

avid

association of visitors to immigration detainees
annual report and accounts april 2010
registered charity number 1063784

Asylum Welcome
Brighton Voices in Exile
Cambridge Oakington Con-
cern **Doncaster AVID** Dover De-
tainee Support Group **ESCR** Gatwick
Detainee Welfare Group **Haslar Visit-**
ors Group Jesuit Refugee Service **Lewes**
Group Liverpool Prison Visitors Group
London **Detainee Support Group** Man-
chester Immigration Detainee Support
Team **Oakington Friends** Scottish
Detainee Visitors **Southampton and**
Winchester Visiting Group
Wandsworth Refugee Network
Yarls Wood Befrienders
The Zimbabwe
Association



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structure, governance and management

Registered Charity Number	1063784
Registered Address	PO Box 1496 Oxford OX4 9DY
Correspondence Address	C/o Asylum Aid Club Union House 253-4 Upper Street London N1 1RY
Governing Document	Constitution adopted 30th May 1997 and amended 2002, 2003, 2005 and 29th March 2008
Aims of the Charity	The Charity's objects ("the objects") are exclusively charitable relief of immigrants and refugees who are suffering hardship, distress or are in need, with particular reference, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, to those who are imprisoned or detained by the Immigration Service of the Home Office in the United Kingdom whether in detention centres, holding centres, prisons or police stations
Governance	The charity is managed by a Board of Trustees, which meets quarterly. Day to day management is exercised by the salaried Director, Ali McGinley



AVID trustees

Sally Tarshish	Chair
Liz Cox	Vice Chair (resigned January 2010)
Eike Ndiweni-Muller	Honorary Secretary
Mike Slinn	Acting Treasurer
Revd. Sir John Alleyne	(resigned April 2010)
Tony Oteh	(resigned April 2010)
Catrin Ingham	
Kathy English	
Neil Mulhern	

Advisors/Resource People

Derek Newton: Treasurer
(September–December 2009)

John Bingham: Volunteer
(In Touch Newsletter)

Staff

Ali McGinley (Director)

Patrons

Belinda Allen
Colin Firth
Lord David Ramsbotham GCB, CBE
John Scampion CBE



AVID

member groups

Asylum Welcome Campsfield House IRC

Brighton Voices in Exile Supporting asylum seekers in Brighton

Cambridge Oakington Concern Oakington IRC

Doncaster AVID Lindholme IRC

Dover Detainee Support Group Dover IRC

ESCR Enabling Christians in Serving Refugees

Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group Brook House and Tinsley House IRCs

Haslar Visitors Group Haslar IRC

Jesuit Refugee Service Harmondsworth and Colnbrook IRCs

Lewes Group Lewes Prison

Liverpool Prison Visitors Group Visiting in Walton, Altcourse, Rislely and Kennett Prisons

London Detainee Support Group Harmondsworth and Colnbrook IRCs

Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team (MIDST)

Manchester Airport Short Term Holding Facility

Oakington Friends Oakington IRC

Scottish Detainee Visitors Dungavel IRC

Southampton and Winchester Visiting Group

Community work, also visit in Winchester Prison when needed

Wandsworth Refugee Network

Yarls Wood Befrienders Yarls Wood IRC

The Zimbabwe Association supporting Zimbabweans both in the community and in detention

**Nearly
1,000 children
a year are de-
tained in UKBA
immigration
detention
centres**



chair's report

This AGM Report will give the reader an overall picture of the work of AVID with our new Director in post, as well as the role of the Trustees.

Securing long term funding for AVID's core activities was finally realised last October. With grants from the Esmee Fairbairn and Lankelly Chase Foundations, the Trustees were able to appoint our new Director and open an office in London. For the office, AVID is much indebted to the generosity of Maurice Wren and Asylum Aid who have been incredibly welcoming. These factors brought to an end an unsettled period of uncertain funding and no coordinator or director.

Appointing a new Director

Ali McGinley, our new Director, took up her full-time post on September 7, 2009 and since then has worked very hard to consolidate links between the visitor groups, other nongovernmental organisations, UKBA and AVID as part of our core activities and Strategic Directions for the next two years.

