

scottishdetaineevisitors

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts January 2021 – December 2021



Scottish Detainee Visitors

Scottish Charity Number: SC033781

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Charity Trustees

1. Mary Munro (chair)
2. Martha Harding (vice-chair)
3. Alice Cockburn (treasurer)
4. Sophie Lock (Secretary)
5. Anna Beesley (until October 2021)
6. Hanan El-Atrash
7. Anissa Thabet
8. Elahe Ziai

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Chair's report

We came through 2021 somewhat challenged but still focused. In that we have survived at all is thanks in large part to the commitment of the staff group, particularly our director Kate Alexander, and the small team of volunteers who switched to offering phone support to people in detention.

Thank you to Kate and to the phone team. Thank you to Firdaus Ahmed who left her role as administrator during the year. Thank you to Stevie Ritchie for his work with the Life After Detention group. Thank you to our funders for keeping us going.

Thank you also to colleagues on the Board who have zoomed monthly during this period, including from Tunisia. Our first in person Board meeting was literally a walk in the park in October.

Kate's review of 2021 below captures in more detail the activities of the year. Late in the year we took the strategic decision to anticipate a return to what is conventionally called 'normality' by getting recruitment of a volunteer support worker underway. We are now faced with a burgeoning demand for our services having lost a number of our active volunteers over lockdown. Our story in 2022 is likely to be very different from 2021 in the detail. The core of our work remains the same: there is no respite, the need to do what we do is as great if not greater than ever.

Mary Munro, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Structure, governance and management of SDV

Trustees are appointed in compliance with the constitution. We advertise opportunities to join the board on our website, and use social media as well as personal contacts.

Over the course of 2021, SDV employed three part time members of staff: director Kate Alexander, administrator Firdaus Ahmed, who left for pastures new in August, and Stevie Ritchie, who joined as our community development worker in April.

Objectives and activities

Our constitution defines our objectives as follows:

- To relieve the conditions of stress and isolation of asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland who are or have been in immigration detention (4.1);
- To improve the health and wellbeing of people in Scotland who are or have been in immigration detention (4.2);
- To raise awareness around the issues of detention and advocate for change in order to further our other charitable objectives (4.3)

Scottish Detainee Visitors began as a project managed by Scottish Refugee Council in 2001, in response to Dungavel opening as a detention centre, but in 2002 SDV was constituted as a separate charity and then, in 2015 a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO SC033781).

The core of our work has always been regular visiting of people detained in Dungavel, but also includes work to support people who have been released from detention and policy and advocacy work aimed at bringing about detention reform.

Our activities in 2021

Supporting People in Dungavel

Last year we reported on an extraordinary year, where in common with virtually every other organisation in the country, our work was profoundly affected by the pandemic. By 2021, we had all adapted to 'the new normal', although it was far from normal.

Throughout the year, visiting Dungavel in person remained difficult. The centre was in frequent lockdown, either because of national restrictions or because of outbreaks of Covid among staff or people detained in Dungavel. However, our staff visited weekly where this was possible and ran Skype drop ins when it was not.

Because of social distancing and other restrictions, we were unable to resume volunteer led visiting during the year. But a grant from Foundation Scotland allowed us to provide phones and training to our volunteers to enable them to offer regular support to people by phone.

Providing individual one to one support was a new experience for our volunteers who are used to the peer support of our group visits, but they rose to the challenge magnificently and we owe them an enormous thank you for staying with us and working so hard in very difficult circumstances.

The number of people detained in Dungavel remained low throughout the year, rarely rising above 30 people. While we are always pleased to see fewer people detained, the low numbers, especially when combined with the difficulties in receiving visits through Covid, meant that people in Dungavel were even more isolated than ever. We know from their feedback how much they appreciated our efforts to visit, phone and support them.

Usually, we would expect to visit 200 people over the course of a year. In 2021, we visited 45, all but one of them men. They came from 21 different countries. The largest group (11) came from Poland and we also visited people from other European countries such as Lithuania, Latvia, Romania and Portugal. Of people who came from outside of Europe, the most came from Vietnam (4), Albania (3), Eritrea (2) and Somalia (2).

Almost all of the people we saw had been transferred to Dungavel having served a prison sentence. This is a group the Home Office calls "foreign national offenders", but this stigmatising term masks the very wide experience of this group. People we supported this year had lived in the UK since childhood, had children born here and some had arrived as refugees to the UK. They were far from the "foreign criminal" bogeyman. Without the complication of a challenged immigration status, they would have been released into the community.

