



# Infopage

A Quarterly Newsletter



**Soeren Keil**

*Ex-detainee project manager. Soeren is 26, was born in Lubz, Germany, and studied in Wurzburg and Canterbury (University of Kent). He has worked in several NGOs in Berlin, Brussels, and Sanjévo.*



Your feedback makes a difference to what we do to improve our services, so please ensure you return your forms to the DDGV offices.  
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**Dates for your DIARY**



Plenty of chance to meet other volunteers and keep up to date with plans. PLUS useful contacts.  
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**It Takes Two**



**Eve and Martin Clark**  
Explain why they volunteered and how it helps to visit together.  
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**Supporting Detainee's Families**

*At last! DDVG will be providing practical assistance to detainee's families by providing help with travel expenses - thanks to hard won funding for a new project.*  
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## Ex-Detainee Safety Net

**Volunteer visitors are aware of the hardship detainees endure while held in detention, however for some release may bring even more problems. That is why DDGV has set up a project to provide both financial and practical support for those who are released into the UK community.**

*Soeren Keil, who joined the group in November 2009, is responsible for the success of the DDGV Ex-Detainee Project, which has the financial backing of the Big Lottery Fund. Here Soeren, explains how the project works.*

Care for detainees who have been released from detention (either on bail or because they have received leave to remain in the United Kingdom) is of particular importance, as very often these individuals remain vulnerable and are likely to become destitute. Therefore, one of the main aims of the Ex-Detainee Project is to help ex-detainees integrate into their new environment. The project focuses on their needs as soon as they have been released from detention and offers three main areas of help.

Firstly, the project provides financial support for former detainees through the reimbursement of travel expenses, the provision of clothes vouchers and emergency accommodation and food vouchers, if needed.

Secondly, it offers a wide range of advice for ex-detainees. This can include help with finding a doctor or dentist near to where they live, as well as identifying other support groups who may be able to help. The project manager can also help them keep

in touch with their lawyer and up to date with the progress of their case.

Visitors are encouraged to maintain contact with their detainee once they have been released. This not only provides ex-detainees with a trusted contact but also enables visitors to pass on their needs to the Ex-Detainee Project Manager.

Finally, the project will also provide valuable research into the problems ex-detainees face once they have been released into the community. To aid this research an Ex-Detainee conference is being planned (date to be finalised), which will focus on highlighting best-practice in dealing with ex-detainees issues.

The project extends nationwide, which means ex-detainees from Dover will be supported wherever they are in the United Kingdom.

So, if you are a visitor and your detainee has just been released or if you are an ex-detainee, please contact us, so we can see how we can help.

**Soeren Keil**  
*Ex Detainee Project Manager*

**Concerned About Your Detainee?**

If you believe that you detainee is suicidal or may self harm, you should phone the Dover Immigration Removal Centre on: 01304246 406 or phone 01304 246400 and ask to speak to the duty manager.

**Do not use this number for anything else.**



## It Takes Two

Eve and Martin Clark, who have been visiting detainees at Dover for the past two and a half years, are passionate about the injustice of indefinite detention in the UK.

Despite the experience of working at the sharp end in deprived areas of South London, they are still shocked by the incompetence of a system which keeps people detained for long periods, or in some cases returns them to a country where they face persecution or even death.

Martin, who was a parish priest in South London, most recently in Brixton, served on the Board of Visitors (now called the Independent Monitoring Board) at Wandsworth Prison. Eve spent her working life in social welfare jobs, mostly with marginalised people, ending as Director of a local Mencap charity in a London borough.

“As a member of the Board of Visitors at Wandsworth, I met men who had committed some terrible crimes and had to be punished, but at least they knew how long they had to serve and that if they behaved themselves they could get out earlier,” said Martin.

During their time in Brixton, Eve and Martin faced all the usual challenges associated with inner city London but they also made many friends.

