

***Confidential***

**Independent Investigation into Brook House**

**Wednesday 31 January 2018**

**Interview with Mr John Kench  
Central Detail Manager**

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Investigators: Mr Ed Marsden (Verita)  
Ms Kate Lampard (Verita)

1. **Mr Marsden:** *[Introductions]* John this is the information that we give everyone, some of it will apply to you, some of it I suspect won't. I have told you about how we have come to do this independent investigation. The interview that we are going to conduct will be confidential to the two of us, we are not sharing our interview transcripts with G4S. Please speak honestly about what you have experienced of Brook House running the detail. Once we finish the interview, we will type up the transcript and send it to you as a Word file and when it comes through to you it will be password protected, so if you ring Nicola in our office, she will give you the password and please amend it as you wish.
2. This is not a test, it is not an examination, so if you have said something inaccurate, or you have said something in a way that you think of a better way of describing it, then that is fine, you can amend your transcript. If you don't want to, if you just write back to her and say it's fine, that would be really helpful.
3. Other things I think we should tell you are we don't know what G4S are going to do with the report but you probably should work on the basis that, and I think everyone ought to, the report might get into the public domain given how high profile this is. We won't be using people's names in the report so someone like you will be referred to as a **Central** Detail Manager or whatever your correct title is, if indeed that. We say this to everyone, it does not have any particular significance to you, if we are going to be critical of anyone, in any of our reports, we give people the opportunity before the criticisms are made or finalised, to see the criticism and comment on it and suitable for any factual changes. I think probably that is all you need by way of introductions, is there anything you want to ask us before we start?
4. **A.** No, not really. My full title is Central Detail Manager because I work at Brook House and Tinsley House. Purely the staffing, I don't have anything to do with detainees at all.
5. **Ms Lampard:** John, let's begin then by just asking you.
6. **A.** It would be better if you just asked me questions really.
7. **Q.** I was going to say, you tell us exactly what your title is, what your roles and responsibilities are.

8. **Mr Marsden:** A bit about your background would be helpful, what you did before you came to Brook House
9. **A.** I have been at Tinsley House and Brook House for 22 years. I was their Central Detail Manager, I didn't actually start as that. I was actually long distance lorry driving before. I had a small heart attack and I was basically really just going to go for the training course and go back driving afterwards when Tinsley House first opened. I seem to have a niche for the job, and after about three months I was made a supervisor and looked after the reception area at Tinsley House.
10. **Ms Lampard:** So you are a DCO? You were a DCO?
11. **A.** Yes, for a couple of months. Right at the very beginning. Then I became the Reception Manager for Tinsley House, then became the Reception Manager and another role, I cannot remember what it was now, I think it was transport, I cannot quite remember. I became the IT Manager there after a while, because they didn't have an IT Manager, so I looked after the networks and infrastructure of IT at Tinsley House. Then along with that role, another part of that role was IT and Transport Manager, which included the transport because we had the movements for the transport contract as well. That included setting up a transport **depot** in Croydon as well I believe, I cannot quite remember now, and doing the job at Tinsley House as well. Then it got a bit much, so I went back to being IT Manager and then went onto rosters. I have been doing this for about 15 years I suppose. Originally it was just Tinsley House, then when Brook House opened I was asked to take on both roles, looking after both **sites** and that includes the rostering of the staff, the shift patterns, their annual leave, their pay to a degree, their overtime and making quite a few HR bits and pieces as well that they asked me to take on.
12. **Q.** John, you are answerable to whom? Who is your line manager?
13. **A.** Dan Haughton.
14. **Q.** Do you have any reports to you?
15. **A.** Anyone that reports to me? Not directly, the chap that works alongside me is another DCM.
16. **Q.** You are a DCM?
17. **A.** Same grading I suppose, yes.
18. **Mr Marsden:** You are paid about the same?
19. **A.** No, I am paid a bit more than that, which was an agreement we had when I took on Brook House as well.
20. **Q.** You are DCM grade?
21. **A.** Yes.
22. **Ms Lampard:** How does it work, let's talk about the detail. How does that actually work? How do you sort it out?
23. **A.** We have **Kronos** software. **Kronos** is attendance software and looks after their annual leave entitlements and a lot of it has to be inputted manually. When I first took this on, it just didn't do what I wanted it to do, to actually look at the staffing levels and other bits and pieces. So now I have created for each centre, spreadsheets in Excel with quite complex formulas in it, working on contractual hours and numbers of people. Working with colours, I really have to show you one actually to explain it a bit better, but if someone is on a