Usually, around half the people we support in Dungavel are seen only once or twice. This year that proportion was down to a third, while the people we supported 10 times or more was up to nearly one in five, compared to one in ten most years. This reflects the fact that long term detention was a common experience for the people we saw this year. Six of the people we supported were detained for three months or more, one of them for more than eight months.

Visitors and staff complete reports of our interactions with people in detention. These reports allow us to monitor trends and to share information within SDV about the people we are supporting. The following extracts from these reports give a flavour of the issues we encountered in 2021.

K was detained when he was reporting to immigration. He's a bit shell-shocked and still in isolation. He'd appreciate calls but was a bit shy about his English, which is actually pretty good.

A is up and down mood wise but is trying to keep himself busy with the gym and artistic projects. He's full of praise for the staff in Dungavel and seems to be getting plenty of support

P was frustrated and low. Much more so than last time. He was granted bail in principle a couple of months ago but is still in detention.

N was a bit down. He is finding all the uncertainty difficult. He's staying in his room a lot. We had a long chat and he seemed to really appreciate the call.

S described being in detention as like Groundhog Day, which seemed really apt. Although the regime in Dungavel is more relaxed, he said it can be harder than prison.

Met J for the first time. He was doing OK and had seen a doctor but he's sleeping a lot and seemed lethargic. I encouraged him to go outside in the sunshine, and maybe to use the gym.

Life After Detention

Following our 2020 scoping exercise on post-detention work, we secured funding from Awards For All to appoint a community development worker to work with our Life After Detention (LAD) group on their future direction. The funding also

allowed us to buy tablets and data to enable the group to meet online more easily, as Covid restrictions continued to limit their ability to get together in person.

Stevie Ritchie joined us as our community development worker in April 2021, having previously worked with the LAD group throughout 2020 on a sessional basis, and as a volunteer for a number of years before that. He worked with the group throughout the year, meeting them regularly, supporting them, planning activities and facilitating discussions on the group's further direction.

In early 2022, partly because of the disruption Covid caused, LAD members took the decision not to continue with the group for the time being. A number of them have been granted leave to remain in the country, and the others are able to continue their lives in Glasgow, bolstered by the friendships and skills fostered by the group. Our door remains open should they wish to resume the group in future.

We are very grateful for Stevie's excellent work in supporting the group for as long as they wanted to continue it.

Policy and advocacy work

SDV's policy and advocacy work aims to ensure that people in Scotland, and decision makers in Scotland and the rest of the UK have a better understanding of the inhumanity of detention, and are aware that there are alternatives to it.

In 2021 we:

- Produced blogs on topics such as the quarterly Home Office Detention Statistics. These have been published on our website and sent to MSPs on our database.
- Provided comment to broadcast, print and online media outlets on detention matters.
- Redesigned and relaunched our website and continued to build our online presence with the help of a team of social media volunteers.

Throughout 2021, the number of people making perilous journeys across the channel to reach the UK continued to rise. Our colleagues working in centres in London spent much of the year supporting large numbers of highly traumatised people, detained by the Home Office on arrival in the UK. It was an issue we did not expect to encounter in Dungavel.

However, on a visit in October we learned that a large number of people who had arrived at the south coast in small boats had been bussed up to Dungavel for "processing". It is bad enough that the Home Office consider it appropriate to detain people on arrival in these circumstances. To compound this by forcing them to make a 500 mile journey by bus immediately on arrival was shocking.

We worked with Anne McLaughlin MP, the SNP's immigration spokesperson, to establish from the Home Office how often this had happened and where people had gone after leaving Dungavel. We also worked with Scottish Government and our press contacts to raise awareness of the issue, which garnered significant press attention. That we were present to witness this practice underlines the importance of our work in Dungavel to our policy and advocacy work.

We could not end this report without recording that at the end of 2021, a new detention centre with the capacity to detain 84 women opened at Derwentside in the North East of England. It is the first new detention centre to open since the Verne in 2013, and comes after years of declining capacity in the detention estate. The provisions of the Nationality and Borders Act, passed in 2022 will undoubtedly increase the use of detention further.

