

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

2014

Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England and Wales No. 4911257

Registered Charity No: 1124328

Patrons: Lord Dholakia PC, OBE, DL & Rt. Hon. Baroness Williams of Crosby

Annual Report



Chair's Report

I am here as the new Chair of Gatwick detainees Welfare group, due to the illness of Anna Seddon. Anna, the Chair since 2011, is well known within the charity and it is a daunting prospect to step into her shoes. Her love of the charity and commitment to supporting detainees in need has always been self-evident. We miss her presence and I know that not only the Trustees but the volunteers, staff and members of the charity thank her for her hard work and wish her and her family well.

The central core of our charity is, and always will be, our visitors. It is they who take our care into the detention centre and create the relationships which help detainees through the struggles which they endure. The companionship developed between visitors and detainees remains the focus of all that we do.

Nationally immigration issues take the centre stage, too often with depressing slant. However there are green shoots. I am writing before the result of the election is known but it is optimistic that two of the major national parties have committed to end the practice of indefinite detention. The lack of any time limit on detention is something which detainees speaking to us find very hard to bear. When interviewing for staff in our office I was impressed and renewed to hear of the number of younger people working hard to assist refugees and asylum seekers and showing enormous dedication in supporting those who are at risk of slipping through the cracks in our society.

Most of you should have heard of the 'Refugee Tales' event due to take place soon. This is an exciting and imaginative way of involving people in considering the plight of others. The organisers have put in a great deal of effort and this is really taking off- we hope for a real buzz which will generate interest in the issues we discuss. I hope you have booked your tickets for the final event and a place on the walk if you are able.

Our Big Lottery funding has been a great boon (many thanks to Felicity Dick for her efforts in achieving it), which has allowed us to expand our office support and increase the service we offer detainees and support we offer visitors. I am sure you will all agree that the team led by Nic Eadie, our Director, are superb at both getting on with what needs to be done and coming up with ideas for outreach work which has become increasingly interesting. We have been able to support some research by our staff, 'Cutting Justice', which is needed to support efforts to produce change at a national level. However the Lottery funding will be coming to an end in 2016 and we will be increasing our fundraising efforts in order to maintain the services we provide, including instituting a friends scheme and a legacy scheme.

I also want to thank all the other Trustees who have worked very hard to support the aims of the charity and assist me in moving forward. Elaine Mitchell has resigned (due to personal reasons) and we thank her for her support and hard work. We will need to recruit more trustees and if you, or your friends would be willing to help, especially in the area of IT, I would encourage you to come forward and find out what is involved.

To finish on a personal note, when I arrived at my first visitors' meeting I was daunted and somewhat overwhelmed by the commitment of long standing visitors and their knowledge and experience developed from their friendships developed through their work for our charity. I could not imagine ever being in this position, and indeed I am far from having the wide network of some of our visitors. But this month I was able to meet with an ex-detainee friend in Paris. With one big smile that neither of us could hide I glimpsed in a second the rewards the befriending brings all of us. And it starts with the first trembling hand shake.

Gemma Stockford
April 2015

Detainees' Words

Some words from current detainees and those released

Words cannot express how wonderful your support was during our trials. Your support to both me and my husband was so amazing, at a time when it feels hopeless you helped us to keep strong.

Lauren, thank you for everything. I'm sure just thank you will not be enough but this means a lot to me. Thank you once again for ur precious time and to Jessie as well for being there for me when I had no one.

It's brilliant work and just to talk is so important. I can't worry my family by what it's like here and you need someone to listen to you.

My visitor is like a mother. Having a visit takes you out of the place.

I never thought talking could be so priceless. It keeps me alive.

You can't believe that someone you never met comes to see you when friends you had before keep away because detention seems terrible to them.

My visitor she talk to me only. She care for me. She listen to me. I need her visit me.

Director's Report

2015 was a mixed picture for GDWG and the people we worked with during the year, but for the first time in a very long time it felt as though there were reasons to be hopeful that positive reform may just be possible. The announcement of the first ever Parliamentary Inquiry into the use of immigration detention in the UK in July was met warmly by the many organisations, including GDWG, who have been arguing for a long time that the use of detention should be reduced and not expanded, and that it is inherently unjust and damaging to the individuals who are entrapped within the system. Led by Sarah Teather MP, the panel announced that they would be taking evidence not only from organisations who work with detainees, but also directly from current and former detainees themselves. GDWG were able to help a number of people make their own submissions, as well as submitting our own evidence. Reporting early in 2015, we have been extremely pleased to see a recommendation for a 28-day time limit on detention, as well as a range of other recommendations to transform the way that detention is used, and not merely tinkered with.