B shift, all the way down through all the departments at the bottom, it adds up the B shifts and multiplies it by the amount of hours a B shift is worth. On the bottom half of it, it turns different colours for different criteria. If it's in the grey which is at the bottom, this indicates the right amount of staff, if it turns red we are under staffed, if it's in the green, we are above the contractual hours. Again that is what we try and base the annual leave availability on as well. Just recently going back to I suppose *Panorama* we were under, After checking we were working on contractual hours which where 668.

24. Q. What do you mean 32.
25. A. 32 people.
26. Q. 32 people in the centre is the safe -?
27. A. Safe working load for DCOs.
28. Q. What would that mean in practical terms of where they are?
29. A. Again that adds all the different departments up, there would be two on the wings, on each wing, A,B,C,D & E. The rest are distributed between visits and other departments.
30. Q. So if you had this 32 on shift basically this is what you knew or what you considered safe, how does that compare with contractual hours?
31. A. Without looking I wouldn't know. 32 staff would equate to 400 hours, after checking this was to cover all posts and to allow 4 staff per wing and not a minimum safe working.
32. Q. That is what I don't understand, the Home Office are very keen to tell us that they don't say how many people should be anywhere at any one time. What they say is we are doing contractual hours, so you worked out what safe was, regardless of contractual hours is that right?
33. A. Then, yes.
34. Q. Who did you work that out with?
35. A. I put the main figures from I believe the senior management, I got the figures from them. Same as the contractual hours as well. The contractual hours should be broken down by the amount of staff on, so it should equate to that.
36. Q. I just wonder whether they are the same, what you have decided is safe is perhaps a bit more than what the Home Office would say, or whether it is less. You might be able to tell us, could you let us know. Please refer to 31 A.
37. A. At that particular time it was deemed that 32 was working average, covering all the fixed posts in the centre but there would only be four on a wing. The danger there was that, if one went for his break there would be one on a wing which is not very good.
38. Q. You have just been talking about the last period since *Panorama*, have you been hitting 32 or have you been exceeding it? After checking we had between 24 – 29 DCO's on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September 2017.
39. A. We changed it around when Lee first came here, I cannot remember what date that was, but we had an agreement that 32 was a bit low, we tried to get it to 36 minimum staffing, but we hadn't been hitting that, no. It was after Lee Hanford had taken over that the aim was to increase staffing to 36 with the help of the ITC courses and the overtime.

40. Q. You hadn't been hitting the 32 or the 36?  
41. A. 36.
42. Q. What have you been hitting since?  
43. A. It varies, you would have to have a look at the spreadsheet and see what our actual was, on the days. **Please see my sheets for staffing levels.**
44. Q. What would have been your worst do you reckon?  
45. A. 24. **See 38 Q**
46. Q. How many times do you think that has happened?  
47. A. Average three or four times a month.
48. Q. And the best?  
49. A. Best is usually a Wednesday, when it can go up to 41 or 42 because we deemed that Wednesday would be like a training day to take care of our training.
50. Q. That is most Wednesdays, is it?  
51. A. Most Wednesdays, yes.
52. **Mr Marsden:** Today if you walk around the wings, there are four on a wing.  
53. A. That is made up with overtime. We have only just started, G4S have never been good payers in overtime respect, not for here anyway, or Tinsley House. So when it was agreed that we had a period of time where we would pay time and a third, then we went up to time and a half, and then when Lee came here, we put a scheme into place with Peter Corrigan and we did an overtime bonus system starting from last November, finishing in this April. That would be to support what we are down.
54. **Ms Lampard:** What are you paying on that overtime scheme?  
55. A. Time and a half their normal hourly rate. I don't know what their hourly rate is.
56. **Mr Marsden:** Are they getting some kind of one-off bonus of £500.  
57. A. When they sign up for the scheme, there was a way of tracking it, again I made it into a spreadsheet where it tracks it all. They had the choice to sign up between a four, six or eight average over that period of time which is 26 weeks I think it was, no more than that, to the end of April anyway.
58. **Ms Lampard:** So depending on how many weeks extra you are going to put in on overtime.  
59. A. The way it was sold to the staff it wasn't very clear, but the way I have explained it to them, I said what you have got to look at is you are not going to be able to do or fulfil that contract by giving four hours every week, it will be impossible, because of the way their shifts run and everything else. The average, or my idea of an average, from start to finish it is the amount of hours divided by the amount of weeks, that is an average. Providing they are hitting that average, at the end of it they will get their bonus. Some of the staff thought, oh no I am not making my progress, I am putting a lot of hours in, they have hit their targets and now they are not bothering anymore. That was the danger of that bit, but the spreadsheets themselves tell me if someone is hitting a target - the way I have made it - either by turning yellow on the four hours, green on the six hours and orange on eight hours,



