

Annual Report 2015

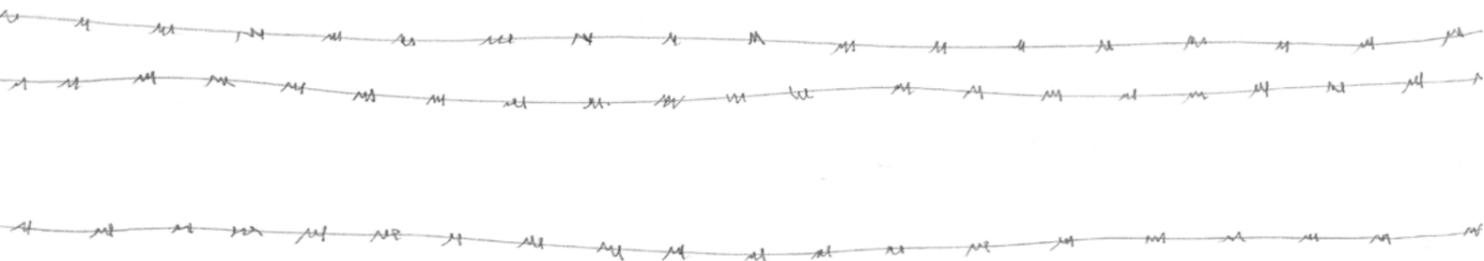


association of **visitors**
to
immigration detainees

Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1156709

“...our evidence on the ground suggests that the current approach to vulnerability is flawed. Detention can and does make anyone potentially vulnerable. As such, vulnerability must be viewed as a complex and dynamic combination of personal, social and environmental factors which are reviewed in an ongoing manner. AVID believes that vulnerable people with complex needs should never be detained.”

AVID submission to *The Shaw Review* (May 2015)



33,189 people left detention in 2015. Of these, 18,103 people -

55% - were released back in to the UK community - their detention having served no purpose.

47%

of people leaving detention in 2015 had sought or were seeking asylum.

Over 650 volunteer visitors were registered in 2015, in **20** visitor groups making up the AVID network. Together, they provided emotional support and practical advice to detainees held in **every single** detention centre and residential short term holding facility in the UK.

What is Immigration Detention?

Immigration detention is the use of custody to hold someone while considering a request to enter the country, or pending deportation or removal from the country. In the UK, there is no automatic judicial oversight of immigration detention: decisions to detain are made by civil servants, not in court. And unlike most other countries in Europe, there is no time limit on detention.

In 2015, there was a radical shift away from the constant expansion of immigration detention that we have seen in recent years. With Haslar closing in March, and Dover in November, by the end of the year, there were nine detention centres or 'immigration removal centres', compared to 11 at the end of 2014. There were also four residential short term holding facilities, including Cedars, which holds families and is designated 'pre departure accommodation'. People can also be held under immigration act powers in holding rooms at ports and airports, or in prisons. At the end of 2015, 32,446 people had entered immigration detention (and around another estimated 500 were held in prisons). This was a reduction of around 2,000 from 2014. We hope that this downward trajectory continues: the UK's use of detention is unjust, ineffective and causes lasting harm.

What is AVID doing about it?

Mission Statement

AVID upholds the human dignity and well being of immigration detainees. We do this by voicing the concerns of those detained, our member groups and the nationwide network of visitors, and by supporting and coordinating visiting nationally.

Strategic Directions

- Building a skilled, confident, supported and knowledgeable visitors network
- Raising awareness of the realities of immigration detention, presenting a national voice for change to decision makers
- Ensuring authoritative and high quality information on the realities of immigration detention is available to all

List of Members 2015

Asylum Welcome

Campsfield House IRC

Detention Action

Colnbrook IRC, Harmondsworth IRC and Verne IRC

Friends Without Borders (Haslar Visitors Group)

Formerly visiting at Haslar IRC, now community support

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

Brook House IRC, Tinsley House IRC, Cedars pre-departure accommodation

Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Asylum and Refugee Network

Detention issues in the local community

Jesuit Refugee Service

Colnbrook IRC, Harmondsworth IRC

Larne House Visitors Group

Larne STHF

Lewes Group in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

HMP Lewes

Liverpool Prisons Visiting Group

Liverpool prisons

Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team

Pennine House STHF, HMP Manchester (formerly Strangeways)

Morton Hall Detainee Visitors Group

Morton Hall IRC

Samphire (formerly Dover Detainee Visitors Group)

