

Ed Marsden notes from meeting with James Wilson

Director, Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

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Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

- Campaign for a time limit - want a policy shift
- Five staff, forty volunteers
- Two areas of work:
 1. Campaigning/lobbying
 2. Specific work at BH & Tinsley

Big issues

- Indefinite detention
- Access to legal help
- Access to medical help
- Numbers of vulnerable people detained

Activity in Brook House

- Delicate relationship with G4S - e.g. don't hold demos outside but do work in centre
- Visiting is core of work. Started with Tinsley. Funding from Lottery. No money from HO.
- Forty volunteer visitors. Visit a detainee. Once a week. Emotional and practical support. Point of contact. 35 to 40 visits per week. Conducted in visits hall. Conversations are quite wide ranging. Don't give immigration advice. Don't go into wings.
- Free phone line. Detainees contact them.
- Contact with 1400 detainees in 2016.
- Clothing, phone cards, small amounts of money.
- Staff run drop-in sessions. Three half-days per week. Organised in advance with G4S. Issues that come up include: someone needs a visitor or casework to be done. Casework may include: getting legal help, helping detainees keep in touch with solicitor, advocating for healthcare access, contact with families, arranging fares for family, referring on to BID, Medical Justice etc.

Brook House

Relationship with G4S

- Difficult relationship with G4S.