averaged. The £500 uplift was paid to them at the beginning of it, if they hit their targets by the end of April and run a week after that, depending on what colour they turned, which is what they will get. If they have signed up for the four and they have hit the yellow, then they get a £500 uplift; green, six hours, if they have hit that they get £1000; if they have hit the top one they get £1500. That was the incentive behind that. I did a little calculation yesterday funnily enough, we have spent on that scheme so far and, we are half way through it, just over £90,000.

60. Q. How much did you have for it?
61. A. It was open. Obviously not squandering it, but say for instance on a Wednesday we have enough people which is a top heavy day, then we won't be advertising for that day. There is a time when we will target people, especially when we are short and say look you are not hitting your target and we require someone to work here to make the numbers up to a safe working environment. It is an ongoing thing at the moment.
62. Q. The figure of 32 safe staffing, which had been deemed to be as it were what would meet the contract and what was safe, was that figure something that you can pinpoint when you were working to that? Personally you have identified it is 32, if that is what it really meant in terms of having two on the residential wings, it isn't appropriate if at that time you have 132 on a wing, was that always the case?
63. A. It's in the profile. It was in the profile I believe. After checking, any reference to 32 staff for safe running was not the case, it was to cover all posts and to give four staff to each wing.
64. Q. I just want to know, was there a particular time when that was introduced, was there a time before when it was always considered?
65. A. No it was not always considered that it was worked on contractual hours.
66. Q. When do you think that 32 came in then? Was that a Ben Saunders thing?
67. A. It was a Ben Saunders thing, yes. I thought this was introduced by Ben Saunders, it was not, it was relayed to us by Steve Skitt, I don't know the date.
68. Q. Before that you think it was hours?
69. A. It was definitely hours, because the way I have built these sheets it would look at people and it would look at hours, so for instance if it was on the green and we had the people, we would look at the hours and see if it met the contract. I had a bit of leeway if you like because if it was green I could go down below the hours to a certain degree without getting any penalties. I cannot remember what the actual penalty is, I think it is three a month.
70. Q. Is it your impression that 32 is below the hours? 32 staff equates to 400 hours.
71. A. I would have to work that out, I wouldn't know.
72. Q. Could you let us know because that would be really interesting, because I can't work out where this low staffing comes from. Whether it was in the minds of people here, you know, we'll need 32 people, or whether actually the contract itself is also woefully -
73. A. I wouldn't say it was the contract but I believe it could be the profile.

74. Q. The profile comes from here.
75. A. Yes. At one stage we worked with two people on the wings, then they would be relieved by someone else, because they were not meant to be left on their own.
76. Q. When was that?
77. A. This was the year before last possibly.
78. Q. That was starting in about 2016.
79. A. Roughly yes.
80. Q. How long did that go on for?
81. A. Until Lee came here when we all agreed that 32 was a bit low and people were getting left on the wings on their own. There weren't enough people to go around to give them breaks and our TOIL forms were mounting up so high which reflected that.
82. **Mr Marsden:** Sorry, the what forms?
83. A. TOIL forms, Time Off In Lieu. They don't get their break they have to submit a form signed by their line manager.
84. Q. That is a kind of distress indicator isn't it really. It is signally something that people are claiming time in lieu -
85. A. Because they are not getting what they are entitled.
86. **Ms Lampard:** Lee said he wanted at least three on the wings and a **DCM**.
87. A. Yes, including an extra manager on each wing which he is in the process of putting together now.
88. **Mr Marsden:** In terms of hard data, it feels like *Panorama* probably was filming in April of last year, through to June. Would you have anything about staffing from that period, accurate about not just what was in the detail but the actual numbers of staff?
89. A. Yes, I keep back-ups. **Please see my sheets.**
90. Q. It would be really interesting just to look at that.
91. A. I would like to show you them really at some stage.
92. Q. Let's arrange to do that.
93. **Ms Lampard:** What we would love to know, there are two things really, first of all people talk about how stretched they were over last year in particular, but they talk about it starting at the end of 2016. Stress levels were quite high, people were fed up, they were not feeling safe, and they talk about last year as having been very difficult indeed, and then Tinsley shutting and people then back then to Tinsley, leaving people here feeling more stretched. They talk about the stretch of last year and also what a knock-on effect that has had on retention. People have left as a result. I think it is very interesting that happened when the *Panorama* stuff was being filmed at that time and one must ask questions about whether people felt under pressure and when you are under pressure you don't behave very well, people forget things. Does that ring true for you?
94. A. Yes, in a roundabout way. I am not sure when they came to mind now, but there were two separate contracts, there was the Tinsley House contract and

