

# Roadmap for change - how we will challenge immigration detention

**The Detention Forum Strategy Document**

**THE DETENTION FORUM CO-ORDINATION GROUP  
DECEMBER 2012**

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## Who this document is for

**Roadmap for change - how we will challenge immigration detention sets out the Detention Forum's overall strategy for change. It was also written with a number of audiences in mind.**

**Working Group participants** - The document provides a snap-shot picture of where the Co-ordination Group thinks that the Detention Forum has travelled to since January 2012 through the Working Groups' work. It shows how the Co-ordination Group views the overall strategy for the Detention Forum when we bring together the work of all the different Working Groups into one place, and the issues each Working Group discussed via a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis after the endorsement process. The document is a reminder that much more work is to be done and underscores the Detention Forum's commitment to making a change through effective collaboration and creating a movement that challenges immigration detention.

**Other Detention Forum supporters** - The document should give you a very condensed summary of what the Working Group participants have worked on over the last ten months. It helps you to understand the Detention Forum's general direction of travel, which consolidates and builds on each Working Groups' work. Please consider if you can help us implement our strategy further.

**Organisations and others who are concerned about immigration detention and want to "do something about it"** - Perhaps you are already concerned about immigration detention, but you do not know where to start or what to do about it. We hope that the document will give you ideas for practical collaboration with organisations involved in the Detention Forum and encourage you to give us your advice, support and endorsement. We look forward to welcoming you to the movement: get in touch with us.

**Funders** - The document outlines an overall direction of travel for the Detention Forum for the next few years as identified by many organisations who participated in the Working Groups. While it does not claim to reflect the views of all detention organisations, the document evidences that, through a robust process overseen by the Detention Forum Co-ordination Group, a significantly large number of organisations were able to broadly agree on common priorities, targets and methods of advocacy activities. Neither does the document provide a complete start-to-finish advocacy plan: each Working Group will continue to review, refine and implement their theory of change and we believe this process will make their theory of change more robust. The Co-ordination Group aims to assist the Working Groups to effect a real 'step change' as they work through their theory of change and has identified the Forum's overall 'step-change' as its communications: to this end, we are reviewing the structure of the Detention Forum and setting up a framework and mechanisms for effective communications so that it can implement this strategy effectively and build momentum.

**Wider voluntary sector audience and other types of group** - The document provides a basic outline of the intensive process of strategy setting that nearly 30 groups went through over a period of 10 months. The process was far from plain sailing: these organisations with different approaches to immigration detention issues could only come to a consensus through honest discussions, negotiations and concessions. Many were also challenged to question their deeply held beliefs about the efficacy of their day-to-day activities. The experience raises serious questions about the nature of collaboration and advocacy by the voluntary sector, as well as how decisions are made. We are committed to disseminating our learning, so if you want to know more about the process, please get in touch with us.

**What this document is not for** - The document is not intended for influencing our advocacy targets, such as the Government, parliamentarians, various Committees, the UK Border Agency, monitoring bodies or any others that Working Groups have identified as those who have power to make the change they want.

## Executive summary

The Detention Forum is a loose network of organisations which questions the legitimacy of immigration detention as a normal part of British immigration control. The Detention Forum does this by providing space through which fundamental questions about the legitimacy of immigration detention can be asked, heard and answered.

Between January and October 2012, The Detention Forum undertook a 10-month long Working Groups process, involving 29 organisations, working together to collectively produce and agree on a joint strategy that identifies our advocacy objectives.

This strategy document outlines an overall direction of travel for the Detention Forum for the next few years as identified by those who took part in the process. We aim to turn the Detention Forum into a movement that effectively challenges immigration detention while working towards specific, tangible advocacy goals. The document also explains how the Working Groups process started, an overview of the strategy, summary of each Working Group's advocacy objective and workplans, and our next steps.

The strategy is composed of three specific advocacy objectives and workplans as prepared by thematic Working Groups. They are the Vulnerable People Working Group, Indefinite Detention Working Group and Judicial Oversight Working Group.

The common tenet that runs through these advocacy objectives is that, as the Detention Forum, we want to be able to influence: and this is where the fourth Working Group, the Communications Working Group plays a vital part. We will therefore work on our communications in order to establish our credibility and have a bigger voice that will influence those who hold power so that we can make the changes we want to see.

We do not pretend that this strategy outlines our entire plan from start to finish. The Thematic Working Groups will develop and modify their plans further as they implement their work, and the Communications Working Group has just been able to begun working on some key tools for the Detention Forum. However, having identified and agreed how we begin to turn the Detention Forum into a movement, it has now become much easier to know what we need to do next.

