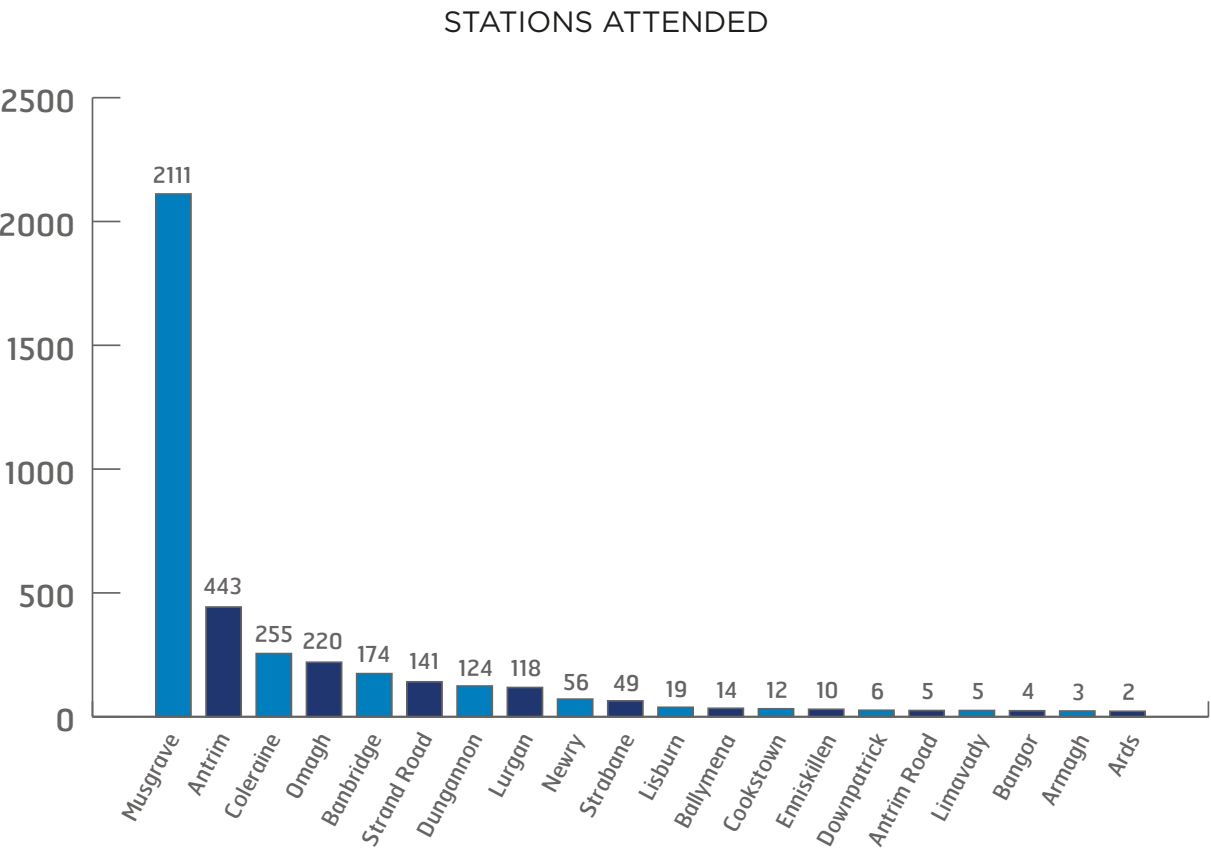
Musgrave Street station as the main holding centre for the greater Belfast City area is by far the busiest station for the scheme. Staff experience daily attendance there and often find that before completion of one requested attendance, another detainee has arrived or is already in custody that is in need of the support of an Appropriate Adult.

We have experienced several Appropriate Adults being present in Musgrave custody suite at the same time, all being engaged in different matters, running concurrently within the suite.

The PSNI have an ongoing refurbishment plan for custody suites which mean they may be closed for a period. Also many provincial towns may not have an operational custody suite; this can inflate attendance figures in another area whilst providing no figures for that particular area.