the Brook House contract. I was pushed if you like by Mr Saunders to bring people from Tinsley House, let them get fined and have staff up here. So yes I was taking staff from Tinsley House, letting them suffer if you like, because the fines were cheaper down there than Brook House, so yes.

95. Q. When was that period?

96. A. The same year.

97. Q. End of 2106?

98. A. Roughly about there, yes. I don't think even now the contracts are in line with each other. I think this new contract will be put on the same lines, but the other thing that Tinsley House had against them if you like, there was a group of people that were on 42-hour contracts and then we changed the policy and anyone else who came to the company came on a 46-hour contract. People who were on the 42 contract were up in arms, 'I am not working at Brook House, I am contracted to do Tinsley House', which they were, but the 46-hour contract was a Gatwick contract, which was across both sites. People by got poisoned by other people if you like and said 'well, I don't have to go down there', and the others would follow suit so there was a bit of an uproar about that coming up to Brook House because Tinsley House is more laid back. People would want to stay there really, the same money for a lighter job.

99. Mr Marsden: Yes, less stressful.

100. A. Less stressful job. So trying to pull them up here was where the stress was coming from.

101. Ms Lampard: But that was anyway only to meet this 'two on a wings' thing. Even then.

102. A. Even then it was the case, we are still drawing from Tinsley even now.

103. Q. To meet sometimes very low levels.

104. A. Which we are not meeting.

105. Q. What are you not meeting?

106. A. We are not meeting the safety level that we talked about.

107. Ms Marsden: The 36?

108. A. 36. We are losing so many people and we are losing quicker than we are getting them in or retaining them if you like. That is one of the problems.

109. Ms Lampard: There is a question in my mind about retention here and that is you don't pay any sort of premium for long stay or long service, you have no increments. Would that not be something you think about?

110. A. They used to but they stopped it. They used to at Tinsley House, you used to get I think it was an extra day's leave, I cannot quite remember, but I think it was an extra day's leave for over five years' service but they stopped that. I have three groups of staff at Tinsley all on different rates of annual leave entitlements, but up here they are not, they are all the same.

111. Q. Are you losing people, it's early days since Lee came in and had new ideas and he has shown us the plans for recruitment, ITCs back to back. Are there any signs yet that people have been lost year off those new groups?