Dover IRC

Scottish Detainee Visitors

Dungavel IRC

SOAS Detainee Support

Colnbrook IRC, Harmondsworth IRC, Yarl's Wood IRC

Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group

Community Support

Sudanese Visitors Group

Supporting Sudanese detainees

Verne Visitors Group

Verne IRC

Wandsworth Refugee Network

HMP Wandsworth

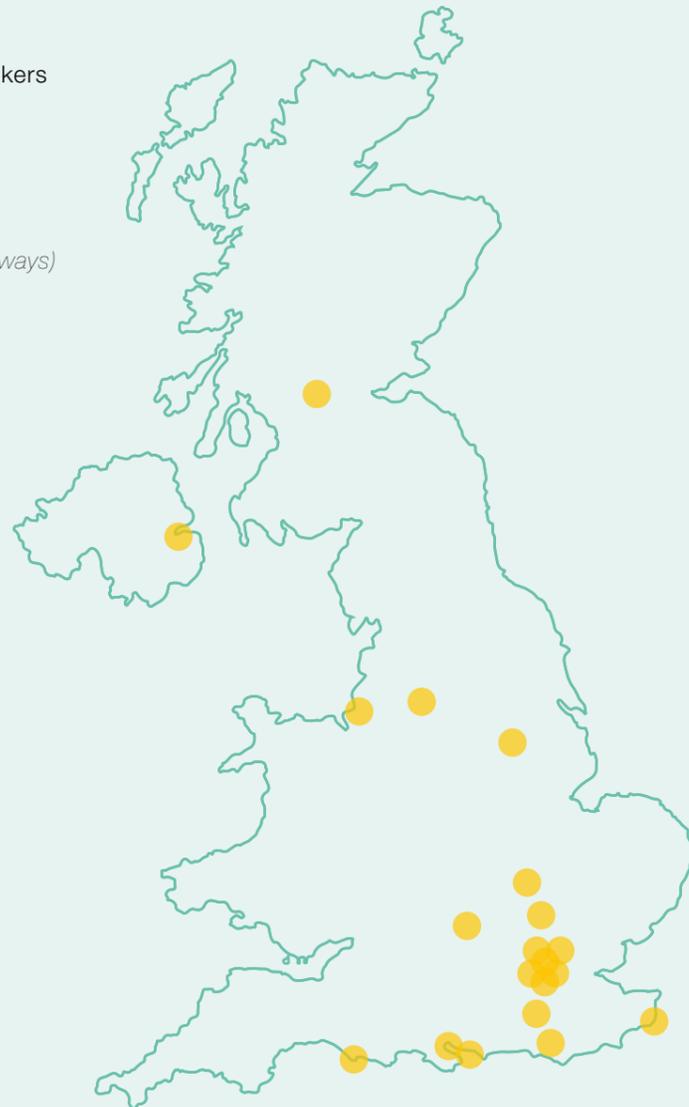
Yarl's Wood Befrienders

Yarl's Wood IRC

Zimbabwe Association

Supporting Zimbabwean detainees

20 | member visitors groups were supported by AVID in 2015



Chair's Report

I became Chair of the Board of Trustees on Kathy English's retirement at the 2015 AGM. Kathy is a hard act to follow. Her quiet determination and endless good humour made working with her a pleasure, and we all miss her. We're sure that she will continue to give wonderful service to her school board of governors, and any other work she wishes to take on.

During 2015, the Dover and Haslar detention centres were closed more or less overnight. Whether or not these closures were a part of it, there has been a definite shift in thinking in this last year around the use of detention in the UK. The report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention in the UK – to which AVID, among many others including detainees – gave evidence, came out strongly in favour of a time limit for detention. The Panel overseeing the inquiry consisted of members of both Houses and from across the political spectrum. Its conclusions are clear, and people have had to take notice. Stephen Shaw conducted his review into the welfare in immigration detention of vulnerable people in 2015, although it was not published until January 2016. He surprised many by interpreting his terms of reference widely and making a series of recommendations to the Home Office, which if adopted, would transform the use of detention in this country. The fact that AVID's evidence is cited throughout his review speaks volumes about the quality of the submission made by Ali McGinley, our Director. It is evidence, yet again, that this small charity has real influence, and that is almost entirely due to Ali's efforts.

We are grateful for the continued funding in support of our second member of staff throughout 2015, which once again enabled us to further enhance the training, outreach and capacity building support of our 20 member visitors groups. AVID's

Training and Membership Coordinator, Jessica Lousley, once again invigorated the delivery of training throughout the membership network with a particular focus on the smaller groups outside the London area, such as the Verne Visitors Group, ensuring a secure foundation on which to carry out its work. The direct support and advice AVID is able to provide, is greatly appreciated by our network of members. I'm sad to say that Jessica left AVID in January 2016, to move to Australia, but we wish her well in the new phase of her life. We look forward to welcoming a new Training and Membership Coordinator to continue this work in 2016.

