

scottishdetaineevisitors

**Annual Report
&
Review of 2014**

Chair's report

In 2014, SDV carried on our work in Dungavel expressing solidarity and friendship to the people who are detained under immigration rules. As the chair of the committee and a long-term volunteer myself, I know how demanding, but also how rewarding, visits can be and I want, on behalf of the whole management committee, to thank all visitors for their continued work.

2014 was the year in which the Scottish Government's white paper on independence included a commitment to close Dungavel in an independent Scotland. This was an exciting prospect which, with a no vote, has receded. But it was still a momentous year for SDV and for all the people who tirelessly work to challenge immigration detention.

Our awareness-raising work continues, and in June 2014 SDV hosted a talk during Refugee Week, with a presentation of an ongoing project on immigration detention by Professor Mary Bosworth and Dr Sarah Turnbull from the University of Oxford. We also organised a well-attended film screening at the CCA, in the context of the GRAMNet/Bemis film series.

At the end of 2014, immigration detention became a hotly debated topic due to the revelations about the dire situation faced by people detained in UK immigration removal centres. Some of the issues highlighted in the news were also confirmed by the findings of the cross-party parliamentary

Inquiry into the Use of Immigration

Detention. The inquiry panel issued a call for written evidence in July 2014 and SDV was among a number of civil society organisations that submitted evidence to the panel. We also facilitated the submission of evidence by detainees and former detainees.

In October 2014 SDV also contributed information on detention to a Ministerial Workshop on Immigration and Asylum with Humza Yusaf, MSP. Alongside this direct involvement, SDV has maintained a constant presence in social media, helping to keep the issue of immigration detention in the public eye.

We continue to be active within Detention Forum Scotland and contribute to the work done by AVID, the umbrella organisation of visitor groups. Members of SDV took part in a short film produced by AVID, which documents 20 years of volunteering in immigration removal centres and the important work done by visitors UK-wide.

Sadly, our committee member and volunteer Duncan Toms will be soon moving to Wales and therefore he will not be able to work directly with SDV any more. We will all miss him very much, but we're sure he'll keep in touch and wish him all the very best in his new home.

Giovanna Fassetta
Chair, SDV

Coordinator's report

In 2014, SDV visitors continued our core work of visiting people in Dungavel twice a week on evening visits and once a month at our drop-in service. But we were also involved in many other activities.

Our submission to the Detention Inquiry, which Giovanna has mentioned in her chair's report, gave us the opportunity to highlight the particular issues faced by people detained in Scotland's only detention centre.

An example is the catastrophic impact moves between Dungavel and centres in England can have on the legal cases of people who are detained, because of the different legal systems in Scotland and England.

Our participation in the 'Unlocked' Twitter tour of detention, coordinated by Detention Forum, was another way in which we worked to raise attention to these issues. The idea of the tour was to 'unlock' the gates of detention centres and so that we could take a good look inside. The tour 'visited' each of the UK's detention centres for a week in the autumn, tweeting information about them and the people who are detained. During Dungavel's week, we tweeted extensively about Dungavel and our work. We posted extracts from our Detention Inquiry submission, information about visits, and photographs of the long journey to Dungavel from central Glasgow.

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Our activity during the week also included my article about Dungavel for Open Democracy, which became our most viewed Facebook post of the year.

A grant from Awards for All this year allowed us to revamp our website and it is now a much improved public face for the organisation. It has a lively news blog that includes contributions from visitors and other guest bloggers, and provides a user-friendly way for potential volunteers to apply to join us.

In 2014, we began a new evaluation of our work. This is ongoing and involves consultations with visitors, former visitors, people in detention and other stakeholders. Early results from our consultations with visitors and former visitors show that visitors derive a number of benefits from volunteering with SDV and enjoy and value their time with us. However, they also told us that there were improvements we could make. Our volunteers are the backbone of our work and we will be focusing in the year to come on improving their experience.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our visitors and the committee for all their hard work, and to remember all the detainees, supporters and funders who were part of SDV in 2014.