From now on, The Detention Forum will concentrate on implementing this strategy and we will review our structure accordingly to ensure that the new structure can effectively implement the strategy.

Ultimately, we would like more organisations and groups to support our work and join in our activities to challenge immigration detention. We hope you feel excited by this strategy and get in touch with us.

## Introduction: how it started

The Detention Forum is a loose network of organisations which questions the legitimacy of immigration detention as a normal part of British immigration control. The Detention Forum does this by providing space through which fundamental questions about the legitimacy of immigration detention can be asked, heard and answered. It is currently hosted by Asylum Aid which provides office support and line-management of a part-time freelance worker for the Detention Forum. Its active voluntary Co-ordination Group oversees its direction and development.

The Detention Forum also aspires to be a movement, and this strategy sets out the initial phase of the journey. The Detention Forum was set up in July 2009 in response to an overall consensus from those involved in Asylum Rights Campaign and beyond that a renewed effort was necessary to put immigration detention back on the campaigning agenda. It was felt that there was not much progress in this area of work: in fact, the situation was worse now than before, with more people detained and for longer.

So far, the Detention Forum has created parliamentary space that encourages more politicians' involvement in detention issues as well as space for different organisations to discuss a strategy for a change. We have provided secretarial support to bi-annual Parliamentary Network Meetings on Detention, through which we have secured increased support from parliamentarians. Our quarterly meetings have enabled us to organise joint lobbying actions on an opt-in, opt-out basis, in the form of joint letters to relevant bodies, usually attracting about 30 signatories.

The Detention Forum did not have any advocacy strategy as such until now: we know that it sounds odd but it was a careful decision taken by the Co-ordination Group. In its initial phase, the Co-ordination Group took the view that there was simply not sufficient level of trust amongst the organisations who gathered around the Detention Forum. Nor was there sufficient evidence to suggest that these organisations were willing to actually "do something". The Co-ordination Group drew the conclusion then that it was not the right time for these organisations to try to come to any consensus about priorities or objectives, nor to implement any advocacy actions collaboratively.

Discussions and co-ordinated joint actions that followed over the last few years encouraged many, but not all, of the Detention Forum supporters to realise that they share a common direction of travel. The Detention Forum encompasses a wide spectrum of organisations; because we have different goals, our methods of making changes are also different. While these differences were probably the main reason for tension, many now accept this diversity as a reality and a strength, and have been able to move on to considering what the collective gain might be if we worked together. No doubt some will continue to express their dissatisfaction about the lack of absolute unanimity: however, the majority are comfortable with the idea of "unity, not unanimity" for the sake of amplifying each organisation's impact in order to bring about a more fundamental change.

When the Co-ordination Group spoke with key Detention Forum participants in October and November 2011, it became clearer that there was a growing appetite for a concrete strategy for change and action. The relationships of trust and co-operation that now existed within the Detention Forum appeared to have increased many organisations' confidence in carrying out collaborative advocacy. The Detention Forum's joint activities prompted many of them to recognize that pooling their expertise and resources could achieve more than they were presently capable of by acting alone. There was also a clear sense that they would like to engage more effectively, not only with parliamentarians and the parliamentary process, but also with wider civil society.

In response to this, and after much discussion, the Co-ordination Group put together a proposal to create a common strategy through Working Groups which was presented at the Detention Forum quarterly meeting in January 2012. It also helped that Co-ordination Group spent six months between July and December 2011 participating in advocacy

workshops to explore different options of moving the Detention Forum forward. The proposal was welcomed by those at the meeting as a positive and exciting step forward, and endorsed.

The Working Groups process was a labour-intensive affair but has been worthwhile. On 11 October 2012, ten months after the work of the Working Groups started, the Detention Forum agreed to adopt the proposals from the four Working Groups as a part of its common strategy.

29 organisations participated in the four Working Groups and it took 20 meetings and numerous emails before the four proposals were submitted. Special workshops on consensus building and facilitation skills were also provided. During the process, the Co-ordination Group also benefited from learning from an evaluation report on one of the recent campaigns.

