



January 2018

Issue 01

News from AVID

Welcome to AVID's **new** monthly newsletter, where you will find information on our member's work in the UK, news on immigration detention, legal and policy updates, parliamentary monitoring as well as info on upcoming events and opportunities. To make sure you see future emails from us, please add us to your Safe Senders list.

Best Wishes to our Director Ali McGinley

AVID's Director Ali McGinley will be leaving us at the end of January on maternity leave until 2019. Although we are sad to see her go, we wish her well and can't wait to meet the new 'bairn' ! Best of luck for the future Ali!

New Staff Join the Team – Welcome to Harriet Ballance and Benny Hunter!

We're delighted to introduce two new members of staff; Benny Hunter as Information and Communications Officer, and Harriet Ballance as Acting Director. Harriet joins us from leading a charity for the Gypsy and Traveller communities and has a background in project management, specialising in migration and social justice issues. Benny has written widely on detention and migration themes for a variety of publications, as well as having direct experience working with people in detention and for the organisations Safe Passage and Help Refugees. We hope that they will both feel welcome.

This month

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[Coming up](#)

Coming Up

2nd February 2018

[NCVO Training: Data Protection Reform - An Introduction to the GDPR for the Voluntary Sector @ NCVO Conference Suite, London](#)

12th February 2018

[Behind the Walls: Verne Visitors Group Public Meeting with Guest Speakers @ Dorchester Corn Exchange](#)

13th February 2018

[Small Charities Coalition Training: Fundraising Strategy & Decision-making @ Bristol Energy Hub](#)

14th February 2018

[Rainbow Pilgrims Conference: LGBTQI Migrant and Travelling Communities Perspectives @ Buckinghamshire New University, High Wycombe](#)

News from Our Members



Yarl's Wood Befrienders organised a Christmas party last month in the centre

Detention Action is looking for Volunteers!

Our member group Detention Action is on the hunt for committed volunteers to help them to deliver support and advice to people in immigration detention. As well as volunteer visitors, Detention Action is also looking for volunteer interpreters and advocacy and support volunteers. Get in touch with them if you're interested!

[...Read More »](#)

Yarl's Wood Befrienders Xmas Event

Yarl's Wood Befrienders helped to put on a Christmas Event for detainees in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre on 20th December. Women in Yarl's Wood were treated for the day to pampering, games, activities and festive food. AVID's Benny Hunter was kindly invited along to participate in the event. Well done to YWBFs for organising the day. [See more pictures from the event here.](#)

New Film "Life After Detention" by SDV

We are very pleased to share a new film by our member group, **Scottish Detainee Visitors**, in collaboration with men and women who have experiences of immigration detention. In the film they share stories from their life after detention. Their viewpoint and their words are especially harrowing and powerful. You can watch the film and read more [on our website](#).

Sudanese Visiting Group visits Parliament

On 28 November **Sudanese Visiting Group** organised a trip to Parliament as part of a training on how to effect change in the UK political arena. SVG's **Maddy Crowther** shared a story with AVID about what happened there: "One of the participants was a gentleman who is still waiting for his asylum decision. Only a few weeks ago he was held in detention and we supported him during this time. He was utterly despondent, and started a hunger strike by way of protesting his situation. They tried to remove him, and so he stripped naked thinking this might stop them, but they simply bundled him up in a sheet and took him to the airport. By some miracle he escaped being put on the plane, and was returned to the IRC, and eventually released to fight for asylum in the community, which is where he should have been in the first place. I cannot describe how empowering it was for someone who has been so badly treated, and failed, by the system, to be given the chance to speak truth to power. After the training he said, "This is one of the best days of my life. I will never forget this day for as long as I live"."

Scottish Detainee Visitors Held a Vigil

On the 13th of December, Scottish Detainee Visitors held a candle-lit vigil, to remember the 39 people who have died in detention since 1989. They wrote: "This year has been the deadliest year of all: 11 people have died in 2017. Six people

have also died shortly after their release from detention, including our friend Solyman Rashed who was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq in 2007 after making the decision to return rather than face even longer in detention. He had been detained for nearly a year. We remember them all." ... [Read More »](#)

Refugee Tales 2018 Walk - Tickets on Sale

Tickets are now on sale for Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group's 'Refugee Tales' - a 5-day walking event from St. Albans to London, Saturday 6 July to Wednesday 11 July, including talks, poetry, music and other events, including stories on immigration detention from experts-by-experience ... [Read More »](#)

Members - Share with Us Your Stories and Work!