With the Legal Aid cuts of 2013 continuing to bite for those we support, we started a piece of research to see exactly how people had been affected at the Gatwick IRCs. My thanks go to Lauren Cape-Davenhill for putting so much hard work into this, and to all of the volunteers who helped her gather the data. At the time of writing, this research is almost ready to publish and we hope it will add further evidence to the campaign to restore Legal Aid to all vulnerable people who are at risk of being denied justice.

I remain in awe of all of the fantastic people involved in the GDWG Outreach Committee who put on another fantastic evening of entertainment at the Hawth Theatre in Crawley in June as part of The Longest Day 2. A packed theatre listened, laughed and learnt about what it actually means to be a refugee and to make the journey to a foreign land, leaving all you know behind. Out of this incredible creative energy came the idea of The Refugee Tales, the Committee's biggest and most ambitious project yet. The amount of work that Anna Pincus and the volunteers on the Committee put in to all of these events is enormous, and they add huge value to the work of GDWG. I thank you all for your dedication and hard work.

I also want to put on record my sincere thanks to Naomi Blackwell and Sarah Pailthorpe, who made up the rest of the GDWG staff team along with Anna and Lauren. They all did a fantastic job throughout 2014 listening and supporting so many people with such diverse needs, as did all of GDWG's wonderful volunteers who work so tirelessly in often difficult circumstances. And finally I want to say thank you to Anna Seddon, long-term visitor with GDWG and up until very recently our Chair of Trustees, who has had to step down from the role due to ill-health. She has played a huge part in GDWG's story for a very long time, and working with her has been a privilege and a pleasure. I wish you all the best, Anna, and hope to see you in the visits hall very soon.

Nic Eadie
April 2015

Facts and Figures

In 2014 we were in contact with 1148 detainees in total, more than 10% higher than 2013

Assistance

Below are some of the measurable ways in which GDWG assisted detainees in 2014.

Number of Detainees Requesting	Total 2013	Total 2014
Agency Liaison/referral	94	155
Clothing	418	411
Drop-in	380	335
Information/signposting legal advice	325	337
Phone cards	731	908
Removal Money	104 (£3060)	227 (£5760)
Section 4 Assistance	83	80
Transport Money	36 (£1286)	7 (£283.39)
Visitor	262	239

Demand for our services remained strong throughout the year, and the figures above reflect increases in a number of the services we offer. In particular we gave money to almost double the number of people who were about to be removed than the year previously, and also made a significantly increased number of referrals to other agencies.

Length of Detention

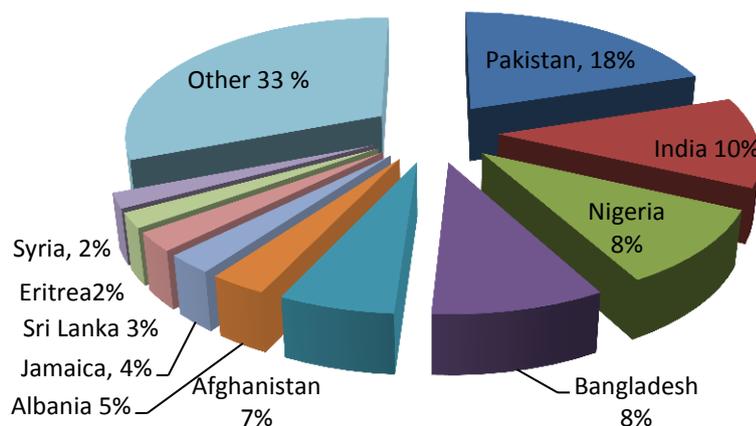
Below is a 'snapshot' of how long each of the detainees we were in touch with on 31st December 2014 had spent in detention. As in previous years, these figures may slightly underestimate the periods of detention, as for many of these people we did not know about periods spent in other detention centres so we took the date they came to the Gatwick IRCs as their start date. This period also coincided with the aftermath of a chickenpox outbreak across both centres which meant that numbers of people detained at Gatwick were lower than usual.

The figures show once again that the number of very long-term detained people had decreased, though only very slightly when you look at those held for more than six months. Once again detainees were on the whole held at Brook House for much longer periods than at Tinsley, where the vast majority were held for less than three months.

Period of Detention	Number Detainees (2013)			Number Detainees (2014)		
	BH	TH	Total	BH	TH	Total
0-30 days	49	29	78	27	16	43
1-3 months	72	16	88	63	23	86
3-6 months	25	5	31	18	1	19
6-12 months	13	0	13	14	1	15
Over 12 months	8	0	8	4	0	4

Countries of Origin

For the third year running we had more Pakistanis contacting us than any other nationality, followed by Indians, Nigerians and Bangladeshis. Many of these people were either caught working without permission or were students who had breached the terms of their visas or been accused of obtaining their visa by deception related to their English language test. We also came into contact with 23 Syrians, mostly those who were facing removal to another European country. 9% of those we supported were from EU countries, with Polish being the largest group.