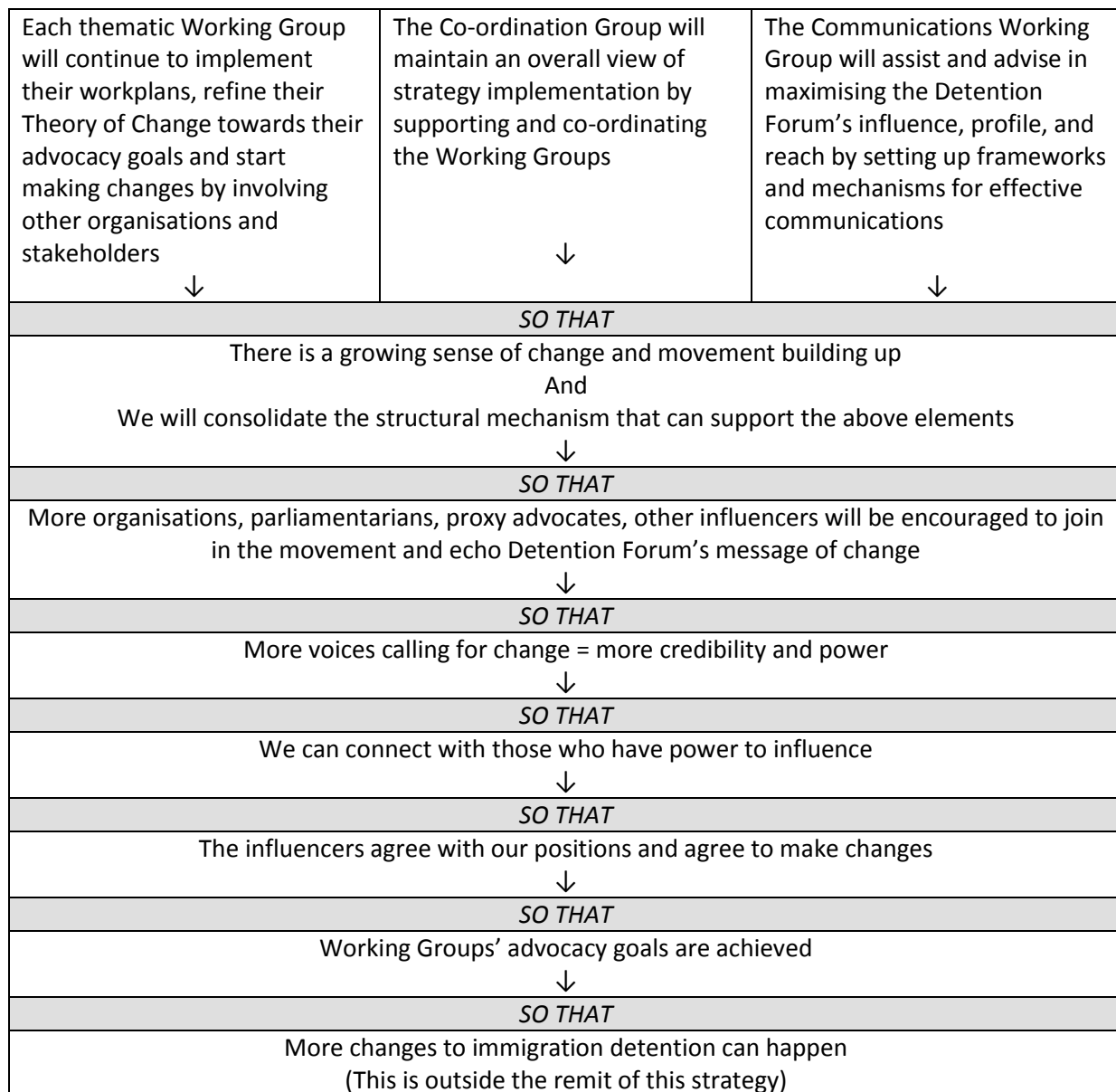
This long-term approach ensured that the final proposals have a wide buy-in and that the Detention Forum can now move forward with a single advocacy strategy. During the endorsement process, 24 organisations said that they have no concerns with the proposals. Three organisations said that they are standing aside: while they remain supportive of the proposals are happy for the rest to make the final decision, they preferred not to endorse any proposals. One organisation did not endorse one proposal and another did not endorse three proposals. We spent substantial time with organisations who did not want to endorse the proposals to resolve their concerns. Although we had to agree to disagree, a clear majority of support gave a mandate to the Working Groups to continue developing and implementing their work and for the Co-ordination Group to produce this strategy document.

