



association of visitors to
immigration detainees

Annual Report

2018

Charitable
Incorporated Organisation
Number 1156709

In **2018**, our AVID newsletter
– AVID Detention Monitor – brought
immigration detention news and
updates to **450 people**
every month

“ Thanks for your excellent monthly
newsletter! It’s very well written and I
look forward to reading it every month ”

| Immigration Detention

Immigration detention has been a stain on the UK's human rights record since the 1970s. It was expanded massively under successive governments in the 1990s and 2000s, and is now a well-known cornerstone of the current Government's hostile environment policies. While the scale has reduced in the last few years – centres have closed, and fewer people are now detained – the systemic injustices remain.

Detention is a purely administrative process, not a criminal one, yet those detained for immigration purposes don't have the same safeguards as those who are deprived of their liberty within the criminal justice system. For example, the

decision to detain is not made in court, or by a judge, but is authorised by a civil servant. There is no automatic access to legal advice. And there is no time limit, so people can be locked up for months or years. All for administrative convenience.

AVID believes that people should be in the community, not in detention. We want to see a fair system based on engagement and not on enforcement. For the last 25 years we have worked to support people in detention – wherever they are held – through our national network of volunteer visitors. We also work to reform the system and to ensure those held are fairly treated.

| Volunteer visiting

AVID is the national support network for volunteer visitors groups providing support to those held under immigration act powers in detention centres, short term holding facilities, and prisons. A volunteer visitor acts in lieu of a friend or family member and can be a lifeline to someone in detention, ensuring they have someone to talk to in confidence, completely independent to the system that has put them there. While many of our member groups still have visiting at their core, they have responded to the changing nature of detention and the needs of people in detention in a number of new ways. Groups now provide a range of supports including casework, signposting and referral, campaigning and

advocacy, post detention support and even education programmes.

AVID works to support and develop the network of volunteer visitors groups: establishing access to places of detention for volunteers, setting up new groups when centres open, and helping to build the capacity, skills and knowledge of volunteers and groups themselves. We provide a range of training, information and supports to all members. We also work to reform the system of detention through our policy and advocacy work, and to raise awareness of the realities of life behind bars, so that more people are aware of the issues and feel empowered to help push for change.

44% of those detained in 2018 were removed from the UK. This means that **56%** were released back into the communities from which they were taken, their detention having served no purpose.



| Mission statement

AVID aims to address the isolation and injustice of immigration detention in the UK. We do this by supporting, strengthening, and promoting volunteer visiting nationally, and by working towards positive change for all people in detention.

| Strategic Directions 2016 – 2018

- To build a skilled, confident, supported and knowledgeable visitors network
- To challenge the injustices of immigration detention, with a particular focus on ending the detention of vulnerable people
- To raise awareness of the realities of immigration detention nationally



AVID Conference 2017

List of members 2018



Over **520** volunteer visitors were registered with AVID member groups in 2018, in **17** member groups. Together, they provided emotional support and practical advice to detainees in every single detention centre and residential short term holding facility in the UK.

- **Asylum Welcome**
Campsfield House IRC
- **Befriending and Support Team for Foreign Nationals in HMP Wandsworth (BEST)**
- **Detention Action**
Colnbrook and Harmondsworth IRCs, and some London prisons
- **Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group**
Brook House and Tinsley House IRCs
- **Jesuit Refugee Service UK**
Colnbrook and Harmondsworth IRCs
- **Larne House Visitors Group**
Larne House STHF
- **Lewes Organisation in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers (LOSRAS)**
HMP Lewes
- **Liverpool Prisons Visiting Group**
Liverpool Prisons
- **Manchester Immigration Detainee Support Team (MIDST)**
Manchester Airport STHF and HMP Manchester
- **Morton Hall Detainee Visitors Group**
Morton Hall IRC
- **Rene Cassin Jewish Visitors Group**
New Member
- **Scottish Detainee Visitors**
Dungavel IRC
- **SOAS Detainee Support**
Colnbrook, Harmondsworth and Yarl's Wood IRCs and some London prisons
- **Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group**
Community Support
- **Sudanese Visitors Group**
- **Verne Visitors Group**
Awareness raising in the community
- **Yarl's Wood Befrienders**
Yarl's Wood IRC

