

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group: 2005 Statistics

In 2005 fewer people were detained at Tinsley House than the previous year. 588 detainees were assisted by GDWG - compared to 805 people during 2004. This was due to four separate outbreaks of chickenpox, which each time left the centre in quarantine for 3 weeks. During these times no new detainees are admitted (unless they have removal directions out of the country for the next day), and no families or women are accepted into detention. GDWG still visits during these periods, but the population remains stable and the number of new referrals drops.

Detainee profile

- **Asylum status:** 75% of the detainees in contact with GDWG were asylum seekers.
- **Gender:** 64% were male and 36% female.
- **Age distribution:** Most detainees that we assisted were aged between 22 and 30. We were in touch with 16 children who were being detained as adults because their age was disputed by immigration, and 49 children who were being detained with their families
- **Nationality:** The detainees we encountered came from 78 different countries:

Afghanistan (31), Algeria (14), Albania (6), Angola (19), Antigua (1), Azerbaijan (7), Bangladesh (8), Benin (1), Bolivia (4), Bosnia (2), Botswana (1), Brazil (2), Bulgaria (1), Burkina Faso (2), Burundi (2), Cameroon (5), Canada (1), Chad (2), Chechnya (1), China (16), Colombia (15), Congo Brazzaville (2), Cuba (3), Dominican Republic (1), Democratic Republic of Congo (19), Ecuador (2), Eritrea (19), Ethiopia (7), Gambia (4), Ghana (20), Ivory Coast (2), Guinea Conakry (2), India (10), Iran (22), Iraq (19), Israel (3), Jamaica (27), Kazakhstan (1), Kenya (10), Kosovo (10), Krygistan (3), Lesotho (1), Liberia (6), Libya (4), Malawi (3), Malaysia (2), Moldova (3), Mongolia (2), Morocco (1), Namibia (1), Nepal (3), Nigeria (50), Pakistan (15), Palestine (9), Philippines (2), Romania (11), Russia (2), Rwanda (1), Sierra Leone (13), Somalia (3), South Africa (3), Spain (1), Sri Lanka (6), St Lucia (2), Sudan (6), Togo (4), Trinidad (3), Tunisia (1), Turkey (18), Uganda (22), Ukraine (6), USA (1), Uzbekistan (1), Venezuela (2), Vietnam (14), Yemen (1), Zambia (2), Zimbabwe (31), Unknown (5)

During 2005 there was a 50% rise in the number of Zimbabweans contacting us. During the summer of 2005 the government detained large numbers with a view to removing them from the country. After a campaign by the media and refugee organisations, culminating in a ruling by the House of Lords, removals to Zimbabwe were eventually stopped.

We were also contacted by a much higher number of Vietnamese detainees than usual, as the immigration service mounted a special operation during the year to detain and remove large numbers of these nationals.

There has also been a notable increase in the numbers of people we are in contact with from Iraq. In November 2005 the Immigration Service operated its first successful enforced removal to northern Iraq.

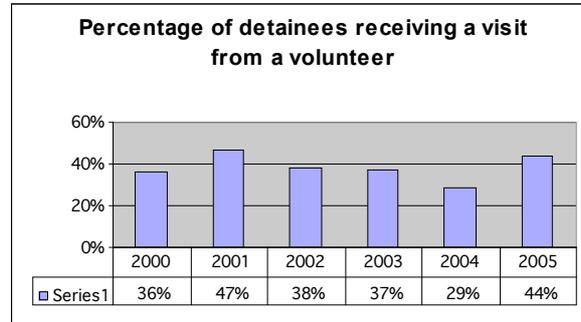
Forms of assistance

77% of detainees requested a visitor upon contact with the group. The GDWG office also provided other forms of assistance listed in the table below:

Type of assistance	Detainees assisted in 2002	Detainees assisted in 2003	Detainees assisted in 2004	Detainees assisted in 2005
Telephone card	46	94	198	339
New solicitor	127	148	74	16
Legal liaison / signposting of legal advice	168	257	380	276
Clothing	171	309	231	179
Toiletries	175	333	292	204
Liaison with friends or family	35	41	61	33
Referral / liaison with other agencies	137	173	121	122
Removal money for destitute detainees	35 (£725)	48 (£1,022)	38 (£925)	39 (£1120.00)
Assistance after leaving	-	101	98	53

Visiting Statistics

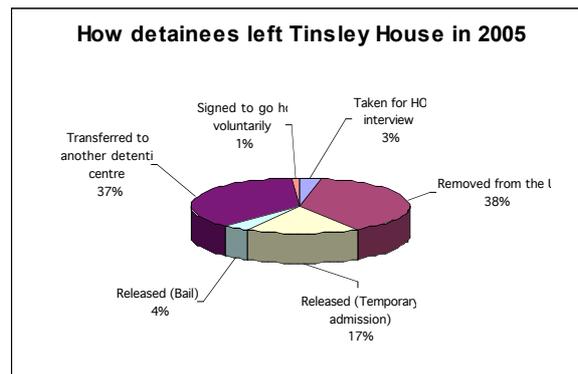
Although we've had fewer detainees contact us this year, the movement of people through the centre has been less rapid than in the previous few years. This has meant that the proportion of those who contact us who actually received a one-to-one visit from a volunteer has increased (as opposed to being helped solely by office staff).



Outcomes of detention at Tinsley House

When new detainees contact us, we ask them how they first came to be detained – the majority (44%) had been picked up by immigration at their place of work or in their home; 20% had been detained on arrival in the UK; 16% came from prison or police custody and 20% were detained upon routine reporting. It is not always possible for us to find out where a detainee has gone on leaving the centre, but we have data for 517 detainees with whom we were in contact in 2005. Approximately one in five were released from detention, weakening the government's position that people are only ever detained immediately prior to removal.

During 2005 people continued to be held for relatively short periods at Tinsley House. Of those we were in contact with, 81% were detained at the centre for less than one month, 14% were held for between 1-2 months and 5% for over 2 months. The person visited the longest during the year was detained at Tinsley for 11 months before being transferred to another detention centre.



Volunteer Statistics

- In 2005 we had 74 volunteers who speak between them 26 languages - 20% are members of an ethnic minority.
- During the course of 2005, 11 new volunteer visitors were trained and inducted.