112. A. The last one was a very small one, there was only ten on it and I think we ended up with six, the one at the moment there are 21 and we have lost two. One was a clearance though. They didn't declare something on their clearance forms so we had to let them go.
113. Q. Once they have started on the wing, you have only had one lot start on the wing has anybody dropped out since they got on the wing?
114. A. In fact today was their first day back shadowing because even the course before, this one that is on now has only just been cleared.
115. **Mr Marsden:** They have been waiting at home?
116. A. Yes. They have come straight back into a shadowing role if you like, not left of their own basically, and teamed up with someone to find their feet for two weeks.
117. **Ms Lampard:** They would never be on their own or just two, if they were in the shadowing period?
118. A. No.
119. Q. Are you aware of others going to resign, have they suggested to you, do you think you have hit the bottom and you stopped? You think there are more to resign.
120. A. I think personally, as people come here, they get poisoned by the existing staff with the moans and groans and that gets people down and they tar people.
121. Q. Before Ben Saunders slight sort of 'managing' of this, which seems in the long run to have been a mistake, because obviously you create those sorts of moans and groans, which means in the long run you don't have enough staff.
122. A. The Ben Saunders' regime if you like, when we expanded this place here the pro rota of or ration of detainees to staff should have gone up and it did by 17 people.
123. Q. That was in the 60 new
124. A. That is it. You know about that? We were getting paid for that and we were never filling it, never, never been filled. The most we have had in that section of that 17 staff is three. I was asked at one stage, can we save any more money on this? I said you are already saving, well, not saving it you are getting paid for it and we are not using it.
125. **Mr Marsden:** Asked by Ben whether you could save it?
126. A. Actually it was by their accountant at the time. Ben had asked the accountant how can we save more money and the biggest thing you can save on is wages.
127. Q. From where you are sitting, do you think Ben was on a mission to save money or was he on a mission to balance staffing against spending appropriately, providing for the safety of the centre.
128. A. I think Ben looked after himself.
129. Q. If making this contract more profitable got him greater praise, would that have been in his mind?
130. A. I would have thought so.

131. **Ms Lampard:** This was a money-making exercise rather than an efficiency one?
132. **A.** I would say so. I am only reading between the lines, I can't say that as a fact.
133. **Ms Marsden:** No, but it has that feeling about it that it what might be driving it.
134. **A.** Yes.
135. **Ms Lampard:** You said out of the 17 new staff that were actually being paid for under the contract, you probably only ever recruited three?
136. **A.** When we first got that number I was asked how we would incorporate the 17 people because of the ratio. I said we have already had a rethink on the shifts on the beginning of each year and change shifts, we don't really want to do it half way through the year, so I suggested rather than try and put that 17 into a group, we know where we need to bolster up the wings with extra people, we will use that 17 and have their own shift pattern and use it on the wings. The first two we fill up will go to A,B and E wing, the second two will go to C and D wing and so on.
137. **Q.** They would be dedicated and visible?
138. **A.** Yes. The reason I did that was two reasons: one to bolster the wings up and two, it would save me a lot of work rewriting the shift patterns.
139. **Q.** But there was only ever three in that.
140. **A.** There had only ever been three in there. I was hoping to pull off this course now but we have had so many leave, I am only going to fill the gaps again and it is something like 30 vacancies here and around 15 down at Tinsley House. Out of the 19 that are left here I will not even fill the holes. That is basically just people leaving.
141. **Q.** If we go back to before, was there ever a time before Ben's plans where staffing was more realistic and easier for you to manage?
142. **A.** Tinsley House, when I was on my own there.
143. **Q.** Staffing has been a problem here, ever since it opened in 2005.
144. **A.** Not straightaway, no, because it was a new place, all very gung-ho and they were proud of it, but I think as people came up from Tinsley House or people went down to work at Tinsley House, things got poisoned again. My belief is that staff get poisoned very quickly here and you can see how it rubs off on people. People get to know, 'have a little knock here we'll be off for weeks and get paid for it'.
145. **Mr Marsden:** Are there people who you would identify, in the privacy of this room, as poisonous, could you identify people who you think?
146. **A.** I just call them moaners really.
147. **Q.** Are they senior experienced DCOs are they managers, are they both?
148. **Ms Lampard:** Members of the SMT?
149. **A.** I wouldn't say any of the SMT to be honest, no. This lot that we have at the moment are all pretty good actually. They are really trying hard at it.
150. **Mr Marsden:** Are the poisoners DCOs mainly?
151. **A.** Yes, just chit-chat amongst themselves really. It is like I said they get to know the nooks and crannies of what you can get away with here and in my opinion they used to be too easy on it. They have a little knock, an AOD or accident

on duty and they will get paid for it. It used to be two years. But this is not the case now.

152. **Ms Lampard:** Tell me about morale. Is morale in your view better, worse, much worse than you have known it before?

153. **A.** I would say it is pretty low to be honest.

154. **Q.** Do you think it is as low as it has ever been?

155. **A.** Yes, it is going a good way to that. One of the reasons for that is, they apply for their annual leave by either phoning me, or doing it through the software. It is a bit abrupt because the only response I can give back on the software is either it's been approved or it's been refused or it's pending. I try and look at the forward figures for what we are going to fill but you cannot always do that, so if I know I am going to fill spaces and it is going to take us over the 36 if you like, then I can allow X amount, there is still a bit of margin but the response they get back is either approved or rejected or pending.