Chair's Report

This is my last report to the membership as Chair of the Board of Trustees, since I am stepping down next year. As ever, 2018 was a year with an enormous amount of varied activity for AVID. The most significant event was that our Director, Ali McGinley, took maternity leave from February. We appointed Harriet Ballance as Acting Director for a year. Harriet came from a small charity supporting travellers, which she helped to establish, bringing a range of skills appropriate to AVID. Many would have found stepping into the shoes of someone who has led the organisation for so many years a hugely intimidating experience. Harriet, however, managed the transition with aplomb. She quickly demonstrated her skills and abilities working with staff, member groups and partner agencies. The Trustees are immensely grateful to Harriet for her work. >>>



Andrew Wilson, Chair and Acting Treasurer



Harriet Ballance, Acting Director

>>> We were fortunate, too, to be able to employ Benny Hunter as Information and Communications Officer, on an internship basis, thanks to a generous gift from a member. Benny soon showed that the quality and quantity of social media postings greatly raised AVID's online profile, and that of our members. We were also able to reinstate the AVID newsletter, which was widely welcomed in the sector. Benny left to resume his studies at the end of 2018 and we wish him well. Gee Manoharan, our Training and Membership Coordinator, supported Harriet and continued his invaluable work supporting our network of members. Amy Ramsay was recruited as a job share partner for Gee in November. You can read more about our activities in the *Activities report*, below.

much more prominent. Calls for the imposition of a time limit became more widespread and were taken up by a wide variety of organisations. Two Parliamentary Inquiries took place, each recommending the end of indefinite detention. As a result, it's fair to say there was an air of cautious optimism within the sector that something would change. (As we know, these hopes were dashed when, in 2019, the Government rejected the calls, and restated its opposition to a time limit). What became clear and openly acknowledged by Government was that there had been a deliberate policy of fostering a hostile climate for refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants. The use of detention is a plank of that environment, but perhaps what was more obvious to the world at large were the rank injustices exposed by the Windrush affair and the difficulties faced by EU citizens who had lived, worked, and raised families in the UK, but



AVID Conference 2017

The external environment changed during 2018, not least because the public profile of immigration detention became

who were unable to gain settled status, despite EU rules.

AVID, meanwhile, maintained its work to reduce the harm of detention on those detained, by working with member groups to mitigate that harm, and to advocate on their behalf. It is widely acknowledged that anyone detained suffers mental health problems, partly as a result of the fact that detention is always indefinite: no one knows when they will be released. Despite the fact that numbers in detention declined, still fewer than 50% of those detained were removed from the UK, which brings into question the main reason advanced in favour of detention, which is to facilitate removal. There is a requirement that those who are vulnerable should not be detained but, as we know, everyone who is detained becomes vulnerable through the removal of their

autonomy and being subject to a regime which is more or less indistinguishable from prison, except that it is not of a determined length. Added to that are the difficulties of those detained in getting bail despite the introduction of automatic bail hearings.

In my view, the mark of a civilised society is that it cares for those on its margins by treating them first as fellow humans who have the right not to be abused. Subjecting people to measures like indefinite detention because they don't match the definition of those who should be allowed to stay is clearly an abuse. Unfortunately then, there will be a place for AVID and its members for as long as that situation continues. If I may say so, AVID represents what is best about people. It has been a privilege to serve as a Trustee and latterly as Chair.

I can't sign off without mentioning the Board. It comprises a range of talented and committed individuals dedicated to the cause of supporting those in detention in whatever way they can. This year, we have been fortunate enough to recruit Elizabeth Flint, who has wide experience in the human rights field, and Michael Darko, who is an expert in detention by experience. We also welcomed back Carolina Albuerne after a year's absence. We missed her! At this AGM, we bid farewell to Jane Ryan, who has brought an immense knowledge of the sector to our deliberations. I know the board will miss her quiet but firm contributions immensely. I wish to thank them, and the staff, for allowing me the privilege of working with them over the last few years.

