

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group: 2007

GDWG assisted 563 people in Tinsley House during 2007.

Detainee profile

- **Asylum status:** 72% of the detainees in contact with GDWG were asylum seekers.
- **Gender:** 88% were male and 12% female.
- **Age distribution:** Most detainees that we assisted were aged between 22 and 55. We were in touch with 16 children who were being detained as adults because their age was disputed by immigration, and 21 children who were being detained with their families.
- **Nationality:** The detainees we encountered came from 67 different countries:

Afghanistan (38), Algeria (11), Albania (3), Angola (7), Australia (1), Bangladesh (1), Barbados (1), Bolivia (3), Brazil (10), Burundi (2), Cameroon (28), China (17), Colombia (8), Democratic Republic of Congo (21), Dominican Republic (1), Egypt (1), Ecuador (3), Eritrea (29), Ethiopia (6), Gambia (6), Georgia (1), Ghana (16), Guinea (2), Guinea Bissau (1), Guinea Conakrie (1), Ivory Coast (8), India (15), Iran (12), Iraq (22), Israel (2), Jamaica (25), Kenya (3), Kosovo (9), Kuwait (3), Lebanon (1), Liberia (3), Libya (7), Malawi (2), Malaysia (1), Mauritius (3), Namibia (1), Nepal (2), Nigeria (99), Pakistan (8), Palestine (3), Poland (1), Portugal (2), Russia (3), Rwanda (4), Senegal (1), Serbia (1), Sierra Leone (10), Somalia (12), South Africa (6), Sri Lanka (13), Sudan (Darfur) (6), Syria (2) Togo (1), Tanzania (5), Trinidad (1), Tunisia (1), Turkey (7), Uganda (6), Ukraine (3), Vietnam (9), Yemen (1), Zimbabwe (8), not known (11)

During 2007 we were in contact with far more Nigerians than any other single nationality. We also saw a significant increase in detainees from Jamaica and Cameroon. Numbers of detainees from Eritrea, Iraq and DRC remained fairly high, but there were less Afghan nationals than in 2006.

There was a considerable increase in the numbers of detainees who had spent time in prison prior to coming to Tinsley House. Few of these sentences were for serious offences. Most were related to working illegally or possessing false documents.

Forms of assistance

The GDWG office provided the forms of assistance listed in the table below:

<i>Type of assistance</i>	Detainees assisted in 2004	Detainees assisted in 2005	Detainees assisted in 2006	Detainees assisted in 2007
Telephone card	198	339	466	343
New solicitor	74	16	20	22
Legal liaison / signposting of legal advice	380	276	223	236
Clothing	231	179	252	268
Toiletries	292	204	198	231
Liaison with friends or family	61	33	34	28
Referral / liaison with other agencies	121	122	140	70
Removal money for destitute detainees	38 (£925)	39 (£1120.00)	50 (£1560.00)	30 (£650)
Assistance after leaving	98	53	54	42

Visiting Statistics

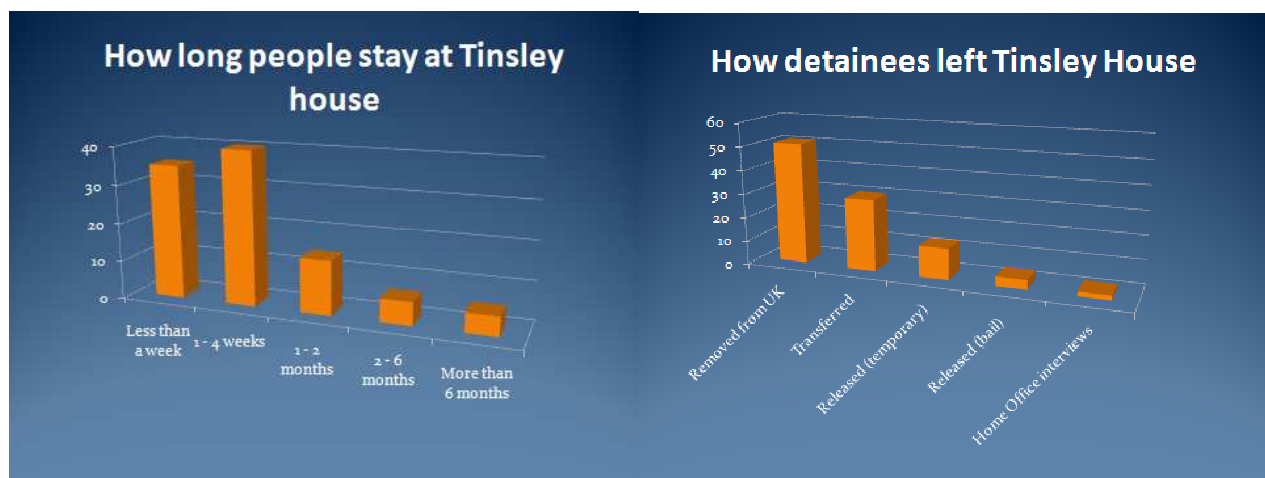
Forty per cent of the detainees who contacted us in 2006 received a one-to-one visit from a volunteer (as opposed to being helped solely by office staff). This was a slight increase on 2005. Thirty two per cent of those with whom we had contact left the centre before we were able to respond to their request for a visitor. This may be connected to the fact that exactly the same proportion of those who contacted us remained at the centre for less than a week (see graph below).

Detention Statistics

Almost half of the detainees who contacted us had been picked up by Immigration from their homes or places of work or when they were reporting to the Home Office or local police station. Around a fifth had been detained on arrival in the UK and a quarter came from prison or police custody. These figures are based solely on what the detainees tell us, and may not be completely accurate as detainees are sometimes unwilling to disclose criminal convictions.

During 2007, 75 per cent of our contacts were detained at the centre for less than one month, and nearly half of these for less than a week. Fourteen per cent were held for between one and two months and eleven per cent for over two. We supported ten detainees who spent more than six months in Tinsley House, including a Jamaican man who spent just short of a year there.

Of those detainees who left Tinsley House after contacting us, almost a half were removed directly from the UK, 30 per cent were transferred to another centre, and just under a fifth were released, either on Temporary Admission or bail.



Volunteer Statistics

In 2007 we had a total of 64 volunteers, who between them spoke 15 languages. 11 per cent came from ethnic minorities. Eleven new volunteer visitors were trained and inducted.