Kate Alexander
Coordinator, SDV

SDV's activities in 2014

SDV provides practical, social and emotional support to people detained in Dungavel. Our core methods are befriending, visitor support and partnership working.

Befriending

SDV provides two main services: twice weekly evening visits and a monthly drop-in. In 2014, SDV made 100 visits to Dungavel. Over the year, we visited a total of 124 people at evening visits. The average number seen on a visit was seven but the number varied from one to 14. As usual, the majority of the people we visited were men (89%) and just 11% were women.

Country of origin of people visited in 2014 (top 10 countries)

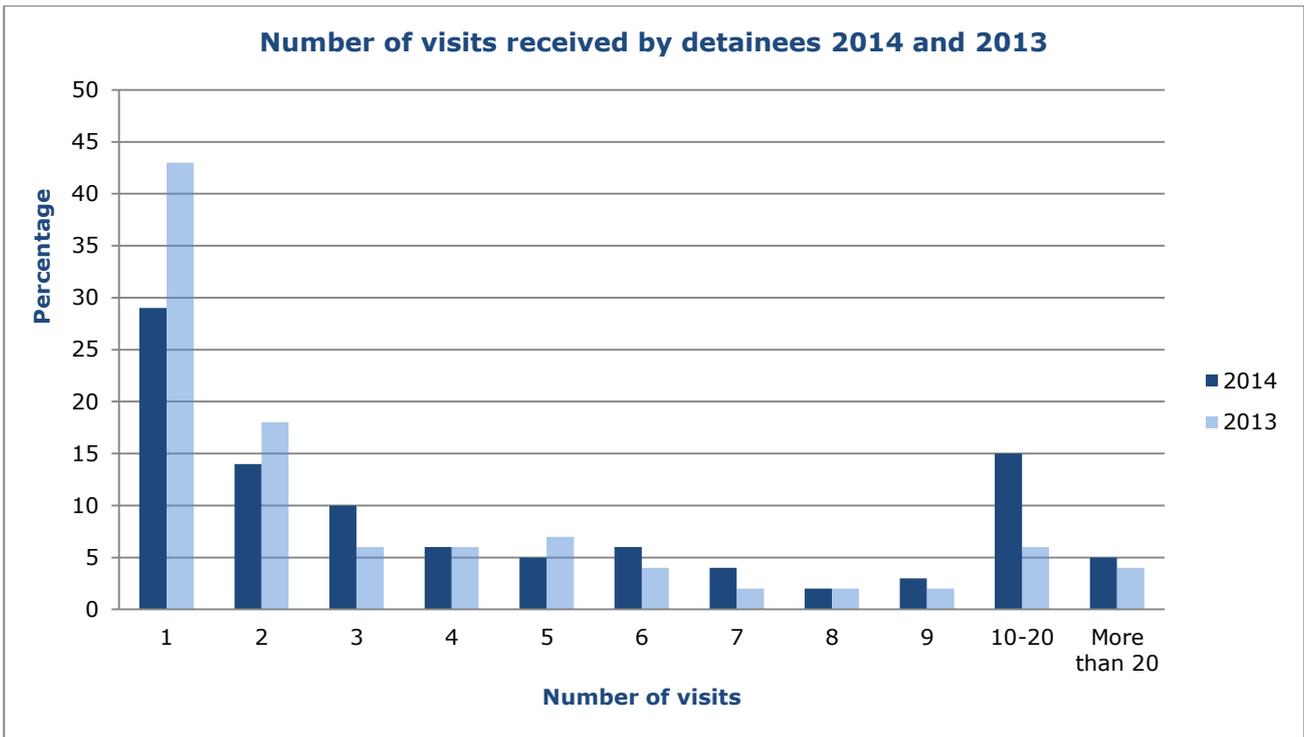
Country	No of detainees	% of detainees
India	26	21%
Pakistan	19	15%
Bangladesh	17	14%
Nigeria	14	11%
Algeria	6	5%
Libya	5	4%
Ghana	2	2%
Gambia	2	2%
Albanian	2	2%
China	2	2%

In 2014, we supported people from 36 countries. As the table shows, the country producing the highest number of people we visited was India (26). Pakistan was next (19), followed by Bangladesh (17).