Governance Matters

The Board of Trustees recognised that some fundamental changes are necessary to facilitate the evolution of our organization. The Review carried out in 2008 highlighted the need to re-visit the organisation of our membership and the first Assembly, held in 2009, gave members a direct opportunity to express their opinions on this point. So, the AGM of 2010 will set out the new proposals to clarify the position finally. It was not as easy as it might have appeared. Preserving choice and ensuring fairness were uppermost in discussions in a Trustee Away Day in January 2010 to thrash out the various possibilities. The proposed changes will be presented for voting on at this year's AGM.

Core Activities and the National Picture for 2010

In travelling up and down the country, bringing together the experiences of those visitor groups in the north and south, and working with other like-minded organisations, AVID is committed to promoting and ensuring the concerns of visitor groups and detainees are represented at a national level.

In the course of the past year two major issues have been highlighted. The first is the north/ south divide. Visitor groups in the south have more opportunities to attend strategic meetings than those visitors north of Birmingham – something which AVID is working to address. The second is the role of AVID in bringing the inconsistencies between IRC establishments to the attention of UKBA.

Some examples of this in practice include:

- Collating and facilitating research into the inconsistencies between IRCs;
- Supporting the need to change the detention of single women in Tinsley House (which contributed towards HMIP-recommended changes being implemented by UKBA);
- Facilitating contact between management at Dungavel and the visitor group;
- Objecting to the separation of families (Removal from Association) prior to deportation from Yarl's Wood;
- Working in partnership to develop stronger strategies: e.g. work with the ARC Detention Sub-group and as a member of the steering group of the new Detention Forum;
- Building relationships between Foreign National Coordinators in HMPs and new groups visiting foreign national prisoners.

With the general election so close, it will be a testing time to see how we can respond to the changing policies that a new government may set. The image of the *tip of the iceberg* comes to mind. Public, political and economic climates alter attitudes which in turn affect what lies beneath, the policies and practice. The tried and tested means for advocating necessary changes in conditions, for detainees and visitor groups alike, has been the evidence based information AVID has collated over the years. The Board of Trustees believe our Strategic Directions will continue to be relevant tools to address new policies, practices or laws.

● **Sally Tarshish**



the trustee's perspective

The last annual report in September 2009 documented much of the strategic planning and directives reviewed by AVID during the previous 18 months. Since then, AVID has focussed extensively this past eight months on the implementation of the agreed Action Plan.

The appointment of Ali McGinley as Director has been key in pushing forward with AVID's strategic directions. Much work has been put into communicating and maintaining links with visitor groups and external partners; providing vital policy updates and visitor group information via regular 'In Touch' newsletters and attending key meetings in order to facilitate dialogue about the Immigration Detention Estate.

In addition, core fundraising has allowed for projects highlighted in the Action Plan to be implemented. These include a redesign of the AVID website and logo, the Foreign National Prisoners project and revisions and amendments to the current handbook. Further funding plans include the recruitment of an AVID Information Officer and the extension of the FNP project to include visitor training.

As a Trustee, I feel confident that these measures will ensure AVID meets its vision and remit as a charity providing support to individuals and groups visiting immigration detainees across the UK.

My future role as Trustee will include sitting on the Detention sub-committee, where issues regarding the detention estate and visiting IRCs will be explored. I also remain committed to visiting Tinsley House and Brook House as a member of the Gatwick Welfare Detainees Group.

Most of all it has been a privilege to work alongside the other AVID Trustees and our new Director, all of whom dedicate their time ceaselessly to promote the values of the organisation.

● **Catrin Ingham**



paying tribute to retiring trustees

Two decades ago a Winchester vicar discovered Kurdish men held in the local prison, not for committing any crime but merely as a result of an administrative act. This disturbed him deeply. So together with a band of committed creative individuals, the vicar probed and devised ways to give these men – and then others too – both moral and practical support.

Out of this initial concern they developed a network of individual and groups of visitors to immigration detainees. This in turn grew into the organised movement which AVID is today; a national charity connecting autonomous visitor groups across the UK and voicing the realities of immigration detention to statutory bodies to bring about change.