We continue to be inspired and amazed by the work of our member groups and individual members. If you have any stories or work that you would like us to share with our readers in our next newsletter then please don't hesitate to contact Information and Communications Officer Benny Hunter at Benjamin.hunter@aviddetention.org.uk.



Update on the UK Detention Estate



[Fencing around an immigration removal centre](#)

Home Affairs Committee to Scrutinise IRCs

A Home Affairs Committee inquiry is looking into the running of Brook House Immigration Removal Centre. The inquiry follows the broadcast of BBC Panorama's investigation in September 2017, which highlighted serious issues, including drug use, bullying, allegations of assault, racial abuse, as well as cases of self-harm and attempted suicide. Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre in Lincolnshire is also to be included in the inquiry following the deaths of four people there in 2017... [Read More »](#)

11 Deaths in Detention in the Space of a Year

Eleven people died while in immigration detention in a year. Michael Netyks, a 35-year-old Polish man, was the latest to die in 2017, while detained in Altcourse prison after he finished serving a six-month sentence there. He had been assessed to be vulnerable and is thought to have taken his own life. Other deaths include four deaths at Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre: 38-year-old Carlington Spencer from Jamaica, Lukasz Debowski from Poland, an unnamed man from Iraq and Bal Ahmed Kabia from Sierra Leone. ... [Read More »](#)

New Minister for Immigration Caroline Nokes

Caroline Nokes replaces Great Yarmouth MP, Bradon Lewis, who has held the role since June 2017. Hansard does not record Nokes ever using the term "immigration" in the House of Commons since her election in 2010.

Second Stephen Shaw Review Underway

The follow up to the Stephen Shaw Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons (published in 2016) started on 4 September 2017. Shaw will be assessing the implementation of all of his earlier recommendations in this review. AVID's response can be [found on our website](#).

New Immigration Bail Proceedings from Jan 15th

"New Immigration Bail proceedings were introduced on 15th of January 2018. These included new bail forms and changes to the management of bail....[Read More »](#)

Mitie awarded contract to manage STHFs from May

Mitie Care & Custody have been awarded the contract to manage airport holding rooms, reporting centres and 'Short Term Holding Facilities' from May 2018, taking over from Tascor. Mitie will also manage escorting of people being deported on removal flights. The 10-year contract has an estimated value of £525 million. Mitie already manages the Campsfield House and Heathrow Immigration Removal Centres...[Read More »](#)

HMIP 2017 Report for Yarl's Wood IRC

Conditions in Yarl's Wood had improved significantly in the two years since a previous highly critical report by HM Inspectorate of Prisons. The previous inspection in 2015 followed publicised allegations of abuse by staff and found large numbers of detainees showing clear signs of distress. The most noticeable change in 2017 was that the atmosphere across the centre was far calmer, more respectful and relaxed. The inspector found that some detainees were held for too long and the high numbers later released into the community raising "questions about the justification for detention in the first place." However, problems with health care were having a "significant negative impact" on detainees ...[Read More »](#)



New Detention Research and Reports



**Locked up, locked out:
health and human rights
in immigration detention**


British Medical Association
bma.org.uk

New Research by British Medical Association

You can now read detailed summaries of all the research reports listed below and other recent reports and research projects [on our website](#).

British Medical Assoc “Locked Up, Locked Out!”

The BMA recently released their report "Locked Up, Locked Out: Health and Human Rights in Immigration Detention" looking at the role of doctors in protecting and promoting the health-related human rights of detained individuals. The report found that detained people present complex needs, a high rate of mental health problems and specific vulnerabilities as a result of past trauma...[Read more »](#)

Amnesty International Report "Matter of Routine"

Amnesty's report "Matter of Routine" examines the use of immigration detention powers since the Home Office reforms were announced in 2016. The report found that detention policy has shifted from detention as a last resort towards detention as routine...[Read more »](#)

Bar Council Report “Injustice in Immigration Detention, Perspectives from Legal Professionals”

New research by The Bar Council finds that immigration detention "operates in a very unjust way" with "inadequate routes to challenge decisions". The new report titled "Injustice in Immigration Detention, Perspectives from Legal Professionals" was based on interviews with barristers, solicitors, immigration judges and other specialists...[Read more »](#)

A helpful and informative video by The Bar Council can be [watched here](#).

