



## Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary

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President Lord Roger Roberts of Llandudno

# SEPTEMBER 2018 LD4SOS NEWSLETTER

*Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary have submitted **an amendment for consideration by the Federal Conference Committee to a policy motion F16, A Fair Deal for Everyone: Prosperity and Dignity in Migration (Immigration and Identity Policy Paper)** going to our September Federal Conference.*

*We have given much thought to the motion, as we could not support much of its tone, although it contains some very good policies. However, we have worked hard to produce amendments that not only alter the tone to one that reflects our Liberal Democrat values, but also add a number of policies that are needed to cover life in the UK for those seeking sanctuary here and wider issues such as unaccompanied child refugees, and an extension to the current Syrian VPRS scheme.*

*You can see the amendment we have put in and also how the motion would read if all our amendments were accepted by Federal Conference Committee and agreed by conference on our [website here](#). Nearly every one of the issues reported on in this newsletter would be dealt with, if all of the policies in an amended motion were taken and agreed.*

## HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Over the summer, as some basked and relaxed, matters got much worse for those seeking sanctuary in the hostile environment. However, the fundamental problems in the system remain, as demonstrated by this [report in The Independent](#). More people were refused leave to remain, and impossible proof was increasingly asked for. The length of time to make a decision has gone up. The high number of successful appeals, 39%, is a testimony to an increasing number of decisions that were wrong first time. The [Guardian tells of](#) the number of appeals lost by the Home Office in all Immigration Appeals, is a far too high 75%. There has been an increase in destitution. It isn't as though the UK has been overwhelmed; there are less than 4% of all refugees in the EU here.

## DETENTION

### SHAW REPORT

The big development has been the publication of the Shaw report (officially titled "SHAW REPORT "Welfare in detention of vulnerable persons review: progress report" July 2018 ". This was on the last day of parliament and MPs and Peers were given very little time to read it before debated. You can read our reaction to it on [our website here](#).

Sally Hamwee [spoke](#) of the absence of hope, the Red Cross review on the long lasting impact on mental health after physical release, and said, importantly "There is always talk of numbers and percentages, which is helpful, but it is worth remembering that each person detained is an individual"

There is an excellent review of the Shaw Report [here](#) by Detention Forum. They quote Paul Scriven "[Shaw asked] whether we will move to a position where, rather than just using a competency-based approach, we could adopt a values-based one when dealing with vulnerable people. That would help to solve the problems in a much more systematic way than just talking about individual programmes or training."

**CHILDREN**, shockingly, are being separated from parents in the detention process, as reported in The [Guardian](#). A Parliamentary question was put by Sally Hamwee, with [only a part answer](#) given by the Minister. Children remain in detention with families, only to be released again. Just 4 out of 19 families were removed, detention forum writes in its [review of the report](#) on Tinsley House by the Independent

Monitoring Board. So many children went through a lot of trauma for no purpose at all. Further comment on this is made by the [Refugee Council](#).

## INFORMATION ON DETENTION

There are [good links to policy papers](#) by Detention Action. It includes alternatives to detention, the need for time limits, and how to talk about those in detention with a previous criminal conviction.

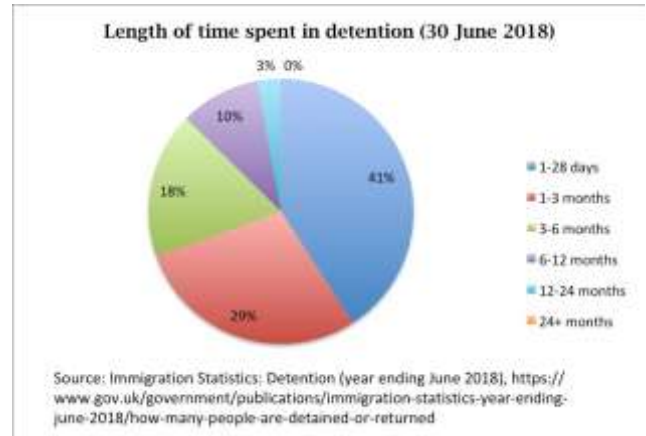
## TINSLEY HOUSE DETENTION CENTRE REPORT

Ed Davey spoke out about the need for victims of torture not being detained at all.