Long after he retired from his parish work, John – **Reverend Sir John Alleyne** – continued to respond to the moral challenge of immigration detention. In addition to being instrumental in founding AVID and regularly responding to individual human beings in distress, John was prepared to fulfil organisational roles and responsibilities particularly at critical times. Indeed he was AVID chairman over two different periods and we very much relied on his experience and skills.

John is now laying down the mantle of AVID trustee for others to pick up. He is joined by **Tony Oteh**, who worked with John since the early days, bringing with him the experience of visiting in prisons during the 1990s through the probation service. We are deeply grateful for all that each of them has done and been in AVID.

At various times they have been joined by others prepared to take on trustee responsibilities. Among these was **Liz Cox**, who played an invaluable role in sustaining key activities during the previous year when we were without any paid staff. For example, producing the regular newsletter and updating the Handbook. In addition to keeping In Touch written and circulated, Liz represented AVID at both the ARC detention sub-group and DUG meetings, both of which required a deal of forward preparation. We are very grateful for Liz's contribution and her willingness to continue to volunteer with AVID.

Throughout their combined involvement John, Tony and Liz have seen considerable change, not least in terms of laws, institutions, the scale and daily realities of immigration detention. But the essence of their approach remained consistent: bearing witness actively to the disturbing realities of immigration detention and doing so fearlessly and yet remaining respectful of human beings. They have given us a legacy to encourage us to face the ever increasing challenges ahead.

● **Eike Ndiweni-Muller**

mission statement:
**facing the challenges
of immigration detention**

avid

believes that people held **in** administrative detention under Immigration Acts are entitled to the same basic **human rights** as citizens. We aim to achieve this through voicing the concerns of detainees, our member groups and the nationwide network of visitors



AVID strategic directions 2009-11

- avid To assist and encourage new and established visitors groups and individuals to increase their reach and capacity**
- avid To be the voice of visitors and detainees in challenging and publicising the issues of detention through our advocacy role**
- avid To be the source of information for members and individuals on detention issues**
- avid To improve the daily life of those in detention**



director's report

I would like to thank AVID's membership, partners and trustees for making me welcome since starting in post in September. Meeting so many of those involved in visiting (staff, volunteers, and detainees) was invaluable in gaining a comprehensive picture of the role of a visitor and the importance of visiting.

This report covers the period September 2009-March 2010, a period which has been equally challenging and rewarding. As AVID continues its work to enhance and strengthen the role of visiting at the national level, the external environment in which it operates is ever more unpredictable. Immigration is already a critical factor in pre-election debate, yet once more discussion is focussed on numbers, targets and quotas. Each week hundreds of volunteer visitors enter immigration removal centres across the country, seeking to break down the isolation faced by detainees, and to listen to the human story behind the statistics. Within this framework, AVID remains committed to moving immigration detention from the margins of the debate and to raising awareness of the work of those who support those detained across the UK.

A selection of key activities contributing towards our strategic objectives is provided below:

Working with Visitors Groups and Detainees

- **Introductory meetings** were held with most, if not all, AVID member groups in the first six months as well as visits to IRCs. Plans and priorities were discussed and this generated a good overview of the visiting environment and the detention estate, as well as how best AVID could target its support.
- **Regular communications** have been strengthened with all member groups. In particular, collaboration has increased with those outside the south east, including Scottish Detainee Visitors, Doncaster Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees and Liverpool Prisons Visitors Group.
- **Presentations** on AVID's strategic directions and plans were made to volunteers at Oakington Friends, Liverpool Prisons Visitors Group and Haslar Visitors Group.

- **Mackenzie Friends training** was held in December 2009 in partnership with Zacchaeus 2000 Trust. This was well attended by members of Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group, Brighton Voices in Exile and Liverpool Prisons Visitors Group.
- AVID's **Handbook for Visitors** has been updated and revised to reflect changes in policy and practice. Thanks go to all those who have kindly given their time to help us with key chapters on asylum policy, medical health, welfare and legal issues. New sections have been added on women in detention and vulnerable groups. We expect the revised handbook, in hardback, to be available in the near future. It will also be made available to our members online.
- Working with existing visitors groups and establishing new groups has been key to the **ex-foreign national prisoners project** – more on this below (page 15).