IVAR Report on Detention Action's legal case: “Detained Fast Track Litigation Case Study”

How can strategic litigation successfully be used for social change? A new case study report from Institute for Voluntary Action Research looks at the successes, risks and challenges for our member Detention Action in using strategic litigation to suspend the 'Detained Fast Track' process...[Read more »](#)

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group Report on Young Arrivers: “Don't Dump Me in a Foreign Land”

Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group's recent report on young arrivers in immigration detention titled "Don't Dump Me in a Foreign Land" found that people who arrived in the UK when they were children represent a hidden but significant and especially vulnerable group inside IRCs in the UK...[Read more »](#)

Less than half of those in detention have legal representation - Bail for Immigration Detainees

New Six-monthly survey by the charity BiD reveals that access to legal representation for those held in immigration detention is seriously lacking and less than half of those questioned have a legal representative ...[Read more »](#)

Bristol University Research on Impact of Immigration Detention on Detainee’s Families

Research undertaken by **Bristol University** has examined the intersection of family life and immigration enforcement by following 30 mixed-immigration status families, consisting of men with precarious immigration status and their partners and children....[Read more »](#)

Detention Action Research Briefing on Trafficking and Immigration Detention

New research has been undertaken by Detention Action titled "Trafficked into Detention: How victims of trafficking are missed in detention" looking at how survivors of trafficking are failed within the detention system...[Read more »](#)

Legal, Policy and Parliament



Joan Ryan presents her Member's Bill in the House of Commons

Joan Ryan presented Bill 146 on Detention of Victims of Torture and Other Vulnerable People

20th December 2017, Volume 633

Joan Ryan (Labour, Enfield North) spoke on the Government's failure to protect victims of torture and other vulnerable people from detention, while presenting a private member's Bill (Bill 146). The Bill was brought to the House to make provision about "immigration detention safeguards for victims of torture and other vulnerable people, including those that have suffered from severe physical, psychological or sexual violence; and for connected purposes." The Bill **will be read for a second time on Friday 23 November 2018**...[Read More »](#)

Parliamentary Questions from Dec 2017 – Jan 2018

Our Parliamentary Monitoring work can be viewed [on our website](#), where you will find the full list of [Parliamentary Questions](#) and [Debates](#) on immigration detention, accessible throughout the month as and when questions are asked in parliament. Follow us on twitter ([@AVIDdetention](#)) and you'll get instant notifications of when they are up.

You can find a list of all relevant PQs from December and January below:

- 29 January: Stephen Shaw Review
- 29 January: Immigration Detention Bail
- 29 January: Screening process for vulnerable people
- 25 January: Report on STHFs
- 25 January: Detention in Areas of England
- 25 January: Detention in Holding Rooms
- 25 January: Vulnerable persons in Detention
- 25 January: Injuries during deportation
- 24 January: Assistance for deportees
- 24 January: Appeals against deportation
- 24 January: Deportation attempts
- 24 January: Screening process for vulnerable people
- 23 January: Detention Centre Costs
- 23 January: Stephen Shaw Review
- 23 January: Detention of Chagossian people
- 23 January: Detention of Children
- 22 January: Injuries and deaths during deportation
- 17 January: Access to Dungavel IRC
- 17 January: Cost of unlawful detention claims paid out

17 January: Steps taken to improve conditions at Brook House
17 January: Average annual cost of detaining an individual
17 January: Cost of running Brook House
16 January: Response to IBM reports from 2016
16 January: Average duration of detention
11 January: Detention of Asylum Seekers
11 January: Detention of Unaccompanied Minors
8 January: Legal Minimum Wage paid in Detention
21 December: Costs of Unlawful Detention Claims
21 December: Support for Stateless Detainees
18 December: Time Limit on Immigration Detention
14 December: Number of people in Immigration Detention
14 December: Number of Ambulances called to IRCs
13 December: Maximum time limit on Immigration Detention
13 December: Number of people granted bail from Detention
8 December: Deportation of homeless EU citizens
7 December: Deportation of returned non-UK offenders
4 December: Number of Suicides in Immigration Detention
4 December: Proportion of detainees released
4 December: Cost of detention in Brook House

High Court Rules That Home Office Unlawfully Detained Torture Survivors

The High Court has ruled that an Eritrean national, who is a torture survivor, was unlawfully detained by the Home Office. The Court found that substantial damages are payable to the claimant for their detention between 8 September and 21 September 2015. ... [Read More »](#)

*We always welcome feedback on our newsletter
Do let us know if there are things you want to see covered.
Please contact us at Benjamin.hunter@aviddetention.org.uk*



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