## FACTS

The Home Office has released its latest quarterly immigration statistics for the year ending June 2018. See the graph for the length of time that people spent in immigration detention. Unacceptable.

There is growing support for an **end to unlimited detention**, the latest being from the HM Inspectorate of Prisons. Also UNHCR, and it is worth noting its 'Beyond Detention' project, in which the UK is participating, and is aimed at finding alternatives to immigration detention.



## OTHER REFUGEE & ASYLUM ISSUES

### LGBT+ ISSUES

Ice and Fire have organised with [All Out](#) – you can sign up to their campaign asking you to take a clear, public stand for better treatment of LGBT+ people seeking asylum and other migrants.

### COMING UP TO 18 years of age

Roger Roberts [asked for assurances](#) that asylum seekers reaching age of 18 can finish their academic year. However, he got nowhere [asking about](#) the availability of English classes, the Government confirming, as we know, that there is nothing for 6 months, and then 50% funding after that. But who pays the other 50%?!

### RIGHT TO WORK

Tim Farron [spoke out in a Westminster Hall debate](#) about how difficult it was for those who just got leave to remain but had not been allowed to work at all, and had no chance of building up any savings. They have spent all that time in limbo, waiting, and had no right to work.

### STUDY RESTRICTIONS

Sally Hamwee [has asked important questions](#) on study restrictions for those on immigration bail conditions. The Minister has said that nobody has these study restrictions now, so if any reader knows of anyone still having problems please let us know.

## PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIAN AND MINORITY RELIGIONS



Well done Ed Davey calling on Imran Khan to reduce and end the persecution against religious minorities in Pakistan, as here in the Church Times.

A senior Scottish judge has condemned an immigration tribunal for not taking proper account of some Churches evidence on the conversion to Christianity of two Iranians according to a report from the [The Herald](#).

## **FAMILY REUNION**

It is good to see the fight for humanity goes on.

Sally Hamwee [spoke, with a passionate description](#) of the importance of family reunion for refugees. The issue will be taken forward by Tim Farron when it goes to the Commons in the next parliamentary session. Surely only the heartless could want to split families.

Christine Jardine [tells of the fight](#) there was for this baby to be reunited with family. There should not have to be a campaign for this.

## **VISA RIGHTS FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT RETURN BECAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO DANGEROUS COUNTRY**

Roger Roberts [has raised this](#) with the Minister, and had a (potentially) positive reply.

## **CHILD REFUGEES**

[This article](#) by Tim Farron on The Windermere Boys spells how British people opened up homes and hearts over 70 years ago. We can do it again if the Government lets us.

## **DESTITUTION**

Tickets are now on sale for NACCOM's Annual Conference and AGM on 25th September 2018 in Birmingham. This year's theme is 'Pathways out of destitution' and the event will feature inspiring stories, interactive workshops and networking opportunities to develop responses to destitution amongst people with NRPF and refugees. Member and non-member organisations are welcome. For the full programme and tickets click [here](#).

## **ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

This [joint report](#), from Refugee Action and NACCOM, highlights the many problems created by the lack of legal aid to make sure that asylum seekers have the access they need to justice.

# **MORE UPLIFTING**

## **INTEGRATION**

Football and refugees, [this shows some good news](#) and hope, even worth a read for those not into football!

## **GREAT BRITISH BAKEOFF**

We are struck by the richness, sweetness and tastiness, as well as fun and fellowship, brought by people from home and abroad. If only in life we could all learn from each other, support each other and have fair rules.

**NELSON MANDELA** once said, "A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones." As we face one of the deadliest refugee crises in history and try and grapple with the tragic reality that 68.5 million people are displaced worldwide, the words of this extraordinary man and staunch defender of human rights are as pertinent as ever.