

scottishdetaineevisitors

**Annual Report
&
Review of 2017**

Chair's report

I feel very privileged to have held the position of chair for Scottish Detainee Visitors (SDV) and have greatly enjoyed it. This is partly due to the strong, talented and hardworking management committee I have worked with. I took on the role of chair in August 2017 after having been involved in SDV since 2009, first as a staff member and then as a committee member, so I knew the organisation well.

Early into the committee's term we received the devastating news that Marion Fairweather, a dedicated SDV volunteer for over ten years, had died far too young in March 2018. I would like to take this opportunity to remember and pay tribute to Marion.

She started volunteering with SDV as a visitor in 2006, visiting regularly for many years and continuing some friendships with those she met in Dungavel once they had moved detention centres or even been deported. She joined the management committee in 2011 and served on it for six years, some of which she acted as treasurer. The committee used to take it in turns to host meetings in our own homes and when Marion hosted she always had something freshly baked for us all to enjoy. In 2013 she and her partner James hosted a fantastic fundraising dinner, probably the most successful fundraiser SDV has had to date, which took a huge amount of preparation, motivation and hard work. Marion was a kind, thoughtful person who had time for everyone and a real commitment and passion for what she did. She will be deeply missed by everyone who knew her at SDV.

Whilst Marion left the management committee in August 2017, she would have kept a keen interest in the goings on of SDV and would, I think, be pleased with its progress.

In 2017, SDV continued to increase awareness around immigration detention in Scotland through a number of means (detailed throughout this report). I would like to especially thank our director, Kate Alexander, for all her hard work in this area. Here, I would like to highlight the work that both of our staff members, Kate and Shirley Gillan, have done with theatre company Ice and Fire in producing 'Detention Dialogues'. This documentary theatre gives the audience a powerful insight into the depths of uncertainty, pain and devastation that is caused by immigration detention in the UK. It is something that SDV, in partnership with Ice and Fire, hope to continue to use to facilitate spreading the stories of those affected by immigration detention, that is, those of us not lucky enough to be born with access to certain passports.

SDV continues its core work of supporting people affected by immigration detention both inside and outside of Dungavel, as is illustrated in the rest of this report. In 2017, we visited Dungavel nine times a month and saw 238 people in total. Outside detention, the Life after Detention (LAD) group is a space of creativity, sanctuary and peer-support for those who are affected by detention. I would like to thank our coordinator, Shirley, and the LAD volunteers for their dedication to this project.

In addition to our two passionate and hardworking staff members, I would like to thank the rest of the management committee and all of SDV's volunteers without whom SDV would not exist.

Anna Beesley
Chair, SDV

Director's report

In February 2017, the UK Government quietly confirmed that Dungavel would remain open and that it would not pursue its plans to open a short-term holding facility in Scotland. The move followed a vocal public campaign against a new facility at Glasgow Airport and the subsequent refusal of planning permission by Renfrewshire Council.

That Dungavel remains open is not a cause for celebration, but the decision ended a difficult period of uncertainty for SDV. The whole episode also focussed public and political attention on detention in a way we have rarely seen before.

When I first visited people in Dungavel 15 years ago, detention was hardly ever in the news. In 2017, it was rarely out of it. The news was never good, but it was reported in the national press and on broadcast news, which would have been inconceivable in 2003.

In September, we learned the terrible news that a Chinese man detained in Dungavel had died. His was the third death in detention in less than a month. By the end of the year, the death toll had reached 11, making 2017 the deadliest year in detention.

The year also brought revelations of horrific abuse of people in detention in Brook House detention centre at Gatwick Airport. Secret footage filmed by whistle-blower Callum Tulley, who worked as a detention custody officer for G4S, was shown on the BBC documentary Panorama. It revealed a culture of violence and brutality at the centre. It led to suspensions of staff and to an inquiry into

immigration detention by the Home Affairs Committee of the UK Parliament.

It was in the wake of these events that Sir Stephen Shaw began his follow up review of the welfare of vulnerable people in detention, which was intended to assess the extent to which the 64 recommendations in his 2016 review had been heeded. After a long wait, that follow up review was finally published in July 2018.

Throughout all this, SDV continued its vital work of supporting people in Dungavel and on release, and advocating for change in the system.

Much of our work is done by volunteers including our management committee, visitors, Life after Detention volunteers, our social media team, country researchers and public speakers. Thanks to all of them for their efforts in 2017. Thanks also to Shirley for all her work as our coordinator. I look forward to working with all of them in 2018 and beyond.