Despite the increasingly hostile environment, along with our partners in Detention Forum, we will continue to advocate for detention reform, for an immigration system based on engagement not enforcement, and for the use of a range of community based alternatives to detention.

Kate Alexander, Director

Finance report

Our independently examined accounts for 2021 are on the subsequent pages of this report and they show that we ended the year in a healthy position with a balance of nearly £37,000 to carry forward to 2022.

2021 was a far more successful year for funding applications than 2020. We were fortunate to be awarded grants by Awards for All and Foundation Scotland. We also received the first tranche of our three-year grant from Robertson Trust and the second instalment of a two-year award from Allen Lane Foundation.

A fifth of our income in 2021 came from donations from the public, both through regular giving and through our Christmas crowdfunder. In order to make donating easier for our supporters, we joined the online platform CAF Donate and anyone can now give to us by simply clicking the button on our website.

We thank all our funders and everyone who donated to us in 2021. Their support is very much appreciated.

Alice Cockburn, Treasurer

Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Print Name:

Mary C Munro

Date:

26th June 2022

Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of Scottish Detainee Visitors (SCIO)

I report on the accounts of the above-mentioned charity for the period to 31st December 2021 as set out on the attached pages.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustee and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10 (1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44 (1) c of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiners Report

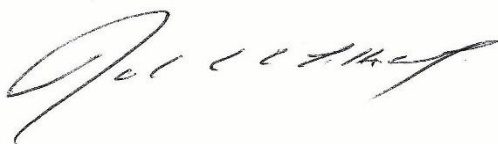
My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiners Statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44 (1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or to which in my opinion attention should be drawn, in order to reach a proper understanding of the accounts.



R W Whittet, FAIA, 11 Fowlds View, Fenwick, East Ayrshire, KA3 6GF

25th April 2022

Scottish Detainee Visitors (SCIO)
Scottish Charity Number SC033781

Receipts and Payments Account
Year Ended 31st December 2021

	Year Ended 31 December 2021		Year Ended 31 December 2020	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
<i>Restricted</i>				
Allen Lane Foundation	5,000		5,000	
Job Retention Scheme	573		1,802	
Awards for All	9,400			
Robertson Trust	15,000			
Foundation Scotland	5,000			
Total restricted receipts		34,973	6,802	
<i>Unrestricted</i>				
Esmee Fairbairn Covid Fund			10,000	
Awards under £3,000			2,000	
Donations and fundraising	7,494		19,090	
Gift Aid and other income	1,162		3,098	
Total unrestricted receipts		8,656	34,188	
Total receipts		<u>43,629</u>	<u>40,990</u>	

	Year Ended 31 December 2021		Year Ended 31 December 2020	
	£	£	£	£
Payments				
<i>Restricted</i>				
Volunteer phones	(332)			
Working with interpreters training	(750)			
Tablets and data	(441)			
Salaries and pensions	(21,573)		(6,802)	
Total restricted payments		(23,097)		(6,802)
<i>Unrestricted</i>				
Salaries and pensions	(9,793)		(25,426)	
Support for people in detention	(3,629)		(4,176)	
Life after detention costs	(1,853)		(3,181)	
Staff training and other costs	(25)		(32)	
Board training and expenses	(73)		(544)	
Volunteer visit travel	(425)		(1,023)	
Volunteer meetings, induction and training			(175)	
Membership subscriptions	(130)		(228)	
Fundraising, admin & office supplies	(389)		(878)	
Website costs	(894)		(710)	
Policy project costs			(105)	
Office rent	(5,000)		(3,750)	
Zoom fees	(272)			
Computer equipment	(412)			
Professional services	(20)		(5,850)	
Insurance	(322)		(297)	
Total unrestricted payments		(23,236)		(46,375)
Total payments		<u>(46,333)</u>		<u>(53,177)</u>
Surplus/ Deficit		<u>(2,704)</u>		<u>(12,187)</u>

Scottish Detainee Visitors (SCIO)
Scottish Charity Number SC033781

Statement of Balances as at 31st December 2021

	31/12/21	31/12/20
	£	£
Bank and cash in hand		
Opening balances	39,446	51,633
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(2,704)	(12,187)
Closing balances	36,742	39,446
Reserves		
General Funds	<u>36,742</u>	<u>39,446</u>
Closing balances	<u><u>36,742</u></u>	<u><u>39,446</u></u>

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf



25 June 2022