Andrew Wilson

1784 people
were in detention
at the end of 2018,
30% less
than in 2017



| Director's Report

2018 began with a high-profile hunger strike by women held at Yarl's Wood IRC, calling for a time limit and highlighting the conditions of their detention. Following the scandals of 2017, where abuse of people in detention by staff at Brook House was exposed by the BBC's Panorama documentary, public awareness was fuelled by the ongoing media focus on Windrush throughout 2018. Unlike the sheer volume of evidence presented in various inquiries, investigations and reports, it was the treatment of the Windrush generation that finally permeated the public consciousness. The idea that people who'd spent most of their lives in the UK were being detained and deported was horrifying to many. Suddenly the systemic failings of the Home Office were laid bare, and the spotlight was well and truly on the detention system. This would have far reaching consequences as the year went on. >>>

and the larger detention centres. These risks are something that we continue to monitor.

New bail provisions came into force in January, including the first automatic bail, a major step forward. Although at every four months, and only for those without a criminal record, the reach is limited. Section 4(1)c accommodation was also removed which meant that there were issues throughout the year with people either not being able to get bail because they didn't have an address (and so remaining in detention) or being bailed to the streets. Certain positive trends were visible however, with the numbers in detention reducing over the year (a 30% decrease on the year before), and a general reduction in the lengths of detention. The effects of these changes were noted by our members, who reported increased turnover of populations in detention centres, and with some detention centres noticeably less full in the latter half of the year. However, with 1,784 people in detention at year end, there are still too many people detained, and for too long.

Changes like this have a direct impact on member groups, and hence on AVID itself. In 2018 our current strategic directions came to an end. So began our process of membership consultation to ensure our priorities for the coming three years reflect their needs, their feedback on the support needs of those in detention, and the changes to our external environment. A grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation enabled us to engage a consultant to assist in this

>>> The Home Affairs Committee began looking into events at Brook House, and soon widened its scope to the entire detention estate as it became apparent the problems were systemic. The Joint Committee on Human Rights also began investigating detention. Both reports would be published in 2019, making recommendations that echo those AVID and others have been lobbying for over many years, including a time limit on detention and improved processes to identify, support and release vulnerable people.

During the summer of 2018, in response to the publication of the second 'Shaw Review' into the detention of vulnerable people, the Home Secretary stated his intention to 'pick up the pace of reform' and committed to four major developments. These included a pilot community-based alternative to detention scheme, and a pledge to improve the support for vulnerable people in detention, both of which were

recommendations made by AVID and partner NGOs in our submissions. Also announced were an internal review on a time limit, and a new drive on 'dignity in detention'. A 'Shaw Board' was established to take forward these recommendations, and AVID will monitor its progress closely.

In November, the announcement of the closure of Campsfield House in Oxford was welcomed, as was a commitment to a 40% reduction in the use of detention by May 2019. Campsfield House was empty by Christmas. Pennine House, the short-term holding facility at Manchester Airport, reopened under a new name and the first ever Short-Term Holding Facility (STHF) Rules were published, giving statutory provisions to these facilities for the first time. AVID played a key role in pushing for greater protection for those detained in STHFs, and we welcomed the publication, although we still feel there are many discrepancies in provision between these facilities

process, and using the ‘theory of change’ model, we were able to produce a thorough restatement of AVID’s strategy which will be published in 2019. In recognition of our changing environment, we will continue to tackle the injustices of immigration detention and to advocate for better conditions and treatment for those affected. Our new strategy will further consolidate our role in reducing isolation and building communities of support, broadening its scope and advocacy on behalf of those detained, to include people who have experienced detention and those who may be ‘at risk’ of detention. Our strategy will be further developed by the Board, member visitors’ groups, and our team during 2019, and will become a regular item on the Board’s agenda.

While I have the pleasure of reporting back to you on AVID’s activities in 2018, I can claim no credit, having been on maternity leave for most of the year. I am immensely grateful to Harriet Ballance, Acting Director, and the team. They managed to keep all of the balls juggling while navigating a challenging political environment and ensuring that our membership network continued to thrive. It was a pleasure to work with Harriet: her intuitive, sensitive approach ensured a smooth transition for the team. Special mention also to Benny Hunter who transformed our information and communications provision throughout 2018. This area of our work is so important: integral to amplifying our calls for change and raising



Ali McGinley, *Director*

awareness of the ongoing activities of the many AVID members and their volunteers.