Kate Alexander
Director, SDV

SDV's activities in 2017

Supporting people in Dungavel

SDV supports people in Dungavel through our twice weekly evening visits and our morning drop-in service. In 2017, we saw a total of 238 people. This is considerably more than we saw in 2016 (179), despite the fact that the population at Dungavel remained at well under capacity throughout the whole year. Dungavel can detain up to 249 people, but UK Government figures show that at the end of each of the four quarters of 2017, the number of people held there never exceeded 145.

Evening visits take place every Monday and Thursday with up to five volunteer visitors driving together to Dungavel, an hour south of Glasgow. Each visit lasts for between an hour and an hour and a half and in 2017, we saw an average of just over seven people at each visit, but, as always, this average masks wide variations. In 2017, visitors saw between two and 14 people at visits so they have to be prepared for anything.

The drop in took place monthly in 2017 and was run by staff, supported by one or two volunteers. At the end of the year, we secured the agreement of staff at Dungavel to provide the drop in twice a month, which means that from the beginning of 2018, we have had a presence at Dungavel 10 times a month.

The drop in provides an opportunity for us to meet people who have not been referred to us for visits. People can just drop in to speak to us. As it takes place in the visits room at Dungavel, before social visits and at the same time as legal visits, it also gives us the opportunity to approach people while they wait to see their lawyers, and explain who we are and what we do. This kind of direct contact

was the most common way people found out about the drop in. However, staff at Dungavel and other people in detention have also been very helpful in introducing us to new people at the drop in. In 2017, 62 of the people we visited were first seen at the drop in (26%).

Just 14 of Dungavel's 249 bedspaces are for women so the majority of the people we see are men. But our visitors are aware that women can feel particularly isolated and frightened and make special efforts to see any women who are detained. In 2017, we visited 192 men (81%) and 46 women (19%). We were more likely to see women at the drop in than at evening visits, perhaps because the sessions are longer and there is a greater chance of talking privately than at evening visits.

Country of origin of people visited (top 10 countries)

	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
Romania	25	11%
China	23	10%
India	19	8%
Vietnam	16	7%
Iran	11	5%
Iraq	11	5%
Poland	11	5%
Sudan	11	5%
Afghanistan	10	4%
Bangladesh	8	3%

In 2017, we visited people from 49 different countries. 24% of them came from European countries, particularly Romania. This is a huge change from 2016 when just 3% of the people we saw were from Europe. Figures from the Home Office show that 19% of the people entering detention in 2017 were European. For those entering detention in Dungavel, however,

the figure was 33%, the highest of all the detention centres.

In the past, when we met Europeans in Dungavel, they had been sent to detention on a deportation order having served a prison sentence for a criminal offence. Increasingly, we meet European nationals who have no criminal record in the UK and have been detained on what appear to be spurious grounds. This situation has led some politicians to argue that the Government is motivated by 'politics, not policing'. This is an issue that we are continuing to monitor in 2018.

We offer a range of practical support at visits including phone cards, emergency money for people we know are being moved from Dungavel and our information booklet. We also liaise with lawyers and other organisations on behalf of the people we visit. But equally important is the friendship and solidarity our visits offer. Many people detained in Dungavel have friends and family in other parts of the UK, who are unable to visit them because they are too far away. For those people, our visitors may be the only people apart from Dungavel staff and other people in detention that they see.

In 2017, 65% of the people we saw in Dungavel were seen just once or twice, compared to 48% per cent in 2016. By contrast, 9% of the people we saw were visited 10 or more times (22 people), compared to 13% (20 people) in 2016 (see chart). This small group of people who are visited over 10 times include those who may be detained for many months and even years. Our visitors build strong supportive relationships with people in this position and witness the deterioration in both mental and physical health that can be the consequence of long term indefinite detention.