Advocating for Change

- **Stakeholder representation with UKBA:** AVID remains a key stakeholder representing our members at both the Detention User Group (DUG) and the DUG medical subgroup, meeting quarterly to discuss detention policy. Through AVID's attendance at these meetings, visitor groups have been able to input into discussion on a range of issues including, for example, the production of statistical information on detention, revisiting Operating Standards for Healthcare, and comparing standards between IRCs (see 'monitoring inconsistencies', below).
- As a result of our work on this theme, AVID has been asked to be part of a new group which will focus on **women in detention**, commencing April 2010.
- **Detention Sub Group:** AVID has continued to play an active role within the ARC Detention Sub Group which focuses on the day to day realities of visiting and conditions across the detention estate. These meetings are a key opportunity for visitors groups to share experiences and work collaboratively on common concerns.

- **Partnership working:** In addition to visitors groups, partnership with external organisations has also been strengthened in the last six months. AVID remains a member of the Asylum Rights Campaign, the Refugee Children's Consortium, and "Still Human, Still Here" coalition, strengthening our thematic work on key issues of concern. In addition, we are now involved in new initiatives in the shape of the Asylum Aid *Charter of Rights of Women Seeking Asylum*, BID and the Children's Society's *OutCry! Campaign* to end child detention, and Citizens for Sanctuary's *Sanctuary Pledge*.
- **Detention Forum:** As a steering group member of this new coalition, AVID is working with a cross section of organisations looking at new ways to coordinate policy, lobbying and campaigning work so that there is a much stronger voice on detention issues. Other steering group members include ARC, BID, LDSG, Rene Cassin and CABIRC.
- **Monitoring Inconsistencies:** The critical issue which has been brought to AVID's attention in these first six months has been the inconsistencies and discrepancies between IRCs in terms of provision and access to support for detainees. Visitors groups and volunteers have highlighted a wide range of examples which vary massively between centres, such as visiting arrangements, escort provision, availability of external/voluntary sector support, access to library provision, and so on. AVID is working to collate an evidence base and to use this to work towards increased equality and standardisation of provision.
- **Website:** The AVID website remains a key source of information for those interested in detention issues as well as visiting- the 'finding information' page on our website is consistently the most viewed page. Similarly, many enquiries via the AVID website come from detainees themselves, or family members, seeking advice and information. Our role as the hub point for enquiries from detainees, potential visitors, and interested members of the public is clear. To expand on this, we are revising and updating the website. New pages include a news section, detention research and reports page, and advice for detainees.
- **New logo and identity:** Our new logo and identity has enabled clearer communications and a strong, unified feel. Many thanks to Andy Myers for his design work which has fed into a range of information and publicity materials.

Working to improve the lives of detainees

- Working with Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group and the Women's Charter, AVID raised concerns regarding the vulnerability of single women detained in the male dominated Tinsley House IRC. The recommendations of the HMIP report, which mirrored our concerns, have been acknowledged by UKBA and we are continuing to monitor the situation facing women in Tinsley House along with GDWG.
- Groups have continued to provide information and evidence about problems experienced by detainees, and key concerns such as: failed escort provision to and from hearings, missed medical appointments, availability of library materials in minority languages, the 'removal from association' of families prior to removal and detainee access to the internet are just a few of those AVID is working with our members to address.
- Gathering **evidence based information** on standards and conditions in IRCs is AVID's strength, and we continue to collate examples to back up cases for change on behalf of detainees.
- We plan to enhance our web pages for detainees so that those with internet access in IRCs will be able to access a range of information resources and support online.

Sharing Information

- **Newsletter:** Information to visitors has been a priority. The newsletter, **In Touch**, is fundamental to this and has continued to be produced each month. The format has been revised and expanded and now includes job opportunities, funding suggestions, and a monthly case study on a thematic issue. Many thanks to John Bingham for continuing his contribution of key legal changes of interest to visitors.
- **Enquiries:** Calls and enquiries from detainees, friends and families asking for signposting and support have also continued to increase, particularly as detainees are moved around the detention estate often at little notice. AVID has been able to respond quickly and act as a referral hub for these queries.