In 2013, most of the people we visited were seen just once or twice (43% and 18% respectively). However, as the chart shows, this picture changed in 2014. Only 29% of the detainees we saw were seen just once and 14% were seen twice. By contrast, in 2013 10% of the people we visited were seen 10 times or more, but in 2014 this figure had risen to 20%.

This change reflects the number of people we see whose detention has been very prolonged. As our chair has noted in her report, 2014 saw political attention focused on immigration detention as never before and a particular focus for campaigning was indefinite detention.

The UK remains the only country in Europe that has no time limit on immigration detention. People entering Dungavel or any of the other detention centres in the UK have no idea how long they will be there. Some people are detained for many months or even years. SDV visitors form long-term supportive relationships with detainees in this position. One such person entered his third year in detention in 2014. Thankfully, his detention finally came to an end later in the year. However, as one of our visitors wrote on a blog on our website, release after prolonged detention brings problems of its own:



Here's what my friend remembers: "I was handed Asda vouchers for my weekly shop. Being new in Glasgow meant that I didn't even know where the nearest Asda was. Everything was difficult, asking directions, walking miles to the store, walking back with the weekly shop. I suddenly had to share accommodation with strangers. In Dungavel I had a room of my own. Detention doesn't prepare you for anything, they just open the door and say 'Go'."

The support SDV provides at evening visits reflects the needs of detainees. People detained in Dungavel suffer both physical and social isolation. Our visits help reduce that isolation by providing contact with the outside world. We also offer practical support, such as 602 phone cards in 2014, to help people maintain contact with their

families, lawyers and other support networks.

Around once a month in 2014 we helped retrieve belongings for people who had been detained. It is not uncommon for people to be brought to Dungavel having been given no opportunity to collect important paperwork, valuables or family mementoes. This can add to the stress people experience on being detained and we help to alleviate this where we can. We were particularly pleased in 2014 to have been able to reunite a detainee, who had been arrested in Portree on the Isle of Skye, with the bags he had not been allowed to pick up. As a small charity with limited resources we were only able to help because the parents of one of our visitors were travelling through Skye on their way home from a holiday. As we pointed out in our submission to the Detention Inquiry, unless the property is in

Glasgow or the surrounding area, the more likely event is that someone suffers enforced removal from the country without even the comfort of their personal belongings.

2014 saw the first full year of our drop-in service. This takes place on the morning of the third Monday of every month. A key difference between the drop-in and evening visits is that detainees do not have to be referred to the drop-in. They can simply turn up to the visit room, where the drop-in takes place. This means that it provides us with an opportunity to reach detainees we would not reach through evening visits.

In 2014, we saw 58 detainees at the drop-in (an average of five per session). Three quarters of the people seen at the drop-in were new to us and many went on to receive further support, either at evening visits or at subsequent drop-ins.

Visitor support

Visiting in groups ensures that visitors receive informal support from each other during and after every visit. We know this support is welcome to visitors and in 2014 we sought to enhance it by introducing a mentoring system. This matches each new visitor with an experienced visitor to guide them through their first visits and to provide additional support.

We also provide more formal support, and in 2014 we secured funding from Awards for All to do much of this work. The funding supported our visitor update meetings, our

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volunteer recruitment days and a training day, which took place in January 2015. Visitor update meetings take place every eight weeks and provide an opportunity for visitors to get together to discuss issues that occur at visits. We also use them to invite guest speakers to give briefings on topics of interest and relevance to our visitors' work.

Our three recruitment days throughout the year brought 20 new visitors to the organisation. The event introduces new recruits to the policy landscape in which SDV operates and allows them to discuss scenarios they might encounter at visits. Evaluations show that participants value and enjoy the day.