It is a pleasure for me to thank all those who have helped AVID throughout 2015, in particular our members and funders. Our small staff team consistently exceed expectations, and the Board is deeply grateful. I must thank my fellow Trustees, who make up a Board that is young, engaged and very sharp. In particular I wish to thank Madeline, our Treasurer, who will come to the end of her term with AVID at the 2016 AGM. Treasurer is not a role for the faint hearted, but Madeline has discharged her duties with aplomb. She has done an enormous amount for AVID, and we shall miss her trenchant comments at our meetings!

By the time of next year's AGM, the use of detention may have changed. By the time you read this, we may know the shape of those changes. I suppose it's unlikely we'll be celebrating the end of detention. Whatever the changes are, I know AVID's members and their volunteers will still be there to offer the support and friendship which detainees are so cruelly deprived of, and which they so desperately need.

Andrew Wilson



Evidence, yet again, that this small charity has real influence





Director's Report

'Immigration Detention: the Truth is Out', to quote just one of the many hundreds of news articles and blog posts on the topic this year. For during one week in March, the secret world of detention was brought – if not toppling down, then at least to its knees – following scathing undercover exposés on Channel 4 News, and the critical report of the *Parliamentary Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention in the UK*. The former led Serco, one of the private companies at the centre of the media storm, to appoint an independent review into its management of Yarl's Wood. The latter – with its series of groundbreaking recommendations including the first cross-party call for a time limit on detention – led the Home Office to appoint Stephen Shaw to conduct an independent review into the welfare in detention of vulnerable people. And so began a year in which the immigration detention system has come under greater scrutiny than ever before.

AVID and many NGO colleagues, as well as – for the first time – those in detention, had given evidence to the Inquiry in 2014. The Cross Party Panel of MPs and

Peers were clear in their conclusions that a radical overhaul (rather than more 'tinkering' with conditions) was needed. Their recommendations of a 28-day time limit and the introduction of judicial oversight, along with a condemnation of the over-use of detention, were momentous, paving the way for a sea change in the rhetoric around immigration detention. For the first time, key figures from across all parties, a diverse cross section of civil society, and faith groups, were unanimous in their call for radical change. These calls could no longer be ignored. Throughout 2015, immigration detention was never far from the media's gaze, and with that, crucially, has come a welcome amplification of the many voices that until now were largely unheard: those with experience of detention. If this year has given us anything, it is this invaluable contribution from "experts by experience", people whose lives have been turned upside down by their detention, and who are now bravely speaking out in the hope of reform.

And reform does seem to be on the cards. This year alone, two detention centres (Haslar and Dover) were

closed, and proposed expansions at Campsfield were abandoned. In March, Shaw commenced his substantive review into welfare in detention, and in July the Detained Fast Track was suspended.

Despite this transformation in the political debate and the optimism it has generated for further reform, at the local level things can be challenging for volunteer visitors. The ring of the office phone has been a constant this year, testimony to the range and scope of different dilemmas faced by those coordinating and developing visitors groups, and their reliance on the network for support. This reactive work has always been a huge part of what AVID does, but never more so than in 2015. Groups have faced numerous challenges, which often require delicate negotiations. This has particularly affected our prison visiting groups.

This past year we've supported 20 member organisations, in turn they have over 650 individual volunteers, visiting many hundreds of people in detention each year. With a small staff cohort of two,

we prioritise our time and resources where the need is greatest: building the capacity of new, smaller and developing groups and working to end the detention of the most vulnerable. Our Activities Report details the full extent of this work in 2015.

I would like to thank Jessica Lousley, Training and Membership Coordinator, for her dedication and commitment, and all her hard work over this year. We all wish her well as she makes a new life in Australia. Our Trustees, as ever, have provided support, guidance and encouragement, and this is appreciated. Many thanks to Andrew for taking over from Kathy at the helm. Our long standing Treasurer, Madeline Church, stands down at this AGM. Madeline has given a great deal to our small organisation, and leaves big shoes to fill, above and beyond her finance skills. On an individual note, Madeline has provided me with a listening ear and good advice on many occasions and I will miss her grounded approach and encouragement.

Ali McGinley

Activities Report

While the context in which we work has changed dramatically, our activities continued to be led by the support needs and concerns of our members. Key activities across our three project areas: ensuring our membership network has access to training, information, advice, support and resources; providing access to quality information about the realities of detention; and pushing for detention reform through our advocacy work, are outlined below:



Coordinators Conference 2015

90 visitors

were trained by AVID in 2015

16 volunteers from 13 groups

attended our Conference in 2015



Coordinators Conference 2015

Membership Support

Throughout 2015, access to training opportunities and information about the ever-changing detention environment remained a priority for our membership network of visitors groups, many of whom are volunteer-led. Between January and December we delivered eight training sessions to groups including the **Verne Visitors Group** (Dorset), **Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team** (Manchester); **Sudanese Visitors Group** (national); **Jesuit Refugee Service** (London) and **Asylum Welcome** (Oxford) amongst others: a total of 90 visitors received AVID training this year. Our well established core training in, for example, *Introduction to Visiting and Immigration Detention* or *Supporting Vulnerable Detainees*, were accompanied by revised and updated trainings in for example *Supporting People in STHFs and Prisons*. This year, alongside our tailored training for specific groups we offered new modules which were open to visitors from all groups. They offer the chance for visitors to meet volunteers from across the country as well as to receive training on topical areas, and have proved particularly popular. An example of this is our partnership with MIND, the national mental health charity, to deliver a full day's training on *Mental Health Awareness for Visitors* in London. This was attended by 16 volunteers from 12 different groups. The feedback received was overwhelming, and it has proved our most popular training course yet. Some groups have been able to use this as a basis for skills sharing training with other volunteers. We also piloted a new module – *Identifying and supporting people who have been trafficked* – delivered to visitors from **Scottish Detainee Visitors** in Glasgow, by trafficking expert Carolina Albuerno Rodriguez. This was so successful we plan to run similar sessions in 2016. The importance of access to training of this kind to volunteer visitors cannot be underestimated, not only in helping individual volunteers feel confident in their (often challenging) volunteer roles, but also in ensuring that immigration detainees are able to access the best support they can from their visitor.

“Quite comprehensive, simple and practical... if we can have a regular gathering of visitors and share/exchange experiences and learn from one another, this can be a rich source of insights and support. A collective solidarity among us, and others.”

Training attendee, Sudanese Visitor Group, July 2015

“Very informative training, delivered in a friendly, personal manner. Thank you!”

Training attendee, Verne Visitors Group, March 2015

“(The training) strengthened my knowledge and therefore improved my confidence as a visitor!”

Training attendee, Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team, October 2015

“Excellent and informative. Thanks for doing something about this horrendous situation.”

Training attendee, Verne Visitors Group, October 2015

Support and Advice

Our development support and advice remains a key cornerstone of the services we provide our membership, and it is particularly important for the smaller and developing groups. We focused our in depth, tailored provision to ten volunteer led groups in 2015, to help them grow.

The variety of groups in our network and the plethora of issues that arise in detention generate a great deal of reactive work and support, a key element of AVID's support to groups but one which is more difficult to quantify. In-depth and tailored face to face, phone and email support has been provided on a diverse range of topics, including: working with group coordinators to strengthen and review recruitment and induction processes; how to increase volunteer support structures and resources; the development of new volunteer roles to increase group capacity; fundraising advice and

guidance; the importance of boundaries and volunteer safeguarding; understanding new detention policy guidance; and use of social media.

This year, for the first time, AVID was in a position to offer capacity building support through a 'seed funding' programme. We were delighted to offer all groups the chance to apply for a small grant to assist with capacity building and development support. This was particularly appreciated by the smaller and volunteer led groups who were able to apply for funding for much needed volunteer support, for skills sharing activities and for development activities for their volunteers and organisations. Many groups took part in fundraising training to help make their groups more sustainable. In total over £8,000 was distributed to six groups, including **Yarl's Wood Befrienders**, **Sudanese Visitors Group**, **SOAS Detainee Support** and many others.

10 | volunteer-run groups
received tailored, in-depth
development support in 2015

£8,000
of seed funding was distributed
to developing groups

"I really appreciate AVID's efforts and your advocacy to help improve mental health among our vulnerable people, which also includes us, and your help in creating and supporting networking and collaboration."

AVID member, November 2015

Detention Monitoring Group

Throughout the year, AVID continued its role in coordinating the Detention Monitoring Group. This monthly meeting in central London provides the opportunity for detention NGOs to meet, share ideas and information, compare situations in different detention centres, and provide mutual support. The meetings also provide a critical space to discuss shared concerns and work collaboratively to improve the daily realities of detention. As the Group's Secretariat, we facilitated a range of thematic speakers this year from organisations including UNHCR, Migrant Help, Campaign to Close Campsfield, Hibiscus Initiatives, Refugee Council and the Habeas Corpus Project among others. These meetings are particularly valued by visitors groups and others working day-to-day on detention issues, many of whom have limited staff capacity and as such these meetings are the key way for them to keep up to date with the ever-changing situation affecting immigration detainees.



Coordinators Conference 2015

Coordinators Conference

"Thank you so much for the organisation, facilitation and delivery of the conference. It was fabulous and conjured up all sorts of new ideas, prospects and highlighted clear gaps in our service provision for detainees. I had a fabulous time and it was wonderful to meet others who are doing coordinating too!"