Future Challenges

With the continued expansion of the detention estate, funding shortages owing to economic recession, and the unpopularity of immigration detention as a “cause”, AVID and visitors groups will no doubt face plenty of challenges in ensuring support continues to reach those who need it most. However, the foundations are already in place for successful year.

In particular, the demand for training from visitors groups across the country has continued, and so we plan a renewed emphasis on updating and revising our programme of training modules for volunteer visitors, continuing provision in key areas such as listening skills, mental health and legal issues. Taking forward the ex-Foreign national prisoner visiting project is a huge undertaking and AVID will continue to develop the strategic partnerships and work collaboratively to ensure this develops. AVID’s role in gathering, presenting and disseminating information and evidence from visitors groups on conditions and standards in detention will continue, as will our role in advocating on behalf of members and detainees in pressing for change. AVID will continue to work in partnership with our members, external partners and coalitions such as the Detention Forum, to ensure a broad spectrum of support and a collective voice.

● **Ali McGinley, Director**



project update:

visiting in mainstream prisons

This project, funded by the Sigrid Rausing Trust, started in May 2008 and came to an end in February 2010. It arose from an approach made to AVID by the Independent Monitoring Board National Council and Prison Chaplains, requesting our help in supporting foreign national prisoners with spent sentences being held in mainstream prisons under immigration acts.

The short term project was completed by Dr Mary Bosworth, Reader in Criminology at the University of Oxford. The initial brief comprised three objectives:

- To devise and implement a strategy for setting up or supporting volunteer visitors groups to support time-served foreign national prisoners
- To provide training and support for visitors, working in partnership with relevant organisations
- To set out proposals on how AVID should take forward the work supporting detained ex-foreign national prisoners

The project started off with a focus on ex-foreign national prisoners who were continuing to be held post sentence in main stream prisons. However, very quickly the research revealed significant numbers of foreign national prisoners still serving sentences who had immigration issues. These two groups combined made up roughly one third of the prison population within the establishments on which the study focussed. The full research report, including recommendations for further work, was written by Dr Mary Bosworth and is available to all on the AVID website.

The project initially had a simple brief in terms of setting up a visiting scheme for ex foreign national prisoners, but it quickly became clear that there were many obstacles that tested commitment and demanded ingenuity. Along the way, the contribution of various individuals at critical moments, proved to be turning points for the project.

Those who literally opened doors, turning possibility into probability, were the prison Foreign National Coordinators. Their initial direct request to AVID to set up a visiting scheme was an

instrumental event. The combination of their ability to make things work within the prison regimes, Dr Bosworth's report, and the willingness of the visitor groups to participate in workshops and share their experiences, were the milestones and keystones for this project.

The project also involved the development of a training module for those interested in prison visiting, which is being adapted and amended to include input from new and existing prison visiting groups.

What remains to be done?

The evaluation of the project, due at the end of May 2010, falls into three parts:

1. Addressing the recommendations in Dr. Bosworth's Report which outline a strategy for taking the project forward
2. Taking into account the context and comments received from the groups who were already visiting, as well as the groups who were new to prison visiting
3. Working with the groups who participated in and contributed to this project, we will be overhauling and amending the training manual that arose out of Dr. Bosworth's report

AVID wishes to thank all those involved in the project and in particular the following for their contribution:

- Dr. Mary Bosworth, Reader in Criminology, University of Oxford
- Emma Kaufman and Eric Gardiner, post graduate students, University of Oxford
- Vebi Kosumi, DDVG
- Chris Lukey, MIDST
- Paul Marsh, Foreign National Coordinator (now working in a voluntary capacity), HMP Canterbury
- Steve Mason, DAS
- Jerome Phelps, LDSSG
- Julie Pitkin, Foreign National Coordinator, HMP Woodhill
- Helen Ross, Lewes Visitor Group

● **Sally Tarshish**

The current average cost per bed per night in the UKBA's detention estate is £120



treasurer's report:

This Report covers the financial year 1st January 2009 to 31st December 2009. It has been prepared jointly by Derek Newton, who resigned as Treasurer at end 2009, and by Mike Slinn who took over responsibility as Treasurer on 1st January 2010.