“One of our neighbours had to hide from immigration officers in case they raided her home and deported her. We knew her story and felt this was very wrong,” said Martin.

So although they were looking forward to returning to Martin’s roots and a well-earned retirement in Deal, when they discovered there was an

Immigration Removal Centre in Dover they just had to support detainees in some way.

“Sometimes I find visiting quite difficult, particularly when my detainee is very depressed, so it really does help that both Martin and I visit at the same time. We often go for a cup of coffee and a debrief afterwards,” said Eve.

Now Martin and Eve are working as leaders of the DDVG Community Awareness Project, to widen people’s understanding of the plight of detainees and to encourage other people to join DDVG.

## About Booking Your Visits

We recently received a final answer form the Dover IRC about whether or not you need to book your visits 24 hours in advance or not. Volunteers visiting in the afternoon or evenings do not need to book, but **those visiting in the morning are still required to do so.**

Morning visits have only 30 minute slots and for that reason we discourage you to go in the mornings unless it is the only time during the day that you can volunteer. We strongly suggest you make sure your detainee is still at DIRC, otherwise you risk wasting your time. To avoid disappointment please either call the detainee directly on his mobile, or call the booking line to see if his name is still on their list.

## Practical Help

DDVG provides a number of practical services for detainees who may be detained without sufficient clothes or even shoes. A well stocked store of clothes, shoes, trainers, shorts is held at DDVG offices. For more information contact Claire on 01304242 755.

Soeren Keil, is also hoping to help ex-detainees who are setting up home for the first time in the UK, so if you have any unwanted furniture let him know.

## OUTCRY

*The Children's Society and Bail for Immigration Detainees have joined forces and through OUTCRY are campaigning to end the immigration detention of children.*

*Every year 1,000 children in the UK are detained for the purposes of immigration control.*

*For more information log on to:*

*[www.outcrycampaign.org.uk](http://www.outcrycampaign.org.uk)*



*DDVG staff and volunteers at their pre-Christmas "Away-Day" where they discussed priorities for 2010. From Left: Marianela Clayton, Claire Parker, Chair Miriam Wood, Vebi, Kosumi Soeren Keil, volunteers Jenny Davis and Eve Clark, Victor Fiorini, Brenda Housell, and facilitator Beatriz Fernandez from Refugee Action.*



### Family Travel Reimbursement

Thanks to a generous £5,000 donation from the J Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust, DDVG is about to fulfill one of its prime aims - to support the families of detainees. Plans are underway to launch a pilot project which will allow hard pressed families to be

allocated a travel warrant - up to the value of £30 per person - to help them with the cost of visiting their relative.

Victor Fiorini, detainee/visitor manager, who is administering the project said: "We are delighted this funding will allow us to help families. As soon as we are ready to go ahead we will be contacting all detainees with full details of the project."

### Refugee Migrant Justice

*What happens if detainees are refused representation because their case is not good enough?*

*What can or can't a visitor do to help in the legal process?*

*What does unlawful detention mean?*

*What is a judicial review?*

*What obligations do solicitors have?*

These are just some of the questions raised by visitors when they met representatives from Refugee and Migrant Justice last month.

Case workers Garry Goddard and Christine Oliver explained the basic process in appealing against deportation and explained when cases might qualify

### BID - Bail for Immigration Detainees

BID is an independent charity that works with asylum seekers and migrants in removal centres and prisons to assist them with bail applications. BID helps detainees to make their own applications for release. Occasionally they are able to provide legal representation in court.

BID runs a workshop at Dover Immigration Removal Centre every first Wednesday of the month at 2pm in the education department, where detainees are given advice about bail and how to apply for bail without legal representation.

**Tel: 0207 247 3590 (1.30pm – 4.30pm)**

for judicial review, and when detainees could make a fresh claim for asylum.

Although it is against the law for visitors to offer legal advice to detainees but there are ways in which you can help and it is worthwhile understanding the process.