# Overview of the strategy

**This strategy is about how the Detention Forum aims to create a step-change and turn into a movement.**

It shows how through collaborative advocacy work we will begin to make concrete changes that fundamentally challenge the UK’s immigration detention policy. It also outlines a trajectory of momentum and influence building, anchored by specific advocacy goals and complemented by the Communications Working Group. It already has wide buy-in, from 27 organisations who were involved in the process, and offers many different ways that more organisations can join in the movement. We aim to work together so that we can establish our credibility, have a bigger voice and influence those who hold power to make the changes we want to see.

**The Detention Forum’s overall theory of change is thus as follows.**



**The strategy also brings together specific advocacy goals and workplans prepared by the Working Groups which have been endorsed by the Detention Forum.** The three thematic Working Groups, the Vulnerable People Working Group, Indefinite Detention Working Group and Judicial Oversight Working Group, are working towards the following goals, which complement each other. They are all at different stages of implementation.

Working Group	Specific advocacy goal and implementation stage
Vulnerable People Working Group	to end detention of vulnerable people (evidence gathering stage)
Indefinite Detention Working Group	end indefinite detention (relationship building stage)
Judicial Oversight Working Group	end unaccountable decision making over who is released from detention* (intelligence gathering stage) (*this is subject to rewording).

**The fourth Working Group, Communications Working Group, will continue to play a vital role in assisting with the communication side of the strategy.** So far, it has produced generic key messages which communicate effectively what the Detention Forum collectively wants to achieve, that are powerful and simple and are compatible with specific advocacy goals of the thematic Working Groups.

Topline	<i>Immigration detention is not the answer.....for anyone.</i>
Problem	<i>People are detained without a time limit, for months, sometimes even years. It is harmful and expensive. It robs people of their dignity, spirit and lives. (This can't go on.)</i>
Solution	<i>We need to work towards an immigration system that is based on fairness not force and alternatives to detention that are accountable and allow people to contribute to society. This would stop wasting people's lives and taxpayers' money.</i>

**You can find out about each Working Group's work in the following pages.**

**We do not pretend that we have everything mapped out: we do not think that is a weakness, but reflects our realistic and optimistic approach.**

The Working Groups' proposals show what we aim to do with our current resource level. However, we are also confident that more organisations and partners will join us in the future to enable us to step-change more quickly. We also acknowledge that each Working Group is at a different stage of implementation; we believe that this offers an attractive range of entry points for new organisations and partners to join in the movement. Our theory of change will continue to be refined; as we implement our workplans, we will have more information to be able to make better decisions about what to do next. This continuous monitoring and learning will only make our theory of change more robust.

We are also aware that these activities, however, cannot happen in a vacuum. While each Working Group continues with activities that are specific to their own advocacy goals, we are also working towards a structural review of the Detention Forum so that the Detention Forum can effectively implement this strategy. We have provisionally identified the following functions the Co-ordination Group will need to perform - providing direction and co-ordination as well as programme management - to help Working Groups and other supportive organisations deliver the strategy and turn the Detention Forum into a movement.



We have also identified that a particular ‘step-change’ for the Detention Forum as a whole is its communications. Managing communication is not something we have thought about concretely before. However, for the Detention Forum to be able to really create a change, it is vital its voice becomes bigger, more credible and more influential, reflecting the level of participation and support from, hopefully, an increasing numbers of organisations.

Providing direction and co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- monitoring progress against strategy and reviewing the strategy</li> <li>- overseeing intra-Working Group co-ordination</li> <li>- managing internal communication</li> </ul>
Managing communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- co-ordinating communicating and influencing common targets together with Communications Working Group</li> <li>- managing external communication as a ‘brand’ or ‘front’ aimed at common targeted audience (for example, mainstream organisations, parliamentarians, monitoring bodies, media through website, statements, submissions letters)</li> </ul>
Programme management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fundraising and budget control</li> <li>- monitoring and reporting to the funders and others</li> <li>- procuring specialist tools and support (advocacy consultancy, lobbying and negotiation expertise)</li> </ul>

Together with Communications WG, the Co-ordination Group needs to work towards the outcome: the Detention Forum’s voice is bigger, more credible and more influential.

Objectives	Activities which will help us achieve these objectives
Increased profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- set up appropriate sign-off procedures for various types of communications</li> <li>- produce a tool kit which explains how key messages can be used and help Working Groups communicate better</li> </ul>
Increased support base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to ensure participation of people affected by detention in our communications</li> </ul>
Increased engagement with influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recruitment and retention of supporting organisations and other proxy advocates</li> <li>- co-ordination, production and dissemination of communications (messages, statements, asks etc) at the targeted audience</li> <li>- co-ordination of events (parliamentary meetings, conferences etc)</li> </ul>

The Co-ordination Group is putting together a structural review proposal for the Detention Forum members. For more information about the proposal, please see the ‘next steps’ section.