Conference attendee, June 2015

Once again our annual get-together for the coordinators of visitors groups was the key event in AVID's calendar. Returning to the peaceful space of Woodbrooke, on the outskirts of Birmingham, we brought together 16 attendees for two days of learning, training, sharing ideas and concerns, and gaining insight from one another's experiences of running visitors groups. It was, as always, a demanding programme, with sessions on, for example, **Working with Visitors Groups to Support LGBTI detainees** delivered by Paul Dillane of UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group, and **Practical support for detainees: what can visitors do that isn't giving legal advice** by Julian Norman of One Paper Buildings. These thematic trainings were accompanied by workshops and skills sharing sessions. This year's conference proved, if proof were needed, that the opportunity for visitors groups large and small to meet face to face is invaluable; it provides a creative space away from the day to day of running groups which can generate new ideas, strengthen collaborative working, and help groups feel less isolated. The connections forged at each conference last a long time, and provide a supportive base for future communications and shared activities.

94% of attendees said the conference exceeded their expectations

87% said they would make changes to the way their group supports its volunteers as a result of their learnings at the conference.



AVID AGM, 2015



AVID AGM, 2015

Information and Awareness-Raising

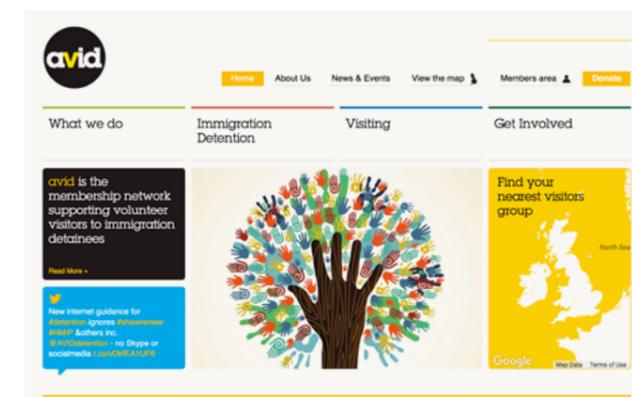
Our online presence was enhanced dramatically in May when we launched the long awaited **new AVID website**. A much bigger site, this has enabled our information and resources on detention policy and practice, as well as on visiting and detention, to be truly accessible to all. It has quickly become a well-recognised resource for both AVID members and the public. Information on all visitors groups and detention centres in the UK are provided through a searchable map, which has proved a great help to friends and families of those detained. There is also a member's area, which all visitors groups can access, and which provides information sheets, policy briefings, training materials, sample organisational policies, and most importantly a member's forum so that all visitors groups can communicate with one another. This gives our members the chance to communicate quickly and easily regardless of where they are in the country, helping to reduce the distance between these disparate groups.

Our monthly immigration detention digest, **In Touch**, continued to be a key resource for all working on or interested in detention issues. Collating parliamentary updates, detention policy changes, and statistics, alongside information about the work of detention NGOs, publications, events, jobs and funding, our newsletter is read by over 750 people each month and is the only monthly publication solely dedicated to detention policy and practice from a civil society perspective. Our twitter account at year end had over 2,200 followers and we have worked to expand our reach by publishing a series of online articles and blogs in support of our advocacy and policy objectives.

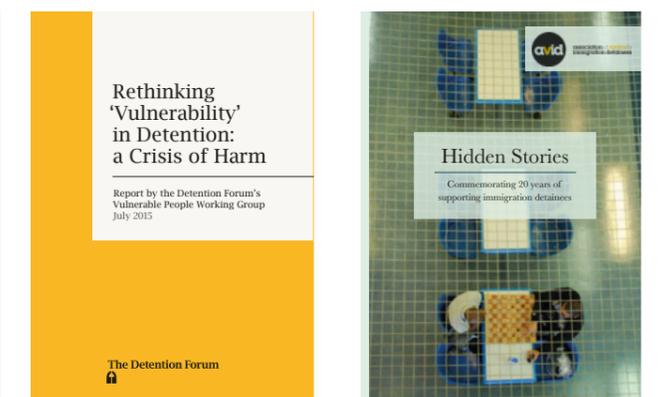
We've continued to work with external support and monitoring bodies to raise awareness of the realities of detention and the need for reform, including the delivery of a training session on immigration detention and visiting to 20 family tracing volunteers with the British Red Cross and a presentation on the work of Visitors Groups to clinicians at Freedom from Torture. In 2015 our key awareness raising event, our **AGM**, tackled the topical issue of vulnerability in detention. Hosted by Freedom From Torture, this event formally launched our research report **Rethinking Vulnerability in Detention: A Crisis of Harm** (see below) and we were delighted to be joined by speakers Nic Eadie, Director of Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group; Jon Featonby, Parliamentary Manager at Refugee Council; and Ian Dunt, Editor of Politics.co.uk.

