

PRESS RELEASE

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SECOND INQUEST INTO DEATH OF VULNERABLE PRISONER IN HMP PENTONVILLE BEGINS

10am Monday 9 November 2009

Sitting before HM Assistant Deputy Coroner for Inner North London, Ms Gail Elliman, at St Pancras Coroner's Court, Camley Street, London, NW1 0WP

The second inquest into the death of 40 year old Paul Calvert opens on Monday 9 November 2009, and is expected to last for five days (the court will be sitting on 9, 11, 12, 13 and 16 November 2009). Following the first inquest into Paul's death in March 2007, his family brought a successful legal challenge to have the verdict quashed. In April 2009 the High Court ordered that a new inquest be held on the basis that the coroner had significantly misdirected the jury in terms of the verdict they could return.

Paul Calvert was found hanging in his cell at HMP Pentonville on 24 October 2004, less than two days after being remanded into the prison. Paul was a vulnerable prisoner who was known to have problems with drugs and alcohol and had a history of self-harm and suicide attempts. His family has serious concerns about whether staff deliberately interfered with the cell bell system which enables prisoners to trigger an audible alarm and a light outside their cell. Paul's body was only discovered a significant time after his death by a cleaner who was responding to his cell bell light, indicating that Paul may have activated it before his death.

The family hopes the inquest will examine:

- The assessment and management of Paul's risk of suicide and self-harm;
- How his drug detoxification was addressed and if he received the appropriate treatment and medication;
- whether the audible cell bells had been deliberately disabled;
- and whether any delay in responding to Paul's cell bell contributed to his death.

Paul Calvert's family is being represented by INQUEST Lawyers Group members Valentina Santambrogio of Coninghams Solicitors and barrister Adam Straw of Toaks Chambers.

Notes to editors:

INQUEST is the only organisation in England and Wales that provides a specialist, comprehensive advice service on contentious deaths and their investigation to bereaved people, lawyers, other advice and support agencies, the media, parliamentarians and the wider public. Its casework priorities are deaths in prison and in police custody, in immigration detention and in secure training centres. INQUEST develops policy proposals and undertakes research to campaign for changes to the inquest and investigation process, reduce the number

of custodial deaths, and improve the treatment and care of those within the institutions where the deaths occur.

INQUEST is campaigning to ensure that the Coroners and Justice Bill 2009 results in fundamental reform of an inquest system currently hampered by delay, inconsistency of approach and lack of resources and unable to fulfil its vital function of preventing unnecessary deaths.

The government must also make changes to ensure that bereaved families can participate effectively in inquest hearings by having equal access, alongside the police and Prison Service, to non means-tested public funding for their legal representation. [INQUEST's briefing on the Coroners & Justice Bill](#)

In recent months Pentonville prison has come under harsh scrutiny concerning transfers of vulnerable prisoners between HMP Pentonville and HMP Wandsworth during their inspections by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons (report published October 2009). In June 2006 the Chief Inspector of Prisons published a highly critical report of the prison and 14 staff were suspended on corruption allegations in August 2006.

SELF-INFLICTED DEATHS IN HMP PENTONVILLE 2000 – DATE				
Name	Date of Death	Ethnicity	Age	Inquest Verdict
Noor Haqyar	29/12/2008	Other	43	Awaited
Darren Edwards	9/4/2008	UK White	38	Awaited
Delaili Kwadzo Abusah AKA Alfredo Castano Fuentes	30/3/2008	Black African	28	Suicide
Sky Sansom	19/6/2007	Black Other	25	Took his own life + short narrative
Phillipe Ringott aka Hamou Libdiri	25/10/2005	Other Mixed	32	Unknown
Nicky Taffe	15/6/2005	Black Caribbean	31	Unknown
James Corlis	12/6//2005	UK White	24	Misadventure
Paul Calvert	24/10/2004	UK White	40	Second inquest pending
Stephen Davis	10/10/2004	UK White	49	Suicide
Paul Bartropp	25/6/2004	UK White	36	Suicide
Kevin Warren	14/6//2002	UK White	43	Suicide while balance of his mind disturbed
Alistaire Duffy	08/11/2001	UK White	34	Accidental Death
Dumisani Mabhena	10/10/2001	Black African	24	Suicide
Barry Watts	28/1/2001	UK White	30	Unknown
William Clemenson	31/7/2000	UK White	33	Suicide

Source: INQUEST casework and monitoring

Further Information	http://www.inquest.org.uk
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