At the time of writing in summer 2019, we approach our AGM. This year, we are losing two AVID veterans, Jane Ryan our Secretary and Andrew Wilson, our Chair and Acting Treasurer. Both Jane and Andrew have helped steer AVID over many years, and their commitment and dedication to tackling the injustices of detention has not wavered. On a personal note, they’ve both been invaluable sources of advice and support for me and will be sorely missed.

Ali McGinley



Brook House

Activities Report

2018 was the last year of our current strategic directions. We continued to work to support our members in a variety of ways, reflecting their diversity, and the multitude of changing needs within the detention sector. Our three key objectives continue to guide our work, balanced as always by the need to maintain flexibility and to react to an ever-changing environment. Progress against each objective is outlined overleaf. >>>

Membership Support

In 2018, we continued our programme of tailored support, advice and mentoring to visitors and groups across the UK. This included a range of topical trainings delivered in partnership with external experts, as well as our well-respected in-house training programme. We delivered 11 training sessions in the year, training a total of 136 volunteers from 11 groups, including groups in Northern Ireland and Nottingham. Our core training modules in, for example *Introduction to Visiting and Immigration*

Detention or Introduction to Immigration Detention policy and practice were accompanied by specific training in key areas including *Conversations with Vulnerable People*, delivered by the Samaritans, *Supporting EU nationals in detention* delivered by Seraphus Solicitors, and *Supporting trafficking and modern slavery survivors in detention* delivered by AVID Trustee Beth Flint. AVID believes that vulnerable people should not be detained, and our training focus on particular groups who may experience particular harm by their detention is an important element of this work. Feedback was, as always, very positive, and volunteers told us that they feel more equipped and better able to support people in detention as a result of our training. More experienced volunteers who attend our specialised modules are also

136 visitors from **11** member groups were trained by AVID in 2018



able to develop their skills in key areas to ensure they can provide ongoing support to people who may be struggling in detention.

This year we were also delighted to work with Rene Cassin, the Jewish human rights NGO, to establish a new visiting group. At the end of the year, ten volunteers were trained and ready to start their new roles as volunteer visitors. We look forward to working with the **Jewish Visitors Group** throughout 2019.

As always, the **AVID conference** was a highlight of the year, for both AVID and our members. We were able to offer places to all members, and provide them with two days of workshops, shared learnings, training, discussion, and most importantly, the

chance to meet face to face, build relationships, and work collaboratively. This year the conference was attended by 15 group representatives from across the UK including four from prison visiting groups. Sessions included a look at the new bail provisions (delivered by our partners **Bail for Immigration Detainees**), Safeguarding (delivered by **NCVO**), Boundaries around Immigration Advice and Information (by **Refugee Action**) and Community Care Law and Support for People in Detention (by **Wilson's Solicitors**). These external sessions were accompanied by member and AVID led collaborative workshops looking at casework, emotional wellbeing and the specific support needs of those visiting in prisons.

We held sessions tailored to those working in prisons and residential short-term holding facilities as well as detention centres. Visitors groups and detention NGOs appreciated the chance to come together, away from the office, in a peaceful location with the time and space to engage with some challenging subject matter. But also, our conference provides the opportunity to share informally with one another, enjoy fresh air and green space away from our offices, and to connect. Feedback is always overwhelmingly positive, with participants welcoming the chance to collaborate with colleagues from across the UK.

We continued to **formalise skills sharing through our Skillshare sessions**, although this year we were only able to deliver one – albeit critical – thematic session, looking at the GDPR legislation. This was attended by 11 different member groups, equipping them with the information and support needed to respond to this new legislation. The *Skillshare* format is designed to be member-led, with topics chosen and facilitated by groups across the UK. We hope that groups will feel more encouraged and able to take this forward next year.

In addition, our Training and Membership Coordinator continued to **deliver a range of supports** through various mechanisms, including ten **outreach visits** to different members across the UK, including in Northern Ireland and Nottingham. This helps us

work on development plans with members, and to provide tailored advice and support on issues identified in these visits. We provided tailored, one to one development support to 13 groups throughout the year, either face to face or by phone or email. This ongoing reactive advice has proved invaluable to the Coordinators of member groups many of whom are working in emotionally stressful environments and balancing casework with volunteer management.