Work also continued on our oral history project – **Hidden Stories** – and we launched the second phase of this important story telling initiative in December, with an accompanying book to complement the film produced last year. The book contains first hand oral history testimony from volunteer visitors, former visitors and people with experience of detention, all giving unique insight into their experiences. This book also contains photographs of all those interviewed, alongside rare images from inside detention. This commemorative book has been distributed to all volunteer visitors groups and is now widely used as a resource in training and awareness-raising or in volunteer inductions.

AVID Website



AVID Publications



Advocacy and Policy

Our policy work is often reactive, based on the concerns and problems faced by detainees and brought to our attention by our member visitors groups. As such, we are involved in various advocacy initiatives ranging from access to detention centres for visitors, the conditions in detention for people with mental health needs, the push for statutory rules for short term holding facilities, access to the internet for detainees, and lobbying for systemic changes to the system, for example our work on ending the detention of vulnerable people.

In addition to our substantive input into the Shaw Review this year, AVID also took part in the Lampard Review of Yarl's Wood IRC. In our responses, we emphasised the critical need to overhaul the detention decision making process so that vulnerable people are never detained. For many, many years we have been supporting volunteer visitors who are in turn supporting people who very clearly should never have been detained in the first place. It has become increasingly clear that tinkering with policy wording will not be sufficient to prevent the detention of pregnant women, or women who have been trafficked, or people with serious mental health needs, or people who were maybe robust and resilient when entering detention but after months of incarceration are struggling to get up in the morning. This year, our advocacy work has centred around the recommendations we made in our research report, launched at the 2015 AGM, **Rethinking Vulnerability in Detention: A Crisis of Harm**. Co-authored with Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group as part of our joint work within the Detention Forum, the report proposes the use of community based alternatives for all those who are, or who become, vulnerable in detention. We also proposed that the assessment and screening process be replaced with a vulnerability screening tool that takes a dynamic approach to screening prior to – and monitoring throughout – detention. Our report is based on

evidence from over 30 case studies gathered from visitors groups and detention NGOs, and presents the case for fundamental reform of how vulnerability is assessed, measured, and monitored. We disseminated this report widely this year, including parliamentarians, faith groups, monitoring bodies and other detention NGOs. The evidence in this report formed the basis of our submission to the Shaw Review. We were delighted to see the review cite AVID's evidence throughout, and echo many of our recommendations, when it was published in January 2016.



Coordinators conference, 2015

Our work with the **Detention Forum** continued this year. Alongside co-convening the work on vulnerability, our Director is part of the coordination group, developing strategies to help build this broad coalition of civil society and promote its three objectives for detention reform. We have also continued to take forward the concerns of AVID members, detainees and visitors in a range of stakeholder mechanisms with the Home Office, including the NASF (National Asylum Stakeholder Forum) detention sub group. We have also collated responses to numerous consultations this year, on a number of Detention Service Orders (DSOs) as well as the Home Office's proposals to reform support for "failed asylum seekers and other migrants".

We've also continued to support and develop the capacity of our membership to engage in policy processes directly, and to build relationships with statutory monitoring bodies such as HMIP so that our member groups can input into the inspection processes of detention facilities.

"Immigration Removal Centres are not conducive to the treatment of individuals with mental illnesses. Many individuals who are currently detained have experienced trauma in their past and detention is wholly unsuitable."

Report of the Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention in the UK

"The UK is an outlier in not having a limit on how long we can detain people under immigration powers. We are also an outlier on the scale of our immigration detention estate. We detain a lot of people, some for a very long time, all with huge uncertainty, and we have very limited processes for individuals to challenge that detention."

Sarah Teather MP, Report of the Inquiry into the Use of Immigration Detention in the UK



Detainee artwork donated by CIVIC

International skills sharing

This year, we were delighted to host a visit by our US sister organisation, CIVIC, to the UK. CIVIC (Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement) is a national network of visitation programmes, the US equivalent of visitors groups. Like AVID, they work to bring those visiting together and to "end the isolation and abuse of people in immigration detention through visitation, independent monitoring, storytelling and advocacy". CIVIC has almost 50 visitation programmes in 42 facilities, with over 1,300 volunteers in 18 states. This puts our geographic spread of groups into perspective! CIVIC's two Directors, Christina Fialho and Christina Mansfield, visited the UK in March and we were pleased that they were able to spend a few days with AVID. Having been in touch via email for some years, we knew that our organisations had much to learn from each other, and were glad to have the time face to face in which to discuss commonalities and differences between our two countries and their use of detention; to share learnings and best practice in visiting; to discuss strategies and approaches to common problems, and importantly to provide mutual support.