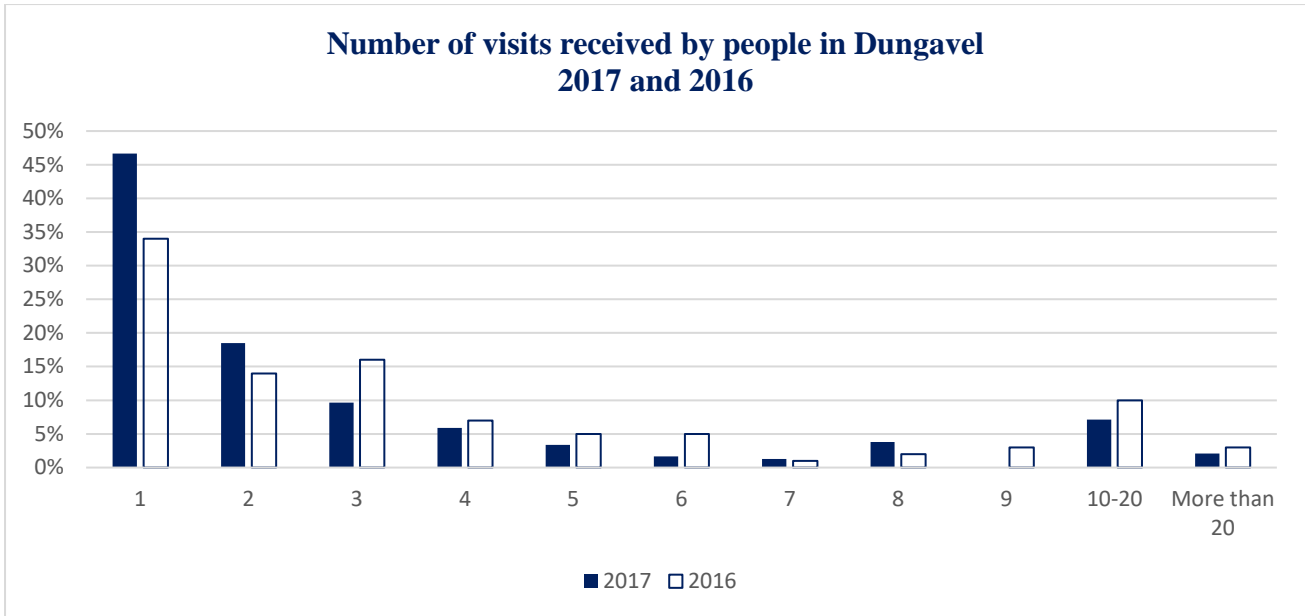
Working with people after detention

Over half of the people who leave detention in the UK are released back into the community, often into very difficult circumstances. Our Life after Detention project was set up in 2016 to work with people in this position. In 2017, the project worked with more than 25 people; 12 nationalities, a mixture of women and men and a variety of ages.

Our coordinator, Shirley, meets people individually first, to facilitate any casework and discuss if the group is a good fit for them. If someone then wants to join the group they are welcomed at our regular meetings.

There is, at any one time, a core of at least ten people, with others joining occasionally as they can. Sometimes the group is a springboard, a place for people to find their feet after detention and then move on. Sometimes the group becomes a sanctuary, a place of safety and solidarity, where people come regularly to spend time with others who have been through the same experience.

The group does not always focus on detention but all of the members are still at risk of being detained and more than half the group are destitute. Some, over the year, were homeless as well. All are really stressed each time they must sign at Brand Street – for some that is three times a week, others twice a year. It never gets easier, with the threat of being re-detained always present. This common base, mutual understanding and shared experience brings a closeness to the group as they come together and share the week's stresses and events. They also celebrate birthdays and feasts, people being granted refugee status and religious holidays.



The group’s experience also feeds into the campaign to end indefinite detention. Members of the group performed their poem “because of detention. . .” at our joint meeting at the Scottish Parliament with the UNHCR in January (see below). Their voice focused the meeting on the real impact of detention on the people most affected.

In 2017, the group continued and extended their creative activities. Their short film, *Life after Detention*, which we premiered at our Christmas event, was made on their mobile phones, then edited together by volunteer visitor and film maker Alice Myers. The film has since been widely viewed online and screened at events throughout the UK.

2017 also saw us begin our ongoing partnership with Ice and Fire: Actors for Human Rights Project, with whom we have developed *Detention Dialogues*, a piece of documentary theatre, using the direct testimony of members of the group. Heartbreaking, moving and horrifying by turns, the dialogues bring to life the injustices of detention through the stories of the people most affected by it.

The first performance was at our Christmas event, with subsequent performances taking place at events in 2018.

Two dedicated volunteers, Mary and Stevie, supported Shirley and the group in their work during 2017 and have continued to do so into the new year.