A focus this year has been on **bringing our members together**, to encourage information sharing and joint working. As well as our own support to Coordinators and those responsible for running groups, we've facilitated peer to peer shadowing opportunities and also mentoring and informal support between groups. We also worked to encourage greater interaction between members including through our online discussion form, enabling groups to ask advice from their peers quickly and easily. This enables a confidential discussion of the practicalities of running a visitors' group and provides a safe space for information sharing about the many issues that arise, including casework, management, or relationships with those running the centres.

“ I really enjoyed the whole day and found it gave me more confidence to continue my role as a visitor ”

- Training attendee, 'Introduction to Immigration Detention and Visiting' Jewish Visitors Group, London

“ the empathy slides were 100%, the professionals speaking about the state of detention at this current time was very powerful ”

- Training attendee, 'Introduction to Immigration Detention and Visiting' Morton Hall Detainee Visitors Group, Nottingham

“ Excellent day of training, bonding, building. Good day of sharing, thinking ”

- Training attendee, 'Introduction to Immigration Detention and Visiting' Larne House Visitors Group, Belfast

“ It is our experience that those who are in immigration detention having previously served a prison sentence are at the greatest risk of long term detention, and are therefore facing a range of multiple vulnerabilities themselves. However, the Adults at Risk (AAR) guidance at page four outlines that ‘the public interest in the deportation of foreign national offenders (FNOs) will generally outweigh a risk of harm to the detainee.’ This element of the policy is clearly guiding caseworkers to find that the evidence of vulnerability will be outweighed by the fact of having served a criminal sentence of 12 months or more, and does not reflect an individualised approach – the need for which was emphasised throughout AVID’s first submission, was prioritised in the first Shaw Review, and is a supposed objective of the AAR policy ...”

AVID submission to ‘Assessment of government progress in implementing the report on the welfare in detention of vulnerable persons: A follow-up report to the Home Office’, Stephen Shaw July 2018

ACTIVITIES REPORT

| Advocacy and Policy

Our policy work continued to focus on ensuring access to places of detention for volunteers, and in taking forward the concerns and issues from our members in various policy forums. Our advocacy goal remains to end the detention of vulnerable people and despite progress in the last year, we believe the Home Office could do much more to ensure those who suffer the most are not subject to detention.

Activities carried out by our Acting Director this year included **targeted advocacy** through a range of briefings and **provision of evidence** at a variety of levels, most notably through parliamentary enquiries and independent monitoring bodies, and to Parliamentarians themselves, but also through our role as a stakeholder at the NASF Detention sub group, the

key government stakeholding meeting on immigration detention. We held several briefing meetings, including with the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIUKBI), the Home Office, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and at individual IRCs with centre managers. This enabled us to take action on concerns raised by our members, ranging from issues with the implementation of the new ‘Adults at Risk’ policy, to access to detention for visitors’ groups.

We continued to **work collaboratively towards detention reform**, with the Detention Forum. Our Acting Director continued as policy lead on Vulnerable People in Detention for this network which exists to challenge immigration detention. We also continued to support the Forum’s work

and objectives as part of the Coordination Group. In 2018, many of the Forum’s advocacy goals were mirrored in the findings of the key inquiries and investigations into detention, giving hope for systemic reform.

As Chair of the **Detention Monitoring Group**, AVID has a key role in bringing the detention sector together to foster collective approaches. AVID continued to chair these monthly meetings which is the key forum for discussing operational policy within detention and conditions and treatment of those detained. We facilitate collaborative advocacy on the operational and policy issues affecting those detained. In 2018 AVID also established a working group on issues facing survivors of trafficking who are detained, as a subgroup of the Detention Monitoring Group.

We continued to **gather evidence and raise awareness** of the issues faced daily by those in detention. This included presenting to the staff of **HMIP**, inputting into the HMIP inspection processes, and providing evidence to a range of inquiries including that of the **Home Affairs Select Committee** into immigration detention. Our evidence also formed part of a civil society report into the UK's compliance with the **UNCAT** (the UN Convention Against Torture, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) which will be presented in Geneva next year. We also represented our network at the **Europe Wide ODIHR** (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) meeting on torture prevention in detention, and were the only UK NGO invited to attend.