AVID also arranged for CIVIC's Directors to spend time visiting different visitors groups and some detention centres so that they could see first-hand the differences and similarities between the two detention regimes. The visit culminated in a round table to which all groups were invited, to learn more about detention and visiting in the USA.

This visit has set the foundations for future collaboration between CIVIC and AVID. Both organisations face unique challenges in their respective systems, but have much in common. We look forward to working with CIVIC in the future to end the isolation of those held in detention, whichever side of the Atlantic they are held.

Find out more about CIVIC's work at www.endisolation.org



L-R: Christina Fialho, Ali McGinley, Christina Mansfield

Summary of Accounts

Income	Unrestricted Funds 2015	Restricted Funds 2015	Total Funds 2015	Total Funds 2014
Grants				
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	40,000	40,000	40,000
The Tudor Trust	-	30,000	30,000	30,000
Awards for All	-	-	-	10,000
Lankelly Chase Foundation	-	-	-	15,000
Truemark Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Edith Maud Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust	-	-	-	1,000
Souter Charitable Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Marsh Christian Trust	-	-	-	450
AW60 Trust	750	-	750	-
Grants subtotal	750	70,000	70,750	102,450
Donations				
All Saint's Church, Milton, Cambridge	600	-	600	600
Parish of Holy Trinity and St Mary's, Guildford	500	-	500	450
M and K English	2,627	-	2,627	2,000
Phyllida Lloyd	-	-	-	1,000
Community Fundraising Events	2,423	-	2,423	-
Gift Aid	911	-	911	-
Other donations	1,772	750	2,522	4,161
Donations subtotal	8,833	750	9,583	8,211
Bank interest receivable	103	-	103	140
Subtotal (grants, donations and bank interest)	8,936	70,750	80,436	110,801
Income from Charitable Activities				
Membership income	2,085	-	2,085	1,820
Handbook sales	-	-	-	110
Provision of training	724	-	724	200
Subtotal (income from charitable activities)	2,809	-	2,809	2,130
TOTAL INCOME	£12,495	£70,750	£83,245	£112,931

Expenditure

Visitors Group Support: advice, outreach, training & development	10,443	30,000	40,443	37,004
Policy and advocacy	7,949	23,884	31,883	23,991
Information and awareness raising	7,851	23,884	31,735	23,991
Hidden Stories	-	7,503	7,503	4,362
Governance Costs (Trustees expenses, AGM)	2,457	-	2,457	3,560
Fundraising Costs	545	-	545	403
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£29,245	£85,271	£114,516	£93,311

Note to accompany accounts:

AVID has three months of reserves set aside (22,750).

The full set of independently examined accounts for the year can be obtained on request from AVID.

Under the new SORP 2015, which was introduced in January 2015, we are obliged to treat the transfer of assets from the old unincorporated AVID to the new CIO as a merger, and as such we have had to restate the accounts from the previous year.

The expenditure figures above including the following for 2015:

Expenditure	Unrestricted Funds 2015	Restricted Funds 2015	Total 2015
Premises & running costs	13,084	-	13,084
Staff costs	7,306	70,750	78,056

Treasurer's Report

I am proud to report that we continue to be able to employ two full-time staff dedicated to the work of supporting Visitor Groups, sharing information about immigration detention, raising awareness about the relevant issues and undertaking much needed policy and advocacy work. Our income is, as always, small, and we use it wisely. This coming year AVID needs to reach new supporters and donors, as we seek to broaden our funding base, but I have no hesitation in stating that we do a great deal with a little, and most of that is the result of our accumulated experience and knowledge. This has been made possible by committed support from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Tudor Trust, and the many small but vital amounts we gather from members, regular givers, and trusts. Our thanks to all those who have donated to AVID this year. We know that the funding environment is really tough, but we hope we've demonstrated here just what can be achieved with consistent core support for our fantastic staff.

Madeline Church

Farewell from our Treasurer



Some six years ago I came across AVID's advertisement for a Treasurer. I was at home, a full-time carer for my mother Margaret, who lived with Parkinson's, and wanted to 'keep my hand in' – to stay connected to the work I've been doing for half a lifetime – human rights protection, conflict resolution, standing alongside and with those persecuted or driven from their homes. Over these six years I've most certainly been hands on, and done many things apart from the finances and the books. Ali wrote and I edited the 11th edition of the

Handbook, paid for with a donation from Margaret. I've facilitated two conferences for Coordinators, raised invaluable funds, interviewed several visitors for our Hidden Stories project, helped AVID move offices, and put it on a firmer footing through becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. I have been enormously enriched by my association with AVID, and can only say that I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to have been on such a dynamic, committed Board of Trustees. I'd recommend it to anyone, and will keep doing what I can to raise awareness, and funds, in the firm belief that everyone benefits through the kind of community of friendship that AVID represents.

