

The Arrest Experience

What happens after I'm arrested?

The police will take you to a nearby police van. You can choose to walk with them or you can refuse to co-operate and be carried, but this may mean you are given an additional charge of resisting arrest (this is usually dropped if you go to court). At the van the police will ask your name, address and date of birth, they might take a Polaroid photo and you will be charged. You have the right to make a reply, which will be written down. They may ask other questions but you don't have to answer them.

Where will I be taken?

If you are arrested by the MOD police you will be taken into the base and then either released from there or transferred to a civilian police station. If you are arrested by Strathclyde Police you will be taken to a police station, probably in Glasgow. Often men and women are sent to different places.

What happens at the police station?

You will be searched and your possessions taken away. Check your pockets **before** the action to make sure you do not have anything in them you do not want the police to see and that you do **not** have your penknife with you. They will also take things like belts so make sure your trousers stay up without them!

If the police ask you to strip for a search (which is rare), ask them why and explain that complaints about previous strip searches have been upheld. If they insist on a strip search it is up to you whether you co-operate, but get the names of the police officers and make a complaint as soon as you are released and let Legal Support know.

The police will ask your details again and whether you want someone told that you are in custody and a solicitor informed as well. Ask them to contact your legal support team. You only really need to see a solicitor if you are being held for court but they can help sort out other problems as well. You have the right to see a lawyer after being arrested. You should have got the name/number of a lawyer from your legal support team before the action (the Legal Working Group can help them find one) - probably on a bust card together with their number.

The police will ask your name, address and date of birth. They will also ask you lots of other questions but you DO NOT have to give them any further information. Tell them if you are vegan or vegetarian or need medication.

If you are ill or injured you have the right to see a doctor and insist on seeing one at the earliest opportunity.

You will then be put in a cell, possibly by yourself or possibly with two or more others. The cell will usually have a gym-type mattress and you should be able to get blankets if you need them (but you might have to ask). Likewise, you should be able to get water when you need it. There is a call button in each cell but they can take a long time to answer so if they come by for any reason take the opportunity to ask then if you need anything. You should get three meals a day (although they may claim you've 'just missed' one so it can only be two, depending on what time you arrive at. They will come by and check up on you periodically and will take you out for fingerprints, to charge you, etc.

The police can photograph and fingerprint you if they wish but records will be destroyed if you are not prosecuted, or if you are eventually acquitted. Strathclyde Police use a new electronic fingerprint machine that is linked to the national computer. You will also have swabs taken from the inside of your cheeks for DNA tests. The police can do this using 'reasonable' force.

If the police can verify your name and address you probably will be released. They check this by sending the local police to the address you have given and asking if you live there or by checking on the electoral roll. However, they may decide that they want to put everyone on bail, so as to be able to impose a condition not to go within a certain distance of Faslane. Alternatively, you may be asked to sign an Undertaking to come back to court on a specified day. This means that if you fail to turn up on that day, they can add an extra charge. They cannot impose any other conditions without taking you to court. You do not have to sign the undertaking, but it may increase the chance that they hold you for court if you don't.

If they do decide to hold you for court, you will be held overnight in a cell at a police station. They have to take you to court the next working day so if you were arrested on a Friday you could be held until Monday. Try and get some sleep - they will come round periodically (every hour or two) to check on you (by opening the little hatch in the door): if you can, then just grunt that you're OK but try not to wake up fully. You will then be woken up very early, given some breakfast and the opportunity to wash at a sink in the corridor and then put into a van to be taken to court. At the court you will be put into a large holding cell before being brought up to the court itself. Assuming you are released on bail, you should be released from the court without having to go back to the police station

Will I be Interviewed?

Possibly. If you've been arrested then you have a right to talk to a solicitor first. Think in advance about what you want to do if you are interviewed and talk it over in your group. You are NOT obliged to answer any questions. If you decide not to answer any questions, then it's best to say "*No Comment*" or something similar to every question, even the stuff you've already told them like name and address. Alternatively, you might wish to prepare a statement in advance, saying why you took part, then simply repeat that or say "*I've nothing further to add to my statement*". If you do decide to answer their questions then it's best to

- Try and stick to why you did it, rather than what you did. Remember that you still don't have to answer every question.
- Not mention anyone else or what anyone else did, however seemingly innocent. It's your decision what you say but it's their decision what they say so if you're going to answer only answer about yourself.

What Happens When I'm Released?

You will be taken out of the cell, you may be asked to sign an undertaking, then you will be given your property back. You will be asked to sign to say you've got it all back - check it first! - and then released. Hopefully, someone from your group will meet you. Ring your legal support team and let them know you're out.

Non UK residents

If you live abroad it is more difficult for the police to check your identity. They may want to see proof of ID such as a passport. It may also increase the likelihood of you being held for court. For more information see the Briefing for Internationals