Alongside this we carried out targeted **local and national advocacy** on behalf of our members to enhance access to places of detention for the voluntary sector. We continued to research and evidence our concerns through a range of research and fact finding, not least through a programme of regular **Freedom of Information Act submissions** including those detained in the prison estate.

Most notably this year, as a follow up to his first review into the welfare in detention of vulnerable people, AVID assisted Stephen Shaw and his team by coordinating a round table focus group, at which a range of concerns were raised about a lack of progress made and the retrograde 'adults at risk' policy towards vulnerable people, which we believe puts

more people at risk than before. The evidence presented by NGOs formed a key part of his second report, *Assessment of Government progress in implementing the Report on the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons*, which cited AVID directly. In response to his report, the Government has established a 'Shaw Board' to oversee several reforms many of which echo AVID's concerns. We will continue to work to monitor this reform process closely.

We also hosted and chaired a **meeting of sector NGOs focused on vulnerability** to discuss advocacy objectives after the publication of Shaw's report, particularly with regard to possible mechanisms to hold the government to account for implementing the promised reforms.

At 31 December 2018, the longest length of detention was **1280** days. That's **over three and a half years**.



BID present at the AVID conference 2017



Samaritans AVID training 2017

Sharing information and awareness raising

Our work to raise awareness of the realities of immigration detention nationally was considerably expanded this year with the recruitment of an Information and Communications Officer (intern). Benny Hunter worked to bring in new audiences and raise awareness through heightening our presence online and in social media. This role has been absolutely vital in getting the message out to a much wider group, not only about the injustices of detention but also of the work of the many volunteer led, developing visitors' groups who do not have the capacity to carry out communications work themselves. This role is now integral to AVID's team and we are working to secure further funding for this post.

This year we significantly increased our **Twitter** followers,

which reached nearly 5,000 by year end, a sizable audience receiving daily updates on the policy and practice of immigration detention and those affected by the injustices of the system. We launched our **first live interview event**, via Instagram and Facebook, with singer and actor Kate Nash. This event was a discussion on all aspects of immigration detention and was viewed by just under 10,000 people, evidence indeed of the interest in the issues and the appetite for information, which AVID is in a strong place to continue providing in 2019.

We resumed the publication of **AVID's key monthly digest – the Detention Monitor** – including regular bulletins on activities across the sector as well as policy and law updates and

parliamentary monitoring. This parliamentary monitoring was also featured on our website and was greatly appreciated by the sector as a whole. Parliamentary activity on immigration detention was also monitored and disseminated widely, which is very helpful for our membership and for the wider sector in terms of keeping track of developments, key trends and government reactions and responses. This has helped equip those carrying out advocacy on the issues to remain abreast of the rapidly changing political context to our work. Our website remained a valuable one stop shop for all information on immigration detention, and this year featured guest blog posts including one by our colleagues at Right to Remain, on people detained in prisons.



AVID team with Kate Nash, during our first live interview (L-R) Kate Nash, Harriet Ballance, Gee Manoharan and Benny Hunter

Summary of Accounts

For year ended 31st December 2018

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total Funds 2018 |
|---|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| INCOME | | | |
| Grants and Donations | | | |
| 29th May 1961 Trust | 5,000 | | 5,000 |
| Esmée Fairbairn Foundation | | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Grants Plus | | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| Tudor Trust | | 40,000 | 40,000 |
| Donations | 9,941 | | 9,941 |
| <i>Sub total grants and donations</i> | 14,941 | 96,000 | 110,941 |
| Membership fees | 1,555 | | 1,555 |
| Bank interest | 34 | | 34 |
| Other receipts | 280 | | 280 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 16,810 | 96,000 | 112,810 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Staff costs | 11,357 | 77,851 | 89,208 |
| Premises and running costs | 5,814 | 11,976 | 17,790 |
| Governance costs | 1,980 | 903 | 2,883 |
| Direct charitable expenditure | 6,438 | 2,004 | 8,442 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 25,589 | 92,734 | 118,323 |
| Net receipts/(payments) | (8,779) | 3266 | (5513) |
| Cash funds at the start of this period | 19,901 | 35,000 | 54,901 |
| Cash funds at the end of this period | 11,122 | 38,266 | 49,388 |