An example can be seen in the provincial towns such as Newtownards and Downpatrick, which do not have onsite custody suites. Therefore those detainees taken to Musgrave Street custody suite inflated the figures for that Belfast station, so our attendance figures at PSNI stations should not be seen as a reflection of crime figures for that area, The pattern of NIAAS attendance at stations fluctuates to meet these changes. (Table 7)

TABLE 7: STATION ATTENDANCE





## Alcohol and Drugs

Whilst staff are consulting with a detainee and examining the police custody record, they have the opportunity to discuss a person's personal difficulties and capture data beyond mental health issues such as the misuse of alcohol and drugs prior to arrest.

Police interviews are not conducted whilst a person is under the influence of a substance; however many of the offences that police were investigating were related to or resulting from the misuse of 'drink or drugs'. Many detainees including juveniles are quite frank with staff and acknowledged that drink or drugs played a part in the events that lead to their arrest, and some are agreeable and appreciative of a staff referral to other support such as the 'Linked-In' project (LIP) which is a MindWise initiative providing an early-stage intervention approach to post

custody support for young people aged 13-24 years old.

This year staff identified alcohol in 1546 (41%) and drug use in 1014 (27%) this is a 2% increase in alcohol use and a 2% increase in drug use since our last report year.

This indicates that 68% of all the people we support have taken drink or drugs before they came in to police custody which is a 5% increase on last year. (Table 8)

## Days of the week attendance

Throughout the year we saw Tuesday to Friday and as being the busiest periods. The service demand is continuous and whilst Sunday had the lowest figure throughout the year, our quarterly reports reveal that this is not a constant and peak days can vary depending upon a range of factors such as holiday periods and events taking place.

We deliver the service continually seven days per week and whilst particular days may be seen to have a higher volume of calls annually there is still a requirement to maintain sufficient staff availability to meet the day to day fluctuations that occur in service demand.

The report does not specifically highlight public holidays such as Christmas and Easter when there can be a dip in call outs however the days of the week statistical table encompasses these periods as the

**TABLE 8: ALCOHOL & DRUGS**

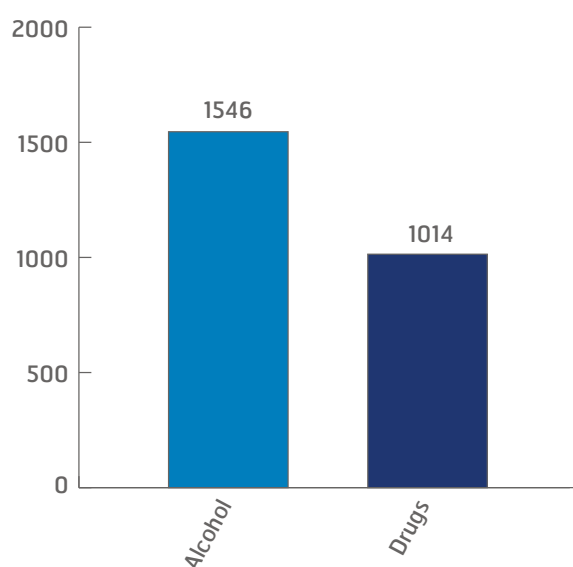
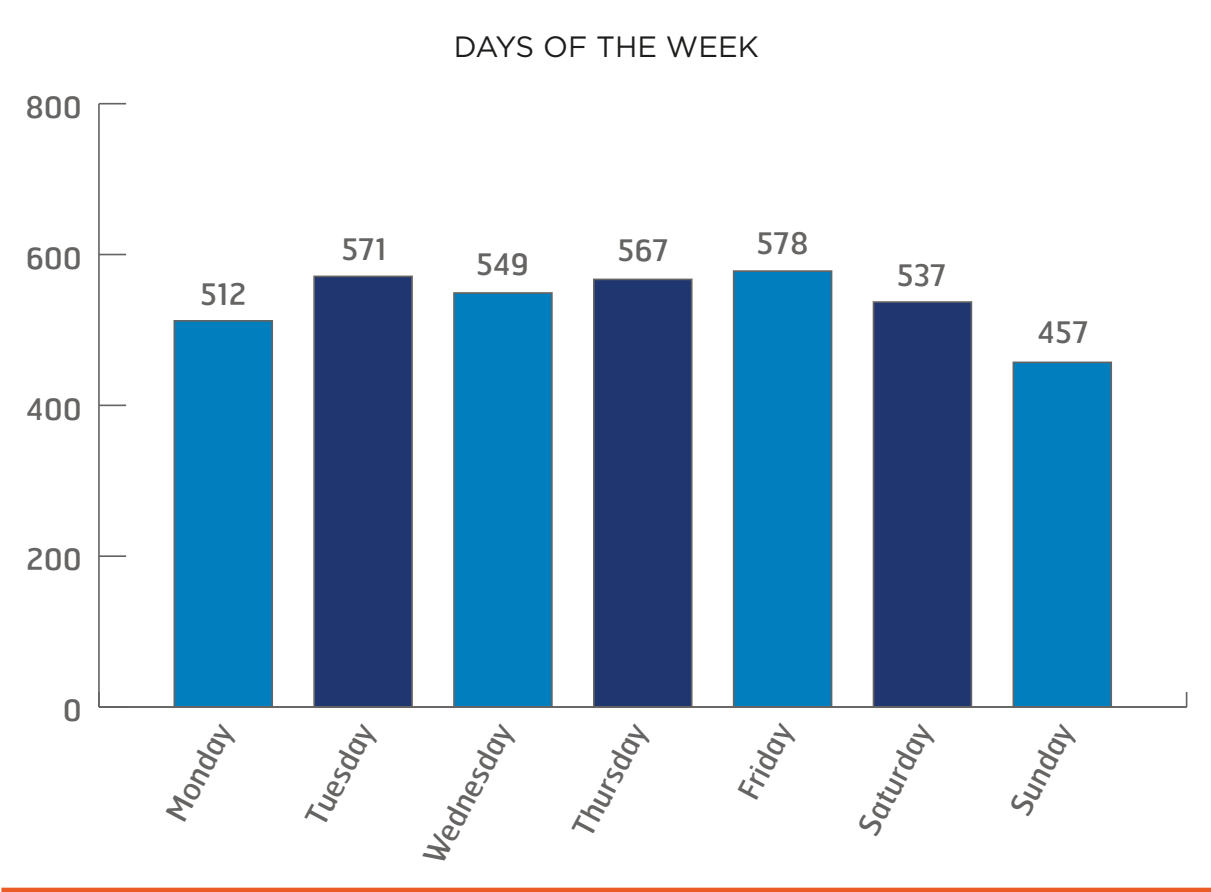


