

M A Y 2 0 0 9

New requirement from the Dover Immigration Removal Centre

PRE-BOOK YOUR VISIT



Due to our advocacy efforts the DIRC is now providing detainees with mobile phones.

As a consequence the DIRC is withdrawing the switchboard system and implementing a pre-booking system.

All visitors, not only those from our group,

will need to pre-book their visits from the 11 of May onwards.

We request all our volunteers to pre-book the visits by calling 01304 246400 as otherwise it will not be possible to visit your detainee. DIRC have suggested to pre-book at least 3 hours in advance or call in the morning if you are planning to visit in the afternoon.



DATES TO REMEMBER

DVD Night: Tuesday 12th May / DDVG Board room from 18.00 to 20.00

Listening and Responding Skills Training 30th May
DDVG Board Room from 10.00-16.00

Support Meeting: Tuesday 9th June at 20 Park Avenue, Dover. 19:30- 21:00.

Visit to Beech Grove Community 11th June. Time will be provided nearer the time.

Talk by the British Red Cross: The International Tracing and Message Services. 17th June 10.00 – 12.00, DDVG Board Room

Multicultural Festival (Dover) Saturday 20th June. Times will be provided nearer the time.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS PLEASE LET US KNOW

Visit from Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group



On the 19th of March, Nick the coordinator of the GDWG came along with Louise and Anna to visit the DDVG. After having a session of sharing information and good practices, both visitor groups' staff shared a friendly lunch with Vebi, Marianela, Victor, Claire, Samia and Stuart. In the afternoon they were taken to the Dover Immigration Removal Centre.

Nick, commented about how intimidating the Dover Detention Centre looked in comparison with Tinsley House, which is also a detention centre, but it is a relatively new building.

Nick, Louise and Anna agreed that the detention centre is very different to the ones they work in. They commented about how far the Dover Immigration Removal Centre is in comparison to Tinsley and Brook house, which are within walking distance to their group offices. Likewise, they consider detainees in their centre's are easier to contact than in Dover, despite the similarities in the procedures to get hold of them.

We also compared the advocacy roles of the visitor groups and they were impressed with the access we have to the detention authorities. This is highly valuable as it is an opportunity to influence policies and practices within the centre, in favor for the detainees.

The Dover Visitor Group is one of the few groups in the UK that does screening visits to the detainees. We do this through the coordinator or assistant coordinator and it is an invaluable opportunity to reassure the detainee and give him information about support in and out of the detention centre which could be inaccessible or unclear.

If you would like to know more about our sister organizations visit their website:

<http://www.gdwg.org.uk>



2008 Bite Size Asylum Statistics:

- 1) Regarding Asylum applications in 2008, the number was 10% higher in 2008 (25,670) compared to 2007 (23,430).
- 2) Total figures for 2008 show 70% of initial decisions were refusals, 19% were granted asylum and 11% were granted Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave.
- 3) In 2008, 66,275 persons were removed or departed voluntarily from the UK, 5% higher than 2007. Compared to 2007, there was a fall of 15% for those leaving who had claimed asylum (including dependants), but an increase of 10% for non-asylum cases.
- 4) Main countries of destination for Asylum seekers: United States (49,000), Canada (36,900), France (35,200), Italy (31,200) and the United Kingdom (30,500).

Taken from
<http://www.medicaljustice.org.uk/content/view/626/79/>



Detainee Clothing Request Form

As a visitor, each time your detainee asks you for clothes, you need to complete a clothing request form that must be signed by the detainee. The reason for the signature is because you need to hand one copy to the DIRC and send one to us at the DDVG. This will help us collate information we need and specific clothing requests.

We are enclosing the new form with a footer added by the DIRC. We can e-mail a copy to you or post it. Otherwise you can pick up copies from our office.

Open invitation to Beech Grove at Nonington

The DDVG gave a talk about immigration detention in Beech Grove on the 11th of June 2009.

We have been invited as a group to The Beech Grove Christian Community at Nonington. This is an open invitation to all our volunteers and stakeholders and will allow everyone to see how they live. The community are very welcoming and often invite outside groups to visit them.

The DDVG is not affiliated to any religious group. If you would like to come please give Vebi a call for more details. 01304 242755.

Helping hand in the multicultural festival in Dover



Every year Kent Refugee Action Network organizes the Multicultural Summer Festival in Dover. This year it will take place on Saturday 20th of June in Dover Market

Square. This event has been a great opportunity for the DDVG to raise awareness about the work we do. We will have a stall there to offer brochures and information, and hopefully recruit more volunteers for our organization. All DDVG staff will be there on the day, and it would be lovely if some of our volunteers can come and help/visit us during the day.

Interesting details about nationalities and length of detention at Dover Immigration Removal Centre (March 2009)

The most common nationalities detained for more than one year are: Somalia (14), Iran (13), Algeria (12) Iraq (8) DRC (6). For more than two years: Iran (5) Algeria (4) Somalia (4) Afghanistan (2) Burundi (2). For more than 3 years: Iran (2) Somalia (1) Libya (1), Afghanistan (1).

The International Tracing and Message services from the British Red Cross

The Red Cross provides a service around the world to restore and maintain contact between families who has been separated by armed conflict, political upheaval, natural disaster or migration. If you would like to know more, you are welcome to come to the talk by the Kent coordinator of this service. This will be at DDVG offices. (Please see "Dates to Remember" section).

FUNDRAISING NEWS:

Our three year grant from the Big Lottery Fund grant has come to an end. We have re-applied to the BLF and now are waiting to hear the news about it.

We have started fundraising to cover the most important expenses and costs in the DDVG so we can continue providing the service to detainees and visitors.

Lately we had a visit from the Norda Trust representative and Trustees. At the end of the visit they granted us £5000 pounds which will be of great help in this time of uncertainty.

We are also waiting for the Links Foundation decision in June.

The Lankelly Chase Foundation who has formerly funded the ex-detainee project visited us in April to know more about our activities and is also considering a grant for our work.

If you have fundraising experience, ideas or information about potential funders, please feel free to call and discuss it ASAP.