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

Treasurers report

The board considers it prudent to maintain three months' running costs as reserves, where possible. During 2018, reserves fell below that level for some of quarter one and quarter two. This was because both major grants were paid during quarter three. The Board and Director took the decision to maintain full staff capacity as long as possible during this period, which required use of reserves. Steps taken to mitigate this include the reinvigoration of a Fundraising Committee, comprising the Acting Director and two Trustees. The committee meets regularly to ensure a continued programme of funding applications. Working with a consultant, an Income Review document and plan was produced which identifies potential diversification streams for AVID, and which we look forward to piloting in 2019. We continue to work with our funders, partners and supporters to ensure that opportunities are maximised. Our Strategic Directions for 2019 should open opportunities with new funders, and with a fundraising plan and calendar of applications for this

year, we are hopeful that we can continue to make progress in a funding climate that is, as always, uncertain.

The Board is very grateful indeed to its members and funders, on whose generous support AVID relies to carry out its activities in support of those in detention. In particular, our continued relationships with the Tudor Trust and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation are valued highly by the Board. AVID is very grateful to the individual donors, small funders and local groups who supported us in 2018.

AVID was fortunate to benefit from a small grant from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation's Grants Plus programme to support work on developing our organisational strategy and fundraising plan. The grant enabled a scheduled review in 2018 to become a much more detailed and wide-ranging piece of work, which is continuing. We are indeed grateful to Leah Selinger for facilitating the review, and her continuing work on strategy.

Andrew Wilson

100%
of conference attendees said they valued the opportunity given for networking and discussion



"..... detainees continued to feel unsafe and uncertain because there was too often a lack of clarity as to what the future held for them, and in particular how long they were to be held in detention. Although most detainees were held for less than two months, some continued to be held for extended periods. More needs to be done to ensure that delays to casework are minimised. It was still the case that too many detainees with vulnerabilities remained in detention, defeating the stated objectives of the Home Office's own policy."

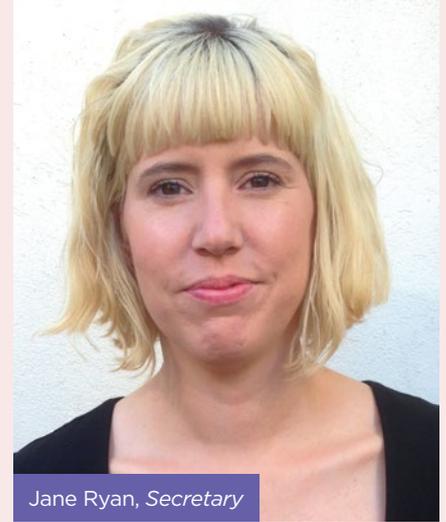
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales Annual Report 2018-19

| Farewell

I have been extremely proud to be part of the fantastic AVID team for seven years. From a small basement in Archway AVID has climbed the heights to a trendy shared office in hipster Hackney, and whilst our surroundings have seen more light (we certainly have more windows) I've also witnessed the important contribution AVID has made to the immigration detention debate. It has been a time of tremendous change for immigration detention in the UK, with AVID contributing significantly to the greater awareness of indefinite detention and treatment of vulnerable people in detention. I have had many personal highlights over the years, from meeting visitor groups and hearing about innovation on the ground to attending meetings with the Committee on Prevention of Torture.

AVID has and continues to be fundamentally important supporting people in immigration detention and amplifying those voices in its consistent and loud calls for change. The AVID conference has also been important to join people together and share experiences. Personally, a big highlight for me was my involvement in the Hidden Stories project for AVID's 20th Anniversary where for the first time the voices of visitors and detainees were publicly documented. It remains a valuable and important testament to the personal relationship between visitors and detainees.