“SDV put together exactly what I'd expect from a training/induction day. The group activities we did were fun and informative.”

Partnership working

In 2014, our work with Detention Forum Scotland was important in coordinating responses to the detention inquiry. Detention Forum Scotland brings together groups with an interest in detention and has the following aims:

- To facilitate a conversation about immigration detention across the relevant sectors/workers;
- To maintain a critical eye on immigration detention in Scotland;
- To raise awareness of the issues within immigration detention in Scotland;

- To facilitate information sharing, guidance and signposting.

Treasurer's report

2014 has been a very successful year for funding. We secured three-year funding (totalling £55,000) from the Tudor Trust towards the running costs of the organisation and a grant from Awards for All that enabled SDV to update our website and provide further training and support to visitors and committee members. Security of funding over a period of years will enable SDV to look to longer term goals, including developing our policy work and finding new ways of supporting detainees. Grants from Quaker Peace and Social Witness and Awards for All have funded our monthly drop-in service providing information to detainees and allowing us to reach detainees we would not have reached through evening visits.

As in previous years our biggest expense has been the coordinator's salary, funded by Allen Lane, Tudor Trust and Lloyds TSB. We were able to increase staff hours from 2.5 days to 3 to meet the needs of SDV, particularly with the increased work following the detention inquiry.

Our unrestricted donations are very valuable as they cover costs our funders don't cover - including phone cards and personal items for detainees. For detainees being able to have their own clothing, rather than clothes given

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This work will continue as the campaign to end indefinite detention gathers pace.

to them by Dungavel and the chance to phone family, friends and their solicitors can make a huge impact on their sense of well being. Donations from Trades Unions, an award from Positive Action in Housing and monthly donations from supporters all contributed to these unrestricted funds.

A further boost came from "Team Ally" who ran in the Glasgow men's 10k and raised over £2,000 in memory of one of SDV's first visitors, Ally Malloy, who died last year. We are really grateful to everyone who donated in Ally's memory and know that this money will make a vast difference to the people we support in Dungavel.

At the end of 2014, SDV is in a strong financial position. This has been helped by on-going support from Scottish Refugee Council in providing free office space. As always we are grateful to all our supporters and visitors in helping SDV to continue to provide support, understanding and a vital lifeline to the outside world for people in immigration detention in Scotland.

Marion Fairweather
Treasurer, SDV

Summary financial accounts

1 January–31 December 2014

RECEIPTS	2014	2013	PAYMENTS	2014	2013
Restricted	£	£		£	£
QPSW	1,650	3,320			
Allen Lane	3,000	3,000	Staff Costs	13,223	13,777
Tudor Trust	10,000		Travel expenses	2,520	1,924
Awards for All	7,200		Detainee phone cards	2,505	2,475
Lloyds TSB	4,500		Items for detainees	693	115
Hugh Fraser Foundation	2,000		Emergency payments	230	361
Jill Franklin		500	Training/meeting costs	1,253	2,349
Total restricted	28,350	6,820	Memberships/subscriptions	85	488
Unrestricted			Insurance	266	266
Donations & fundraising	2,621	5,905	Fundraising Costs	100	275
Other income (including gift aid)	4,524	2,419	Admin and website	1152	165
Total unrestricted	7,145	8,324	Total payments	22,097	22,195
Total Receipts	35,495	15,144	Surplus/deficit	13,468	-7,051

Thanks

Committee

Anna Beesley (Vice Chair)
 Mary Child
 Marion Fairweather
 Giovanna Fassetta (Chair)
 Katharine Jones
 Blair Melville
 Nina Murray
 Anna Pielin
 Duncan Toms

Funders in 2014

Allen Lane Foundation
 Awards for All
 Hugh Fraser Foundation
 Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland
 Tudor Trust
 Quaker Peace and Social Witness
 Scottish Refugee Council

And . . .

SDV visitors, members and everyone who donated, attended events and set up standing orders in 2014.