Dover's closure

In September 2015, it was announced that Dover IRC was to close, and close it did – within weeks.

A former army fortress, prison, borstal, and young offender's institution, Dover began holding single male immigration detainees in 2002. In that same year, the Dover Detainee Visitors Group (DDVG, later known as Samphire) was established by AVID, Kent Refugee Action Network and Refugee Action. It was registered as a charity in 2004. For thirteen years, volunteer visitors from DDVG/Samphire provided a range of emotional and practical support and advice to thousands of men held there, for indefinite periods. They were a vital part of the AVID membership network throughout this time.

Dover itself is often seen symbolically as Britain's frontier with the rest of Europe, and this border position has sealed its fate as the theatre in which much of the UK's anti-immigration tensions are played out. In September 2015, as tens of thousands marched through other English towns and cities to declare "Refugees Welcome Here", a small but determined group of far right activists demonstrated in the centre of Dover. Clashes with anti-fascists ensued, blood was split. This was the third such protest in the town that year.

Around a week later, I attended Samphire's AGM, which was accompanied by one of their increasingly popular awareness raising events "Facts over Fear". The church hall was packed. I scanned the room, pleased to see faces that I had known as part of this group for many, many years, alongside several new faces. There was a buzz in the room, as people hugged and greeted one another. Samphire has always felt like a true community. As speakers, Fraser Paterson (Detention Support Manager) and Christine Oliver (Ex-Detainee Project Manager) reminded us of all the organisation had achieved that year, they also highlighted the significant shift in opinion amongst the public and the media in response to the refugee crisis, emphasising that many thousands had taken part in the "Refugees Welcome" marches despite the government's 'hostile environment' agenda. In a room full of people so concerned to help make Dover a more welcoming place, there was an overwhelming sense of optimism, despite the violence played out on their streets just a few days before.

Over its thirteen year history, Samphire has maintained this sense of community and of optimism, friendship



Dover Detainee Visitors Group, later known as Samphire, was set up in 2002 when Dover IRC began holding single male immigration detainees.



and hope, with many visitors remaining involved in supporting detainees throughout this time. Over the years, the emotional support provided by its volunteer visiting programme was complemented by the hiring of caseworkers who could provide practical assistance to detainees. Samphire also extended its work in response to the changing needs of those held in detention: the organisation established a national Ex Detainee Project to provide support on leaving detention, and runs awareness raising events to challenge the misconceptions about immigration – critical in the Dover community.

After the announcement of Dover's closure, the Samphire team did what they do best: brought their community together, in a meeting for all volunteers to discuss what this meant for the organisation's future. In 2016, their detention visiting programme may have wound down, but they continue to invest their time and energy in supporting those leaving detention and awareness raising work. For the damage caused by immigration detention does not stop at the centre gates; it is long lasting and impacts on individuals, and the community, in a myriad of ways. And that's precisely why Samphire's work remains so important. AVID is grateful to all Samphire's volunteer visitors for their tireless work over so many years, and we wish them well in continuing their work to ensure that those leaving detention are supported, and in promoting friendship, and facts, over fear.

Ali McGinley

About Us:

Trustees

The following Trustees served during the year January – December 2015:

Kathleen English (Chair to July 2015)
Madeline Church (Treasurer)
Jane Ryan (Secretary)
Carolina Albuern Rodriguez
Polly Brendon
Suko Fricke
Juliette Stevenson (resigned July 2015)
Andrew Wilson (Chair from July 2015)

With thanks:

We are grateful for the support of our membership as detailed on page 4, and the following:

Funders

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Tudor Trust
AW60 Trust

Donations:

All Saints Church, Milton, Cambridge	John Coulston
Andrew Wilson	Judith Rattenbury
Anne Falloon	Lewes Group in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers
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BE Rodmell Trust	Mareille Barclay
Berni Cavanagh	Muswell Hill Friends
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Jennifer McConnell	Sue Jones
Jennifer Turner	Suzanne Bradnum-Williams
Jeremy Thorne	
Jillian Wilkinson	
John Alleyne	

British 10k runners

L-R: Tamara Grundman, Jane Silver-Corren, Lily Parrott, John-Henry Duncan, and Jemima Headey who collectively raised over £2400 for AVID's work



Photo: with thanks to Graham Hurst

Staff

Ali McGinley, Director
Jessica Lousley, Training and Membership Coordinator

Volunteers

Anna De Mutiis

Patrons

Colin Firth
Lord David Ramsbotham
John Scampion

And to all who worked with and supported us in 2015:

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Campaign to Close Campsfield
Carolina Albuern Rodriguez
CIVIC (Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement)
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Detention Timeline
Dorset Community Action
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INQUEST
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Nikki Squelch, Alzheimer's Society
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