



This newsletter aims to update you on our recent activities, current news and upcoming events. 2014 is our 20th anniversary year and we look forward to working with you to celebrate our successes.

FROM HASLAR VISITORS GROUP TO *FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS*

NEW VISITING HOURS AT HASLAR IRC

Please note that the visiting hours at Haslar IRC have recently been changed: on Monday and Tuesday they will be just from 14.00 to 16.00; on Wednesday from 9.30 to 20.00; on Thursday and Friday again from 14.00 to 16.00; finally, on Saturday and Sunday the visiting hours will be from 09.30 to 16.00.

We would like to inform you we are in the process of changing our name from *Haslar Visitors Group* to *Friends Without Borders*.

The name on the Charity Commission website has already

been replaced, while the process is still ongoing for our own website and our email addresses.

Anyway, the complete swap is about to come, and we hope to announce it very soon!

LIVING OUTSIDE THE FENCE

12th September 2014

We are proposing to have an afternoon conference on Friday 12th September to celebrate our 20 years, as well as the launch of our new name.

One of our visitors, Dr. Charles Leddy-Owen (Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Portsmouth), will present his research conducted in Gosport, titled *Living Outside the Fence: Migration and Nation in the Vicinity of an Immigration Removal Centre*.

We will produce an agenda as soon as possible and we would ask you all to note the date in your diary!

TAKE ACTION to end indefinite detention!



We are happy to share and support Detention Action's campaign to end the practice of indefinite detention in immigration detention centres. You can support the campaign by writing to your MP asking him/her urgently to call for the Immigration Minister to introduce a time limit on detention. You can find further details and information, as well as a template letter and a campaign briefing, at the web address <http://detentionaction.org.uk/timeliimit/indefinite-detention-in-detail/takeaction>

LEGAL AID CUTS DUE TO THE IMMIGRATION BILL 2014

Due to the recent extensive legal aid cuts, the funding for non-asylum appeals has been abolished: this means that legal aid is no longer provided for family and/or private life, deportation cases, with evident risks of breaching their right to a family life.



Legal aid is still available for tribunal bail applications and judicial review, but legal aid

payments are now only given if the permission for judicial review is granted: it obviously implies that many lawyers are now reluctant to proceed with cases, because of the risk of working for free.

Moreover, following this regrettable tendency, assisted voluntary return for immigration detainees, previously conducted by Refugee Action, has been cut as well, due to a Home Office decision. At the current time, as far as we can see, no plans to replace AVR have been arranged.

THE BOOK OF BOAZ by Dave Smith

Dave Smith, the director of The Boaz Trust – a Christian organisation who helps destitute asylum seekers in Manchester – has written a book about their experiences of the asylum seeker system.

As Dave is a Christian, the book contains references to Christian texts. He states it is in no way written for Christians only, and that the aims of the book are both to raise awareness of the realities of seeking asylum in the UK, and to challenge people – and particularly the Church – to take seriously the issues and the injustices of the current system.

The book is available on Amazon.co.uk and, if you log in first to <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/haslarvg>, you may be able to raise money for Friends Without Borders (formerly Haslar Visitors Group) with your purchase.

2014: AVID's 20th year

2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees.

AVID has decided to create a resource and archive of visitors' testimonies over the years.

The initiative is aimed to explore the relationship between the visitor and the detainee, in its variety of forms and

experiences.

It will also record the growth of volunteer visiting in response to the expansion of immigration detention in the UK.

If you are willing to share your personal experience with AVID, or want to know more, contact:

enquiries@aviddetention.org.uk

Our patrons are: The Rt Hon Earl of Sandwich, Lomana Tresor Lua Lua

To include an item in the newsletter, please forward to coordinator@haslarvisitors.org.uk or bryony.whitmarsh@port.ac.uk

For more information on any of the items in this newsletter, please visit www.haslarvisitors.org.uk

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

Haslar Visitors Group
All Saints Church
Commercial Road
Portsmouth
PO1 4BT
T: 023 9283 9222