In addition, I am grateful for the massive amount of work, spirit and determination of the AVID team, particularly Director Ali McGinley, in pushing the organisation forward. I've



been delighted to be part of an exciting and young board which brings together experiences from multiple sectors. Thank you very much AVID. I hope that my small contribution over the years goes some way to helping AVID to challenge the unjust detention system.

Jane Ryan

15 delegates
from **12 groups**
attended our conference in 2018



| Holding Space: the coordinator's role

AVID's Training and Membership Coordinator role has always centred on providing support to the members in the network and building capacity for each group. This has been delivered through a range of methods, such as outreach visits to the different groups; sharing resources, information and guidance on our dedicated member's area; delivering training, workshops and information sessions; or one to one support sessions to develop the skills of staff and volunteers working in each group.

In 2018 there were an unprecedented number of changes in the immigration detention sector, and this had an impact on the groups in our network. In particular there were lots of staff changes amongst AVID members, including our own Director's maternity leave, and the departure of the long-standing Director of Detention Action, Jerome Phelps. Heiko Topp, one of the founders and the long-term Coordinator of the Larne House Visitors Group stepped down from his role in July 2018 to take a break from visiting. Similarly, James Wilson stood down as Director of Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group towards the end of the year. Many other members welcomed new staff and volunteer Coordinators, including Camille Herreman joining Morton Hall Detainee Visitors Group as Coordinator, and volunteers sharing the Coordinator role at Larne House Visitors Group.

While these changes were happening in our network, 2018 also saw an increased awareness

of immigration detention in the UK, which directly impacted on the Coordinators/volunteer Coordinators and their role in this rapidly changing sector. Being a Coordinator in this environment can be extremely isolating and emotionally overwhelming. Even the strongest leaders, coaches, lawyers, nurses etc need to know that there are some people with whom they can be vulnerable and weak without fear of being judged. Holding space for someone in detention does not require anything more than showing up and listening without judgment. When we hold space for people, we open our hearts, offer unconditional support, and let go of judgment and control. But sometimes we find ourselves holding spaces for people while they in turn are supporting others. That is certainly the case with the Coordinators of visitors' groups and detention NGOs, actively supporting their volunteers. But what about the Coordinators themselves and their wellbeing?

The Training and Membership Coordinator within AVID is in a unique position to do just the same for the Coordinators, or those running visitors' groups and detention NGOs. Over the years we have provided this support informally for several members in our network, helping to 'hold space' for them in their role, walking alongside them in whatever journey they were on without judgement and helping them find solutions and feel better able to cope. In the last year, with all the staffing changes this became more frequent.



Gee Manoharan, *Training and Membership Coordinator*

Phone support, one to one meetings or email conversations took place almost weekly, enabling Coordinators to offload their worries or concerns in confidence to a non-judgemental listening ear with the knowledge and understanding to give tailored advice and support. This has helped Coordinators to be able to continue their effective, meaningful and challenging work. It has also become a key element of the portfolio of support we can offer our members, particularly during times of transition when starting a new role, or when working through changes at the detention centre. It has been fantastic that this support has been so well received and the feedback much appreciated. We will be working to strengthen this type of support in the coming year, and to expand it, through peer to peer mentoring, enabling Coordinators to support one another. We look forward to building on this, by continuing to hold space, in 2019.

Gee Manoharan

| About us

STAFF

Ali McGinley, *Director*
(on maternity leave from
February 2018)

Harriet Ballance, *Acting Director*
(from February 2018)

Gee Manoharan, *Training and
Membership Coordinator*

Amy Ramsay, *Training and
Membership Coordinator*
(from November 2018)

Benny Hunter, *Information and
Communications Officer (Intern)*

TRUSTEES

Andrew Wilson, *Chair and
Acting Treasurer*

Jane Ryan, *Secretary*

Jennifer Choi

Ciaran Price

Elizabeth Flint, from 18/01/18

Carolina Albuerno Rodriguez,
from 04/10/18

Michael Darko, from 26/10/18

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Lord David Ramsbotham

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366 immigration detainees were held
in prisons in England and Wales at the end of 2018
– the equivalent to another large detention centre.
Those held in prison face even greater
barriers to accessing support and justice.

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katierawlins.com



association of visitors to
immigration detainees

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