## Working Groups in focus

For each thematic Working Group, the process of producing a proposal itself was a step-change from simply sharing anecdotal stories about the problem to agreeing on what can be done to resolve it. They were assisted by an advocacy consultant, who helped them to identify a “wedge issue” which could be the key objective of their advocacy efforts. During the process, each group was forced to think about why their identified problem has not been resolved before or their work so far has not led to a change. They were also asked to consider who exactly has the power to make the change they want, as well as the external environment to check the likelihood of the change happening.

### Vulnerable People Working Group (VPWG) - evidence gathering stage

Conveners: Ali McGinley (AVID) and Nic Eadie (Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group)

The VPWG aims to end the detention of vulnerable migrants by exposing the current UK Border Agency policy as unworkable.

The group’s starting point was a frustration that despite many groups continuing to highlight the detention of various types of vulnerable people as problematic, very little change has been observed on the ground. NGOs’ criticism has often been rebutted by the UK Border Agency’s assertion that their policy provides adequate safeguards against the detention of vulnerable people.

The group’s initial discussion explored whether they should prioritise a particular type of vulnerability over the others. However, it was agreed that tackling vulnerability as a whole will have a bigger impact because it can galvanise a range of proxy advocates who specialise in thematic issues.

This approach will potentially enable a range of voices - particularly those of mainstream organisations who are not seen as ‘detention’ organisations - to raise the same concerns alongside detention organisations, exerting a greater pressure on the UKBA and the Government. Moreover, these mainstream organisations are often better resourced than detention organisations and are likely to have their own parliamentary officers and/or links to those who can influence parliamentarians, the Government and the UK Border Agency. The VPWG sees this as an exciting opportunity for a step-change: to widen their allies base and secure proxy advocates who can attract more visibility and bring more credibility to the issue.

The group agreed to frame their problem as ‘the current policy on detention of the most vulnerable people is ambiguous, inconsistently applied and open to interpretation’. They have agreed that their next step is gathering further evidence which shows that despite the existing policy, a range of vulnerable people are in detention. This evidence gathering exercise will also help them understand exactly how decisions to detain are made by the case owners: the result of this exercise will inform what their next step is going to be.

The VPWG, therefore, presents a first ever opportunity whereby a wide range of stakeholders working with specific categories of vulnerable people - LGBTI people, elderly people, disabled people, pregnant women, survivors of human rights abuse, people suffering from ill health, victims of trafficking and so on - can come together and put pressure on the Government and the UK Border Agency together.

## **Indefinite Detention Working Group (IDWG) - relationship building stage**

Conveners: Jerome Phelps (Detention Action) and Liz Peretz (Barbed Wire Britain)

The IDWG's overall advocacy goal is to end the indefinite detention of migrants. Their intermediate objective is to build a broad alliance of unusual allies that can influence the Minister, while keeping the pressure on the UK Border Agency by co-ordinating a shared "holding position" by different bodies and organisations.

The IDWG's scoping exercise showed that there is already a large amount of evidence, research and court cases which show UK's practice of indefinite detention is problematic. This also highlighted the ambitious nature of their advocacy goal, because despite all the criticism, currently there appears to be little willingness by the government to change its policy of indefinite detention.

The IDWG concluded that it is essential to secure a 'step-change' of a wider mobilisation in civil society, outside the circle of usual suspects, in order to influence the main target, the Minister. In the meantime, they also aim to secure other interim changes while/as a result of building a momentum for change. They will ensure that these two different types of advocacy inform each other and, while doing so, carry out "success planning", including how to negotiate with UKBA if the Minister finally gives a go-ahead for ending indefinite detention.

The group intends to fully exploit the unique strength of their key ask - which is identical to their advocacy goal - that can potentially mobilise a wide range of usual and unusual supporters. The group discussed how 'indefinite detention' or 'detention without time limit' invokes a very powerful reaction that goes right to the heart of civil liberties. This could be associated with the concept of 'British justice' - not exclusively a concern of the left but also of the political mainstream. The group agreed that their messaging needs to specifically be designed for these potential allies in the political mainstream, rather than for themselves or those who are already converted.

The IDWG has so far prepared problem/solution messaging, carried out their initial influence map/tree exercise and identified intermediate targets and proxy advocates who can influence the Minister or UKBA that they would like to develop relationship with. They have now started contacting friends who can introduce them to potential allies.