Visiting

Below is a 'snapshot' of the people we were visiting on 31st December, 2014. We were visiting a total of 41 detainees on that date. We had only been visiting one person for more than a year at that point, albeit that person had been in detention for almost two years by then, and remains there at the time of writing. Average lengths of detention for those we were visiting were similar to last year.

Over and above the 41 volunteers who were visiting on that date, we also had another 32 volunteers who were taking a temporary break from visiting at that point, meaning we had a total volunteer force of 73 people. Of these volunteers, 27 have been visiting with GDWG for over 5 years, including 14 for over 10 years.

Period of Visiting	2013 no. detainees visited on 31/12/13	2014 no. detainees visited on 31/12/14
0-30 days	15	12
1-3 months	22	21
3-6 months	4	5
6-12 months	2	2
Over 12 months	0	1

Outreach and work with other organisations

GDWG continued to work with a range of other organisations who support and campaign for detainee rights, both in our day-to-day work with detainees themselves, but also in coordinating our advocacy work. Primarily we continued working under the auspices of the Detention Forum, on both the Indefinite Detention and Vulnerable People Working Groups. The Forum were instrumental in supporting the creation and the work of the Parliamentary Inquiry. We maintained close working relationships with all other visitor groups throughout the country, and regularly attended the Asylum Rights Campaign's Detention Sub-group. We remain a member of the Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees and are grateful for their support and advice.

2014 was the year that The Orchard choir was formed, conducted by our Treasurer, George Fitzsimons, and bringing together GDWG volunteers and staff with singers working in other voluntary organisations at The Orchard. 2014 was also the year that GDWG volunteers, detainees, ex-detainees and local organisations took up their needles and made a quilt on the themes of 'Journeys and The Hand of Friendship'. The quilt formed the backdrop for a celebration of Refugee Week and subsequently toured locally making appearances at Crawley Town Hall, local churches including St Margaret's Church West Hoathly, East Surrey College, the Youth Gather for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, at the Crawley Young Person's Council Question Time, and at The Hawth for a Crawley Black History Foundation event. The quilt reached over 1,000 people and featured in the local press. Special thanks to our volunteers Brenda Jenkins, Lynne Bellworthy, Dorothy Lazenby and Ann

Locke for their work on the quilt. Pound Hill Junior School children took part in an after-school club to sew their contributions and ex-detainees attended a sewing workshop with representatives from local churches, community groups and organisations including Remaking Picasso's Guernica, Crawley Campaign Against Racism, Samaritans and Fairtrade who sewed their logos on the quilt to show support for GDWG.

The Outreach Committee developed preparations for Refugee Tales and in addition to Christina Fitzsimons, Mary Barrett, Ann Locke and Jen Tindle, a greater number of volunteers than ever before joined four committees in an intensive programme of six weekly meetings working on the project. A partnership was formed with Kent University and David Herd, Professor of English, took the lead on the artistic committee identifying writers and poets to collaborate with ex-detainees, refugees and the people who work with them to develop the Tales. Christina and her team walked the Refugee Tales route, visited the venues and links were developed with partner organisations in Kent including Kent Refugee Help, Kent Refugee Action Network and Samphire. Talks were given about Refugee Tales, for example at the Dover Ex-Detainee Conference and to the President of the Mother's Union in Cuckfield. In addition to preparations for Refugee Tales, the Outreach Committee continued to host visits to meet ex-detainees and Brook House for Brenda Smith, Mayor of Crawley and the Rt Reverend Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon.

'The Second Longest Day' celebrated Refugee Week in the Hawth Theatre with performances of music including Mike 'Dr Blue', comedy including John Ryan, the pop-up singing of The Orchard Choir and students from Hazelwick School performing a drama devised from drama workshops held in Crawley with ex-detainees. Ifield Community College Choir and Drummers performed and with the Refugee Week theme of 2014 focusing on the achievements of young people, this vibrant presence of the Chagossian drummers was a fitting celebration of Refugee Week. The Host for the evening was Paul Kerensa and guests including Mayor Councillor Bob Burgess and GDWG Patron, Lord Dholakia. The Mayor wrote afterwards 'I was particularly impressed by the contributions of the young people. They are our future and their participation with the dramatic presentation showed very clearly that young people do care and do have concerns for their fellow human beings.'

Treasurer's Report

GDWG reported a deficit in 2014 (expenditure was greater than income) of £22,956, compared to a surplus of £23,154 in 2013. This was a result of lower income and higher costs.

Grant income was £149,626 in 2014 compared to £184,725 in 2013. The reduction principally relates to the 2013 grant of £28,600 from The Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, which did not recur in 2014 (the fund closed in 2013 after distributing all its assets). Although some new grants were secured in 2014, some other multi-year grants came to an end and the overall effect was a grant income reduction of £6,499 in addition to the Diana-related reduction. Donation and gift income of £7,045 was below the 2013 figure of £9,665, as there were some large donations received in 2013 that did not recur. Interest income of £868 was at a similar level to 2013. Other income of £2,170 in 2014 included £574 of income from the event 'The Second Longest Day', £1,376 of non-returnable deposits for 'The Refugee Tales' and £220 of Christmas card income.