The finances of AVID have improved considerably during 2009 thanks to the fundraising efforts of our Chair. Substantial grants have been obtained from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation (£25,000) and Lankelly Chase Foundation (£26,000). At end 2009, the combined assets of our cash and bond accounts totalled £47,361.

We had sufficient funds to appoint our new Director, Ali McGinley, in September. We can now look forward to 2010 as a year of financial stability and progress towards the achievement of our Strategic Directions.

We also were fortunate to receive several donations and a grant of £15,000 from the Sigrid Rausing Trust in 2008 and this was used in 2009 to progress the Foreign National Prisoners project which has identified the needs for establishing visitor support in prisons not currently served by AVID member organisations.

The Coordinators' Conference 2009 was financially supported again by a grant from the AW60 Trust.

Comparing 2009 with 2008, and allowing for the pass-through funding of the Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group by the Rayne Foundation, our annual income increased from £28,240 to £54,986 and our annual expenditure increased from £19,005 to £33,911. Our end-of-year balance increased from £26,286 to £47,361. We expect to receive further funds as part of the 3-year funding commitment from Esmee Fairbairn and Lankelly Chase Trusts in October 2010, enabling us to continue to cover these core staff and office costs into 2011.

In 2010 we will be prudent in the use of our cash assets bearing in mind the uncertainty caused by the economic climate. We will be seeking further funds from other sources so that we can both fully cover our annual core staff and office costs and commence new projects. Our aim is to raise sufficient annual income to cover all annual outgoings.

In this current economic climate, fundraising has a particular priority to underpin the viability and sustainability of projects to meet our Strategic Directions. We are enormously appreciative of the generous financial support from all our funders, be they grants or individual donations.

● **Mike Slinn**

AVID summary of accounts for the Year Ended 31.12.09

Receipts					
Grants	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Aurora Fund	Total Funds	Total Funds
Rayne Foundation					8500
Allen Lane Fund					5000
Esmee Fairbairn		25000		25000	
Holy Trinity Church	450			450	400
Lankelly Chase		26000		26000	
Sigrid Rausing Trust					15000
AW 60 Trust	750			750	750
Sub Total	1200	51000	0	52200	29650
Other Income					
Group Membership	300			300	1330
Individual Membership	440			440	
Sale of handbooks	200			200	247
Donations	1230			1230	1669
Interest	110			110	450
Charity Aid fund					224
Conference Donations	455			455	
Helen Tetlow Trust					3000
Delegates					170
Aurora b/fd	51			51	
Sub Total	2786	0	0	2786	7090
Total Income	3986	51000	0	54986	36740
Payments					
Salaries		7958		7958	3000
3% pension provision		1050		1050	
Office rent		1000		1000	917
Office expenses	200			200	
Recruiting staff		1840		1840	
Handbook Covers	135			135	1326
Conference	2172			2172	2929
Trustee expenses	1818			1818	2213
Education/training		345		345	365
Mackenzie Friends					28
Memberships	93			93	129
Prison Project		13503		13503	6000
Website		75		75	1000
IR tax	2975			2975	718
Insurance	735			735	380
Bank Charges	12			12	
Total Payments	8140	25771	0	33991	19005
Gatwick Group					8500
					27505
NET BALANCE	-4154	25229		21075	9235
Balance b/f	6640	18446	1220	26286	17051
Balance c/f	2486	43675	1220	47361	26286
Cash balances as at 31 Dec 2009		Investment Bond Account		30000	0
		Cash-deposit account		9200	20808
		Cash-current account		8161	5478
		TOTAL		47361	26286

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



AVID would like to thank the following organisations and individuals who have funded our work in the period:



Lankelly
chase

SIGRID RAUSING TRUST

AW 60 Trust
Krystyna Deuss
Holy Trinity Church, Guildford
Anonymous donations

AVID would also like to thank all of our members, both groups and individuals, for their support.

**In
the last
quarter of 2009,
6915 people en-
tered detention
held solely under
Immigration
Act powers.**