The IDWG's 'step-change' involves widening their allies, with the main focus on reaching out to the political mainstream which is new territory for the IDWG members. This requires unusual political astuteness, as well as careful use of messaging, skills to cultivate new relationships and good co-ordination amongst all the stakeholders. Its potential benefit is immense, as it will also raise awareness of other detention-related issues amongst those who are currently unengaged.

## **Judicial Oversight Working Group (JOWG) - intelligence gathering stage**

Conveners - Gemma Lousley (Detention Advice Service) and Victor Fiorini (Dover Detainee Visitor Group)

The JOWG agreed that there should be a transparent, accountable and accessible system of judicial oversight of detention. The group identified many problems in judicial oversight of decision making on detention, but one problem which seems to epitomise what is wrong with this entire system was the bail hearings.

They articulated the problem as 'bail decision making can be inappropriate/inconsistent/unclear'. This was backed up much evidence which is already available. To begin to solve this problem, the group decided to focus on a single

key ask, 'There should be typed bail refusals clearly setting out how the decision was reached and transcripts/recordings of all proceedings at bail hearings'.

There was some debate with other Working Group members whether this 'ask' was too specific. However, the group believes that having accurate record of what happened during the bail hearings is fundamental for the fairness, accountability and transparency of the immigration detention system which takes away individuals' liberty. They also think that the impact for detainees and their legal representatives will be significance because they will have a clear and comprehensive state on the reasons for their detention.

The group is currently gathering further intelligence to be able to decide which strand of influence they should follow in order to effect the change they want. They have identified three strands: the standard strand (lobbying the judiciary), procedural strand (lobbying the bodies which have oversight of tribunal procedures) and parliamentary strand (lobbying bodies that have power to make recommendations to the Lord Chancellor). At this point in time, all strands seem worth pursuing in one way or another.

The JOWG's 'step change' is, therefore, broadening interest and increasing channels of influence in the issue the group has focused on. They are looking at a range of routes, beyond that which is normally used, with an aim to create broader interest in the issues which are often seen as quite technical and niche, which are in fact fundamental elements of due process and civil liberties. By engaging other strands of influence as well as the standard one, the group expects to be able to exert more pressure.

## Communications Working Group

Convener - Kate Blagojevic (Detention Action)

The Communications WG had a difficult task of coming up with overarching key messages that can support and unify the Detention Forum's asks, before knowing exactly how each Working Group's proposals look.

They had additional difficulties at first, having to agree amongst themselves what key messages are and are not, then extending that understanding to many organisations involved who are not familiar with communications. They then had to draft key messages that are broadly aligned with many different groups' core beliefs, opinions, policy positions, level of willingness to positively engage with those in power and the tone of their general communication.

The group held a series of discussions and consultations in an attempt to encourage participation. They also urged, not always successfully, those who were not happy with the proposed versions to come up with alternatives which would be satisfactory not just to themselves but to everyone involved. The key messages for the Detention Forum that have been endorsed in the end are as follows.

Top line	<i>Immigration detention is not the answer.....for anyone.</i>
Problem	<i>People are detained without a time limit, for months, sometimes even years. It is harmful and expensive. It robs people of their dignity, spirit and lives. (This can't go on.)</i>
Solution	<i>We need to work towards an immigration system that is based on fairness not force and alternatives to detention that are accountable and allow people to contribute to society. This would stop wasting people's lives and taxpayers' money.</i>

While the process produced the key messages that are useful for our future advocacy, it also revealed that in fact many of the organisations involved in the Detention Forum have not given much thought to communications before. There was a tendency for participants to talk about activities (“let’s go to the Guardian”, “let’s produce a leaflet”) without first discussing the purpose of such activities. Another tendency was to fixate upon a particular kind of audience and a particular message that works for that audience and insist on that, without considering the fact that not all organisations address the same type of audiences.

The flipside of this is clearly that the involvement of the Communications WG will be a huge step-change for the Detention Forum because it addresses the weaknesses revealed by the process. The Communications WG can potentially shape and co-ordinate consistent and effective communication about immigration detention by involving many different organisations. One of the perennial concerns has been that immigration detention issues are often communicated in a sporadic manner, without a clear link to any advocacy plan. By working closely with thematic Working Groups, this problem can be addressed.

The Co-ordination Group also feels that the Communications WG’s work will be vital in galvanizing key organisations to take more actions and build momentum: the more the issue is communicated, the more buzz could be created around the issue. Many involved in the Working Groups also expressed their wish to be able to speak as one when influencing and pressurising those in power, and the Communications WG can act as a resource for the Detention Forum to manage that. At the latest Communications WG meeting, there was a real sense of excitement that they can start working on communications on detention collaboratively in a way that has never been done before.