156. **Mr Marsden:** Is that your decision.

157. **A.** Yes.

158. **Q.** All leave has to be granted with your approval, not line managers approval?

159. **A.** No.

160. **Q.** Would you discuss it with line managers?

161. **A.** To a degree but then I have the overall figures to work with.

162. **Q.** You have the complete picture.

163. **A.** We did try it a few years ago at Tinsley House but the managers had quite a lot to do and they just were not doing the job. Part of this job or my job is to make sure people get paid properly. Although it is a standard split salary between 12 paydays, all the other bits and pieces, deductions and whatever are paid a month in arrears but each period has to be signed off every Tuesday and their managers just were not doing it and people were not getting their pay. I cannot remember who was in charge at the time but I said what I would like to do is, I will change the software and I have had the software adapted around myself and my department, so we look after everyone from top to bottom.

164. **Ms Lampard:** The problem I suppose is it must seem quite brutal to somebody who puts in for a day off to go to a wedding or a funeral, and the only thing you have got to think about is whether you can manage your unit and so in a sense for you, you are not in a position of even being able to consider what the reason is. Is that right?

165. **A.** Yes, that is right. Unless they come and see me.

166. **Q.** You don't have the luxury of even making that decision and I can see how that adds to how people can become very demoralised.

167. **A.** I can see that, yes. There is an option in the software if you like. The software has a virtual address, not everyone has an email address but like a virtual one within the system, so they have their own inboxes and they get their responses through me back to them. If I retract something, I do a little speech about the department in every training session and set their accounts up and I say to them look, one of the things you must be aware of and will make it easier for yourself is, if you cannot get something off, come and see



me, don't just dismiss it. If you have got a reply back as I have asked for it back again, pick the phone up and say that means I have another option for you and there are several other options. They can do shift swaps, I can swap them themselves for a day that is worse than the one they want, I have other options to juggle things about if you like.

168. Q. When they complain and say to me, as they have done, 'I put in to go to a wedding and they just came back and said declined, so I am just not going to turn up on time', which somebody said to me.

169. Mr Marsden: If that person had come to you -

170. A. Yes, I would have had a look at it somewhere else, yes.

171. Ms Lampard: In other words, they are not actually helping themselves?

172. A. Not really no. I tell every single person on the course and I give them my little talk if you like, that is one option. Anything that is there that is set in stone, it is not all set in stone, especially if I retract. If I retract something, it means pick the phone up, I have another option for you. So yes there is that option. The other thing I do on yearly basis is, if you look at the shift patterns to start with I restructure them so everyone gets every other weekend off. Every single person gets every other weekend off. That was one of the big things about the old shift patterns where they didn't. They could work three, four or five weekends in a row. That is how I have started profiling the patterns. What I do ask them to do on a yearly basis, I put out a notice to everyone saying it is now open for block leave for the following year and I require them, or I will allocate it to them, four weeks leave a year, and it is a week in the winter, two weeks in the summer and a week in the spring. That two weeks they can take wherever they like, I just say the summer because most people like time off in the summer. I will sit down and work out both centres to make sure everyone has four weeks holiday. Once that is closed it usually goes to the training department, they have the training round it which we didn't have time to do this year. We left it a bit too late.

173. Then once that is done another notice comes out and says they can apply for their singular days in between, and as you know looking at a shift pattern the best time is in between their rest days to get the most out of it - again I explain that to them as well, 'I will make sure you get your four weeks, everyone', and that is part of what I do.

174. Q. What do you mean it is too late for the training this year?

175. A. I usually put the notice out about September time. I was told not to put it out myself, so I left it with Steve Skitt I think it was, to look at it and say fine the draft is okay. He kept hanging onto it and it went out a month later than I usually do. I was pretty pushed to do it and I had to take work home with me in the end to get that completed.

176. Q. Have you got the training days sorted?

177. A. They are going to have to do it now. I needed to publish this year by the end of December so they could see what they were doing by the end of this year really. It is down in the lobby downstairs on the easel, there about three pages of people who haven't bothered to put theirs in so I allocated them.