RMJ hold advice surgeries twice a week at DIRC. They also have an advice line for foreign nationals available Monday / Wednesday / Friday 10.30am-1pm, 2pm-4pm Free on 0800 592 389 or 020 7780 3333. Their offices are open Monday-Friday 10am-4pm on 01304 203 003.

If you would like to attend a question and answer session with case workers from RMJ, the next meeting will be held at RMJ offices in Dour Street Dover on June 17th at 2pm.

## Visiting Foreign Nationals

DDVG is planning to create a team of volunteers to visit Foreign Nationals in Canterbury Prison.

Vebi Kosumi is currently negotiating a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the management at Canterbury Prison, ready for visiting to start sometime in March.

Training has already taken place at the prison but details of the service level agreement are not yet in place.

Vebi explained: "We would appreciate new volunteers to join this project and also DDVG volunteers who have not been visiting in Dover immigration Removal Centre for a while".

### WANTED

If you would like to be a visitor at Canterbury please contact

Vebi Kosumi,  
on.

01304 242 755

mobile: 07886 902 983

e-mail: [vebi@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:vebi@ddvg.org.uk)

or

Charlotte Dunne  
(DDVG Committee member)  
[charlotte.dunne@gmail.com](mailto:charlotte.dunne@gmail.com)

## DDVG Joins London Refugee Voice

DDVG has joined London Refugee Voice, an umbrella organisation for the refugee community, which aims to promote refugee issues and help members improve their efficiency and effectiveness when providing support for refugees.

The group, which includes 72 member organisations around London, provides training on relevant topics, such as fund raising and human rights as well as offering practical help such as putting together fund raising proposals. The London Refugee Voice also has a regular newsletter.

### Return Your Feedback Form



Could visitors please make sure they complete their feedback forms and return them to the office.

This is because the forms not only provide a valuable record of what the group is able to achieve but also highlights any issues which require attention from the team.

Marianela Clayton said: "I would like to impress upon volunteers the value we place on these feedback forms. Some people may think they end up in the back of a cupboard but this is far from true. They are a useful channel of communication, as well as providing a health check on our procedures and data about the real impact of visiting."

## Dates for your diary 2010

### Support Meetings

At DDGV offices  
or 20 Park Avenue, Dover  
7:00pm

March 3<sup>rd</sup>

April 7<sup>th</sup>

May 5<sup>th</sup>

June 2<sup>nd</sup>

July 7<sup>th</sup>

August (No meeting)

September 30<sup>th</sup> (AGM)

October 6<sup>th</sup>

November 3

December Christmas Party

### Training Days

*Immigration and Asylum  
Procedure*

*by Refugee Migrant Justice*

Dour Street, Dover

June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2pm

*There will be new opportunities  
for training which will be  
advertised in DDVG's weekly  
e-mail to volunteers.*

*Remember to book you place  
early for a training course by  
contacting Claire at DDVG office*

## Keeping in Touch

Good communication is the key to the success of DDVG. Whether it is spreading the word in the local community, keeping in touch with the wide network of organisations which provide refugee support, or making sure we contact detainees after they have been released. All of us can make a difference to someone's life, just by keeping in touch.

So here are some important contact details for you:

General Enquiries [info@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:info@ddvg.org.uk)

Director [vebi@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:vebi@ddvg.org.uk)

Visitor and Detainee manager [victor@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:victor@ddvg.org.uk)

Project Assistant [claire@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:claire@ddvg.org.uk)

Planning and Development Manager [marianela@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:marianela@ddvg.org.uk)

Ex -Detainee Manager [soeren@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:soeren@ddvg.org.uk)

Finance Manager [brenda@ddvg.org.uk](mailto:brenda@ddvg.org.uk)

Dover Immigration and Removal Centre

booking 01304 246 486

Refugee and Migrant Justice 01304 203 003

Info Page [jennifer.davis2@btopenworld.com](mailto:jennifer.davis2@btopenworld.com)