The Communications WG is currently looking at issues such as:

- agreeing on the group’s future remit
- how the key messages are going to be used by the Detention Forum (production of tool kit, training sessions?)
- sign off agreement and a language guide for the Detention Forum
- developing a case study database
- whether different organisations’ communication activities can be co-ordinated

## Next steps

Now that the strategy is ready and while each Working Group continues with activities that are specific to its own advocacy goals, the Co-ordination Group is preparing a structural review of the Detention Forum. The main purpose of the structural review is to ensure that the Detention Forum can effectively implement this strategy and support its trajectory of momentum and influence building.

After the Working Groups' proposals were endorsed, the Co-ordination Group and Working Groups carried out a SWOT analysis of the strategy. Our intention is, of course, to exploit our strengths and opportunities, while embed remedies that mitigate the effects of weaknesses and manage threats. In particular, there was a strong desire to be able to speak as one as the Detention Forum; this was also recognised as a strength and opportunity. Simultaneously, it was recognised that proper systems need to be in place to ensure that this can happen; the Communications Working Group is currently working on this aspect.

As explained in the overview section, the Co-ordination Group has provisionally identified the following functions it will need to perform for the strategy to be implemented. A key step-change for the Co-ordination Group is to start managing the Detention Forum's communication needs.

Providing direction and co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- monitoring progress against strategy and reviewing the strategy</li> <li>- overseeing intra-Working Group co-ordination</li> <li>- managing internal communication</li> </ul>
Managing communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- co-ordinating communication and influencing common targets together with Communications Working Group</li> <li>- managing external communication as a 'brand' or 'front' aimed at common targeted audience (for example, mainstream organisations, parliamentarians, monitoring bodies, media through website, statements, submissions letters)</li> </ul>
Programme management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- fundraising and budget control</li> <li>- monitoring and reporting to the funders and others</li> <li>- procuring specialist tools and support (advocacy consultancy, lobbying and negotiation expertise)</li> </ul>

Other issues to bear in mind when doing the structural review are as follows:

- The governance and accountability structure needs to be able to accommodate the above functions, in a resource- and time-efficient manner.
- The roles of the Co-ordination Group/Co-ordinator, Working Groups and the Detention Forum supporters need to be clarified.
- The Co-ordination Group/Co-ordinator could act as the secretariat, composed of Working Group conveners and perhaps a couple of other high-profile individuals who buy into the vision and provide expert advice and leadership.
- The Working Groups should be the driving force behind achieving the identified goals, and the onus is on them, not on the Co-ordination Group, to achieve the advocacy goals. This is reinforced by the Terms of Reference for each Working Group.
- The Detention Forum needs to be more than the sum of the Working Groups. Such other organisations can support the work of the Detention Forum, sometimes take actions through Working Groups and provide advice and information as critical friends if necessary.

- The timeframe we are looking at for the implementation of the strategy is initially 2 - 3 years, given that the next General Election is in 2015. We need a workplan with clear milestones which cover this time period; the Co-ordination Group's current strategy plan will come to an end in May 2013.
- As explained already, there is a strong desire from the participants to speak as the Detention Forum and as the Working Groups, and we have identified this as a major step-change for the Detention Forum as a whole. This needs to be carefully managed by the Co-ordination Group, with the assistance of the Communications Working Group, to ensure that such communication remains relevant to the collective needs of the Detention Forum and the specific needs of the Working Group. The key communication targets that are identified so far by the Working Groups are parliamentarians, Minister, committees, monitoring bodies, UK Border Agency and the media. However, we also need to target other organisations so that they support the Detention Forum's work. Communications Working Group is therefore looking at sign-off procedures, developing a tool kit for key messages and considering how all this work can be co-ordinated.

We aim to complete this structural review as soon as possible, so that we can start seeking funding for the Detention Forum to be able to perform its identified functions and deliver this strategy successfully. In the meantime, the Working Groups will continue to pursue their advocacy goals and the Co-ordination Group will continue to provide leadership for the Detention Forum.