TABLE 9: DAY OF THE WEEK ATTENDANCE



service is delivered continually through the year. (Table 9)

Conclusion

This was another successful year for the scheme with 3,771 attendances at PSNI custody suites through Northern Ireland a 9% increase on last year.

Whilst all people we supported were in need of this support, the PSNI and our staff specifically identified 3,292 people with issues that required support. We believe is due to a greater understanding of mental health issues within the PSNI for which they should congratulated.

I wish to express my thanks for the organisational support we received from the MindWise Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Board of Trustees, and Senior Management Team; I wish to particularly thank the MindWise administration and financial staff, for their support.

I believe that the scheme has shown year on year that MindWise as an organisation can deliver professional services within the Criminal Justice environment and will continue to do so.

**Stanley Booth MBE**  
Appropriate Adult Scheme Manager



Head Office, Pinewood House,  
46 Newforge Lane, Malone Road,  
Belfast BT9 5NW  
Phone: 028 9040 2323

**TRANSFORMING LIVES AND  
DEVELOPING NEW VISIONS  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH BY  
CHALLENGING STIGMA AND  
DISCRIMINATION AND  
PROVIDING QUALITY  
SERVICES AND SUPPORT**



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



Health &  
Wellbeing  
Award

**For further information on NIAAS or MindWise**  
**Email: [info@mindwisenv.org](mailto:info@mindwisenv.org) [www.mindwisenv.org](http://www.mindwisenv.org)**

Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NIC103469.  
Registered in Northern Ireland Number NI071976. HMRC Charity Reference Number XT14999  
Registered Office: Pinewood House, 46 Newforge Lane, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5NW.  
Mindwise is the operating name of MindWise New Vision a company limited by guarantee and  
recognised by HM Revenue and Customs as a charity for tax purposes.

© MindWise 2009. All rights reserved.

Design by TH Jordan | Tel: 028 9045 0866 | [www.thjordanltd.com](http://www.thjordanltd.com)