Direct charitable expenditure increased by £7,376. The Charity's salary costs were £1,650 higher than 2013 (an increase of 1.5% mainly relating to pay rises, partly offset by changes in working hours) and there were significant increases in detainee welfare costs (which are difficult to predict) and volunteer expenses (with volunteers tending to live further from Gatwick). There was also £2,000 of costs relating to 'The Second Longest Day', 'The Refugee Tales' and Christmas cards (offset by related income).

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER

	Unrestricted 2014 £	Restricted 2014 £	Total 2014 £	Total 2013 £
Incoming resources from generated funds:				
Grants received	34,126	115,500	149,626	184,725
Donations received	7,045	-	7,045	9,665
Other income	2,170	-	2,170	-
Interest received	868	-	868	838
Total incoming resources	44,209	115,500	159,709	195,228
Resources expended:				
Direct charitable expenditure	53,962	83,820	137,782	130,406
Premises and office support costs	10,508	31,540	42,048	40,168
Governance costs	2,835	-	2,835	1,500
Total resources expended	67,305	115,360	182,665	172,074
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources	(23,096)	140	(22,956)	23,154
Transfers between funds	980	(980)	-	-
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources after transfers	(22,116)	(840)	(22,956)	23,154
Fund balances at beginning of year	102,707	840	103,547	80,393
Fund balances at end of year	80,591	-	80,591	103,547

Premises and office support costs increased by £1,880, with the main reasons an increase of £1,102 in print, post and stationery costs and £839 of translation costs for the detainee survey (translated into nine languages in order to attempt to increase participation and be more inclusive). Rent reduced, while most other premises and office support costs were similar to 2013. Governance costs rose as a result of increased independent examination fees following the change of Treasurer in 2014.

Cash at year end was £107,552 compared to £134,082 at the end of 2013 and the Charity's financial position appears sound for 2015. The funding from The Big Lottery Fund ends in early 2016 and the Trustees are conscious that, at current expenditure levels, additional funding will need to be found for 2016 and future years.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER

	2014		2013	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets:				
Tangible assets		1,983		1,348
Current assets:				
Debtors	4,580		3,493	
Cash at bank and in hand	107,552		134,082	
	<u>112,132</u>		<u>137,575</u>	
Creditors falling due within one year	(33,524)		(35,376)	
Net current assets		78,608		102,199
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>80,591</u>		<u>103,547</u>
Income funds:				
Restricted funds		-		840
Unrestricted funds		80,591		102,707
Fund balances at end of year		<u>80,591</u>		<u>103,547</u>

George Fitzsimons
April 2014

Support

We are grateful for the support of:

Our funders:

Big Lottery Fund
 Crawley Borough Council
 Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund
 The Hillcote Trust
 Lloyds Bank Foundation
 Sussex Community Foundation
 The Longley Trust
 The AB Charitable Trust
 The Henry Smith Charity
 The Tudor Trust

Our patrons:

Rt. Hon. Baroness Williams of Crosby
 Lord Dholakia PC, OBE, DL

Our friends and colleagues:

ABL solicitors
 Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees
 Asylum Aid
 Asylum Welcome
 Bail for Immigration Detainees
 Bhatt Murphy Solicitors
 Bridges Arts Group
 Councillor Brenda Smith, Mayor of Crawley
 Deighton Pierce Glynn Solicitors
 Detention Action
 Detention Forum
 Doughty Street Chambers
 Duncan Lewis Solicitors
 Freedom From Torture
 Friends Without Borders
 Garden Court Chambers
 Helen Bamber Foundation
 Howe and Co Solicitors
 Immigration Law Practitioners Association
 Kent Refugee Action Network
 Kent Refugee Help

Lawrence Lupin solicitors
 Leigh Day Solicitors
 Lewes Group in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers
 Medical Justice
 Morton Hall Visitors Group
 Project London
 Public Law Project
 Red Cross International Tracing and Messaging Service
 Refugee Council
 Right to Remain
 Rt Rev Jonathan Clark, Bishop of Croydon
 Samphire
 Samaritans (Reigate branch)
 Solange Valdez
 UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group
 University of Law
 University of Kent
 Yarls Wood Befrienders
 Zimbabwe Association

Our thanks to:

Crawley Community and Voluntary Service
 Henry Smith MP
 Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons, Nick Hardwick

G4S and Home Office staff and management at Brook House and Tinsley House IRCs for their assistance and cooperation

Churches, individuals and organisations who have donated money, clothing and other items to us

Our wonderful volunteers, who do such great work with those we support in detention