Recruiting and supporting volunteers

Volunteers are at the heart of our work and we have between 40 and 50 volunteers at any one time. The largest number are volunteer visitors, each of whom visits people in Dungavel an average of twice a month. By maintaining a strong visiting team, we are able to ensure that two visits a week are available to people in Dungavel every week of the year.

When people join us as visitors, we ask them to commit to volunteering for at least six months. Some stay longer, but it can be a demanding role, so we need to recruit regularly to keep our visiting team at full strength. Throughout the year we held two visitor recruitment sessions, bringing more than 20 new visitors into the organisation

Our half day recruitment and induction training receives consistently good evaluations with participants reporting that the session provides them with invaluable background about detention policy in the UK and allows them to learn more about the specific role of visitors. We listen to suggestions made in the evaluations of how to improve them and make changes and adjustments.

Shirley aims to meet new visitors before they start visiting to make sure they are clear about their role and to answer any questions they might have. In addition, our visitors benefit from the support of their peers, and this is particularly important for new visitors. The hour-long drive to Dungavel gives them the chance to ask any questions, to voice any anxieties and to seek reassurance.

In 2017, we expanded our volunteering opportunities and recruited volunteers to work in the following roles:

- Country researchers create reports on the countries of origin of people in detention to provide up to date information
- Life after Detention volunteers assist our coordinator in supporting the work of the Life after Detention group and provide support and guidance to the group on their creative projects.
- Social media volunteers assist our director in ensuring that our Twitter and Facebook accounts are active.
- Public speaking volunteers. We have a team of volunteers who have been trained to deliver presentations about detention to community groups.

Over the course of the year we offered our volunteers a range of training opportunities. We held briefing sessions for social media volunteers and for our public speaking volunteers to prepare them for their work. We also offered a training session on preparing a fresh asylum claim, led by one of the

Glasgow's leading immigration lawyers, and a session for visitors on embedding good visiting practice

Raising awareness of detention in Scotland and advocating for change

In January 2017 we held a meeting on alternatives to detention (ATD) at the Scottish Parliament. The meeting was held jointly with UNHCR, Detention Action and Detention Forum and was chaired by Linda Fabiani MSP. At the time the meeting took place we knew that Renfrewshire Council had refused planning permission for the proposed new short term holding facility at Glasgow Airport, but the Home Office had yet to respond. So, although we knew that people in Scotland would remain at risk of detention, the future shape of detention in Scotland was unclear. It was an ideal time for such a meeting to consider more humane approaches to working with people subject to immigration control.

The meeting was attended by around 40 people including representatives from NGOs, several MSPs and their researchers, and our own Life after Detention group. Over the course of the afternoon we heard about the success of ATD schemes both at home and abroad and considered the overwhelming evidence that they are more effective, cheaper and, crucially, more humane than detention.

The meeting was important for SDV in increasing our links with Scottish politicians and Scottish Government. Since then, we have sent regular information to the MSPs who attended the meeting, those who are involved in relevant committees of the parliament and those who express an interest in detention. We have provided briefings on Home Office quarterly detention figures, information about #Unlocked17 (see below) and copies of our

responses to Government Consultations. Our database of MSPs now includes 40 MSPs from all parties and we also send briefings to their staff and to relevant civil servants at the Scottish Government.

In March a Westminster Hall debate was held on the subject of vulnerable people in detention, in the wake of the first Shaw Review. We provided a briefing for Scottish MPs in advance of the debate which highlighted the particular issues for Scotland and provided evidence about vulnerability in detention based on our visiting experience. It also argued that a move to community based ATDs, coupled with a strict time limit on detention would address many of the issues raised by Shaw.

In September 2017, we worked in partnership with Detention Action to run a focus group for people at risk of detention. The purpose was to gather evidence for Home Affairs Select Committee inquiry on immigration from the people most affected by the hostile environment. Twelve participants came together to discuss their experiences of immigration systems, attempting to integrate into Glasgow, detention and fear of detention, and recommendations for change. Our joint report of the focus group was submitted to the inquiry.

We published several blogs on our own website, wrote an article to Cable Magazine

giving an overview of immigration detention in Scotland. We also contributed to articles in the print media on the subject of detention, and spoke at a number of conferences and events.

We played a key role in #Unlocked17, Detention Forum's annual social media tour of detention, aimed at raising public awareness of detention. We contributed two blogs (one in the form of the Life after Detention film) held three events linked to the tour and were very active across all social media channels throughout the three month tour, and particularly during the week focused on Dungavel.