178. Mr Marsden: In the gatehouse?

179. A. Yes.

180. Q. Yes, I saw that.
181. A. I will sit down if they haven't applied, but they have forms for each week and they get three choices. I ask them to give three choices, some only put one down, if I can give it to them I will but if not I will allocate it to them.
182. **Ms Lampard:** Are you able to get people through all the refresher training this year?
183. A. We are getting through it but we are running short **staffed** again.
184. Q. You are just running out of time to do it?
185. A. Not and have the people to do it.
186. Q. I.e. you cannot take people off the floor.
187. A. That is what we need to do to get the training done. I prefer to run short. The training department have access to my rosters anyway so the training department if they are not sure, they will come and ask me. I will say, how is this going to backlog? They say 'if we don't do it here we are going to lose them for five or six weeks to the next course', so I would prefer to lose two days of being understaffed or six weeks understaffed.
188. Q. You are still not going to get everybody through?
189. A. That is their job to do that, I don't know.
190. **Mr Marsden:** Is it without the refresher training people are not accredited to practise fully and other things?
191. A. Yes, and it will impact on other things as well.
192. **Ms Lampard:** Somebody we spoke to suggested though there are people on the floors sometimes without having got their ticket because they just had not been able to get their refresher credit.
193. A. I would imagine so, yes. I don't see training records.
194. Q. Do the staff themselves swap shifts without you knowing?
195. A. No.
196. Q. You always know?
197. A. They have got a shift swap form.
198. Q. Do you think that there are some who are better at gaming that system than others?
199. A. Yes.
200. **Mr Marsden:** I bet you have some offenders that you go, oh no, that person again.
201. A. I do yes, once a week. Joe Marshall. He has got a post on his own, he doesn't affect the staffing figures that much anyway, his hours count towards it.
202. Q. POA rep?
203. A. Yes, that is right yes. Once a week he will ask can I swap this day for this day, can I swap this day for this day, and it is basically so he can get more time off in one go if you like and he somewhere else.
204. **Ms Lampard:** What about other people, does that sometimes cause tension, do some people feel that somebody gets more out of that than others. They all

have the same opportunity to swap or find someone to swap it with. I used to limit it to no more than 30 days in advance and no more than a 30 day span. After discussion with SMT the other day, I have changed the form now, they can put the form whenever they like and I will process it **ASAP**. You were saying about weddings, people want to know in advance so we have opened that out and if someone can do a shift swap in December this year, but they are going to have to remember it.

205. Q. Do you ever have a suspicion though, that people are trying to work with other people in a way that might be unhealthy. Have you ever had to stop people from working together?

206. A. No, I don't know them personally really, unless we hear something.

207. Mr Marsden: If people, for example you go onto A wing and there are a crowd of people who routinely work together, how do they come to work together? There was little team of people and they said we usually work together.

208. A. Up until eight to ten months ago, the DCMs were doing the rosters. We would supply the bodies on seats if you like and they would do their own rosters. As you said people were getting a bit cliquey and people were complaining that there was a lot going on like that, so they have asked us to do the rosters as well. Peter, my colleague, puts the rosters together because he is more operational than I was, I have never even been into the wings here, so I don't know. But he will put the actual people in places. It will be up to the DCMs the night before to draw that off the common **drive** and have a look at it.

209. Q. They might re-deploy people.

210. A. Yes.

211. Q. So they might say, actually these two don't get on so let's not have them working together but these three last week did a good job on this so we'll keep them.

212. Ms Lampard: It also leaves some slight smell that some DCMs might have favourites they might put teams together that don't work so well that actually this is becoming a bit personalised, that is the issue.

213. A. Yes, I would say that does happen. They have room to play with but as I said I don't particularly get involved with them personally anyway. I would say this is one of the worst jobs in the place, because on the one hand you are saying 'can I ask you to work here because we are short', and then on the other hand say 'no, you cannot have your leave'. It is not a very good job to be in to be honest.

214. Mr Marsden: It is very interesting talking to you. I think you are right though, it would be useful to come and see you.

215. A. It would, I would love to show you what I have done and how I manage it.

216. Ms Lampard: And what you are interestingly telling us is you can track for us not only what you profiled but actually what happened on the day, who turned up, including who took sickness at the last minute or whether somebody went off site and they were only there for a bit.