## Appendix: what are the step-changes for each Working Group?

### Vulnerable People Working Group

- Their ‘step-change’ involves treating vulnerability as a banner via their forthcoming research to unite many specialist and mainstream organisations and to secure proxy advocates. This will bring more visibility and credibility to the issue. The issue of the detention of vulnerable people is often fractured along the line of particular vulnerability characteristics, which can sometime diminish the strength of the voice advocating for each specific vulnerability. By bringing these different organisations together and engaging mainstream organisations who are not seen as ‘detention’ organisations, the group can potentially exert a greater pressure on the UKBA and the Government.

### Indefinite Detention Working Group

- Their ‘step-change’ is their intention to reach out to the political mainstream and gain their support in order to put pressure on the Minister. They also aim to do this in tandem with achieving more practical, interim “wins”. This requires political astuteness, careful use of messaging, skills to cultivate new relationships and good co-ordination amongst all the stakeholders. Its potential benefit is immense, as it will also raise awareness of other detention related issues amongst those who are currently unengaged.

### Judicial Oversight Working Group

- JOWG’s ‘step change’ is broadening interest and increasing channels of influence in the issue the group has focused on. They are looking at a range of routes, beyond that which is normally used, with an aim to create broader interest in the issues which are often seen as quite technical and niche, which are in fact fundamental elements of due process to do with civil liberties. By engaging other strands of influence as well as the standard one, the group expects to be able to exert more pressure.

### Communications Working Group

- Their work represents the first ever attempt for many of the organisations involved in the Detention Forum to take communications seriously and speak as one, in order to challenge immigration detention in a credible and influential way. This in itself is a huge ‘step-change’ for the Detention Forum as a whole.



## List of Working Group Participants

- Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (VPWG convener)
- Gatwick Detainee Welfare Group (VPWG convener and JOWG)
- UNHCR (VPWG)
- UK Lesbian & Gay Immigration Group (VPWG)
- Terrence Higgins Trust (VPWG)
- Kent Refugee Help (VPWG and JOWG)
- Bail for Immigration Detainees (VPWG and Comms WG)
- JRS UK (VPWG)
- Yarls Wood Befrienders (VPWG)
- Poppy Project (VPWG)
- Detention Advice Service (JOWG convener and IDWG)
- Dover Detainee Visitor Group (JOWG convener and IDWG)
- Bail Observation Project (JOWG)
- Campaign to Close Campsfield (JOWG)
- Barbed Wire Britain (IDWG)
- Quaker Asylum Refugee Network (IDWG and JOWG)
- Churches Refugee Network (IDWG and JOWG)
- ReneCassin (JOWG and Comms WG)
- Detention Action (IDWG convener and Comms WG convener)
- Asylum Welcome (IDWG)
- Equal Rights Trust (IDWG)
- Scottish Detainee Visitors (IDWG)
- African Health Policy Network (Comms WG)
- STAR (Comms WG)
- Music in Detention (Comms WG)
- National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaign (Comms WG)
- Refugee Council (Comms WG)
- Coalition Against Bullington Immigration Removal Centre (Comms WG)
- Migrant Voice (Comms WG)

VPWG - Vulnerable People Working Group

IDWG - Indefinite Detention Working Group

JOWG - Judicial Oversight Working Group

Comms WG - Communications Working Group

Out of the four proposals made by the Working Groups, Bail for Immigration Detainees endorsed one and Kent Refugee Help endorsed three of them.

UNHCR, Terrence Higgins Trust and JRS UK are standing aside: while they remain supportive of the proposals are happy for the rest to make the final decision, they preferred not to endorse any proposals.

## Acknowledgments

Producing this strategy through Working Groups was a very complex process; sometimes it was exciting and exhilarating but most of the time, its labour-intensiveness was exhausting. We are however pleased with the result and feel ready to move forward.

The Co-ordination Group would like to thank the following people for helping us to reach this stage:

- **The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund** and **The Barrow Cadbury Trust** for providing guidance and support for this project.
- **The LankellyChase Foundation, The Bromley Trust** and **The Norda Trust** for supporting the core functions of the Detention Forum.
- **Rhizome** for providing learning sessions on the consensus decision-making model and facilitation skills.
- **Jonathan Ellis** for providing expert advice and facilitation for some of the Working Groups as Advocacy Consultant.
- **Working Group conveners** for holding things together particularly when things were difficult and taking on this huge responsibility on top of their main responsibilities at work.
- **Asylum Aid** for hosting the Detention Forum and providing a venue for many of our meetings.
- And finally, a big thank you to all the organisations who participated in the Working Groups.

**This document was written by Eiri Ohtani on behalf of the Detention Forum Co-ordination Group. The document represents the views of the Co-ordination Group. Other Working Group participants might have a different overview of the process we went through.**

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