Over the year, we have continued to expand our social media presence. The assistance of our team of social media volunteers has enabled us to keep our social media channels far more active. We tweet information about detention every day, including information from our own statistics and visit reports and information from official figures.

We continued to be active members of Detention Forum throughout the year and into 2018. We look forward to continuing work with them and others to push for detention reform.

Treasurer's report

Elsewhere in this report we have noted that February 2017 saw confirmation from the Home Office that Dungavel would remain open. This made fundraising for the rest of the year much more straightforward than it had been in the previous six months as we were able to be clear with funders what services we would be offering to people affected by detention.

During the period of uncertainty around the future of Dungavel, we approached our existing funder Tudor to explain the situation we were in, and were delighted that in the early part of 2017, they awarded us £50,000 continuation funding over two years. This put us in a much stronger position for fundraising for the rest of the year. We received the first half of this award in 2017.

We were also successful in an application to the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, who awarded us a grant of £50,000 over three years. We received the first tranche of £10,000 in 2017, with tranches of £20,000 expected in 2018 and 2019.

Both these awards are towards our core costs and have provided us with a measure of security beyond 2017, for which we are very grateful.

We also received one year grants from Voluntary Action Fund, towards our coordinator's salary, and Awards for All for our Life after Detention project and visitor support.

Around a fifth of our income in 2017 came from one-off donations, regular monthly donations from supportive individuals and fundraising events. Two of our supporters held collections at their birthday parties (one 40th and one 80th), and two local community groups held collections for us. We are grateful to all of them for their support.

We also managed our expenditure well, and ended the year with a surplus of just under £10,000 and a balance of £53,000.

We entered 2018 in a much stronger position than 2017. With funding of £45,000 already secured for 2018 and £20,000 in place for 2019, we know that we can continue to operate for at least a year and we will continue to fundraise to ensure that we can continue to provide our services in 2019 and beyond.

I'd like to end by thanking all of our funders and donors in 2017. Your support is very much appreciated.

Sarah Anderson
Treasurer, SDV

Summary financial accounts

Receipts and payments account 1 January 2016 –31 December 2016

	2017		2 Nov-2015-31 Dec 2016	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
<i>Restricted</i>				
AB Charitable Trust	-		5000	
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	10,000			
Awards for All	5,900			
Voluntary Action Fund	10,000			
Tudor Trust	25,000		20,000	
Awards under £5,000	-		9,700	
<i>Total restricted receipts</i>		<u>50,900</u>		<u>34,700</u>
<i>Unrestricted</i>				
Trust funding awards under £5,000	1,000		10,000	
Donations, Gift Aid and other income	12,571		16,147	
<i>Total unrestricted receipts</i>		<u>13,571</u>		<u>26,147</u>
Total receipts		<u>64,471</u>		<u>60,847</u>
Payments				
<i>Restricted</i>				
Salaries and pensions	(37,187)		(40,362)	
Support for people in detention			(2,549)	
Life after Detention	(3,469)		(631)	
Volunteer training, travel and support	(3,156)			
<i>Total restricted payments</i>				<u>(43,542)</u>
<i>Unrestricted</i>				
Support for people in detention	(4,274)		(1,983)	
Staff training and other costs	(278)		(1,037)	
Committee training and expenses	(460)		(1,176)	
Volunteer training, travel and support	(720)		(7,133)	
Memberships	(205)		(175)	
Office rent	(3,853)		(3,125)	
Fundraising, admin and website costs	(1,053)		(978)	
Insurance	(281)		(274)	
<i>Total unrestricted payments</i>		<u>(11,124)</u>		<u>(15,882)</u>
Total payments		<u>(54,936)</u>		<u>(59,424)</u>
Surplus/ (Deficit)		<u>9,535</u>		<u>1,452</u>

Thanks

Committee

Sarah Anderson (Treasurer)

Anna Beesley (Chair)

Giovanna Fassetta

Martha Harding (Vice Chair)

Kathy McNeill (Secretary)

Anne Meikle

Blair Melville

Mary Munro

Staff

Kate Alexander (Director)

Shirley Gillan (Coordinator)

Funders in 2017

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Voluntary Action Fund

Tudor Trust

Hugh Fraser Foundation

Awards for All

And ...

SDV volunteers

SDV members

SDV donors

People in detention

People building a life after detention