217. A. I have about four years back-up.

218. Q. Will it show us things like escorts and when people were off the place?



219. A. No.
220. Q. It will only show us the numbers who were actually assigned to a wing.
221. A. It will show you annual leave, sickness and TOIL taken and absences, and people that have not turned up.
222. Q. That will be useful.
223. Mr Marsden: We could come and see you on Friday.
224. A. I don't work Fridays as I have had to cut the job down a bit due to stress.
225. Q. We will find a time, it would be really useful to come and spend some time. I think it would be really useful to talk to you about staffing over the period of the filming.
226. Ms Lampard: You will be able to show it to us on the screens.
227. A. I can tell you that the following day, because there was a lot of pay muck-ups on it, the boss had agreed to pay people a tornado rate. I don't know if you have heard of a tornado rate?
228. Q. Tornado is the call-out.
229. A. They agreed to pay people tornado rate, we have never used it as paying someone for that.
230. Q. What for?
231. A. The day after the *Panorama*, he asked me to get extra staff in case there was an impact here and I only remember that because the way tornado was used should not have been used that way.
232. Mr Marsden: This was Ben?
233. A. Yes, I think it was Ben actually. Tornado rate for 5<sup>th</sup> September was relayed to us by Steve Skitt.
234. Q. Steve?
235. A. I cannot remember who said it but yes we were asked to offer them tornado rate to get extra staff in for the following day and so the reason it sticks in my mind is it was used purely the wrong way. We paid someone to come in, if you like, for twelve hours at tornado rate which would have about something instead of their normal standard rate.
236. Ms Lampard: What is the standard rate?
237. A. About [redacted] So it was quite a bit more. What actually was payroll, when they get the actual payroll, tornado rate is not actually paid like that, they pay people the difference between their standard rate and the tornado rate and then took back their standard day so they only got the difference on the rates. That is why I remember that and I am still dealing with that now. That is because tornado rate is not meant to be used that way. The way we do the overtime at the moment, because we have gone from time and a third to time and a half to whatever, is done manually, it is not done in the background as there are too many problems with it and that is the reason that I remember that. We are never to use the tornado rate again unless they are called out on a tornado shout.

238. **Mr Marsden:** John, what I will do is get Nicola to drop you a line about at time when we can actually come and see you and actually spend some sensible time rather than squeezing it in now.
239. **Ms Lampard:** There is only one other background question then to be asked and that is about the criteria for how you deploy people. Do you have a plan, for instance, for more experienced staff with less experienced staff, or is that not a luxury?
240. **Mr Marsden:** That is the DCMs tweaking, isn't it?
241. **A.** It is, but at the moment what we try and do, because we are aware of who is new and who is not, we look at the detail, or Peter looks at the detail sometimes and says 'John, look we are in a position today where they are all new staff, there is no experience here at all'. We have been in a situation where we have had so many new staff in we just haven't got the luxury to move them about. The safety in numbers way of doing it would be better.
242. **Ms Lampard:** What about the issue of Tinsley staff, do you do that as well and say to yourselves, actually we have too many Tinsley staff here, we are going to have to get some Brook House in.
243. **A.** What I said about numbers up here or it was determined what the safe working number was of 36, down there it is 18. We try not to drop below 18 but we cannot help that, again because we are still taking Tinsley staff to bump here up.
244. **Q.** So this place takes precedence in terms of keeping it safe.
245. **A.** It is at the moment.
246. **Q.** If you have the luxury if the day allows you, on a Wednesday or whatever it might be, you say to yourselves I don't want only Tinsley staff here, is that a feature? I know they come up here quite a lot.
247. **A.** We ask for them.
248. **Q.** But you are conscious, are you, of the fact that they may find it more difficult to work here than there?
249. **A.** We do and because of the way their contract is as well, some of them will say I am not coming here.
250. **Q.** Some of them don't have to come because they are on an old contract.
251. **A.** That is right, yes. It is only about half a dozen now, but the bonus scheme is specified in that part of the contract is they signed up for that, then regardless they will work here to bolster the wings up, that is part of that contract. Again some people are saying that it was sold to them slightly differently but I don't think it was, I think it was pretty fair the way it was sold to them.
252. **Q.** I don't think there are any more background questions we can ask you. The next thing we simply need to do is look at the actual detail over that time and find out what it is going to be like.

Thank you very much indeed

[Interview concluded]

