

Your Fundraising Toolkit



association of visitors to
immigration detainees





Thank you for the visits and the time being there on the phone — the comfort it brought me prevented so much damage.

Detained person, to Detention Action

AVID Fundraising Toolkit

Contents

1	About AVID and our community	6
2	Why volunteer-led fundraising matters	8
3	How your fundraising could make a difference	13
4	Where do I start?	14
5	Fundraising ideas.	18
	a) Love bringing people together?	18
	b) Love sharing your skills?	22
	c) Love a challenge?	24
	d) Love organising at work or in your community?	26
	e) Prefer simple, everyday actions?	28
	f) Any other ideas welcome!	29
6	How we can help you	30
7	Ready-to-use checklist	31

Cover image illustration by David Moyo,
for AVID's Members Charter Values, 2025.

Follow David on Instagram @davidmoyo2026



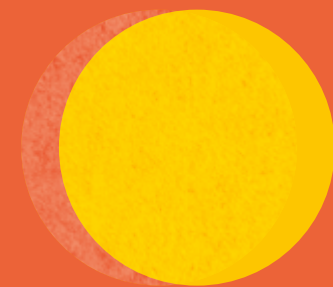
AVID, 10K fundraising runner, London 2015

Thank you for being part of our community dedicated to a future free from the harms of detention and ensuring no one has to face it alone.

If you'd like to support our work further, fundraising is a fantastic way to make an even bigger difference.

By fundraising, you can turn your care, creativity and connections into real, tangible support for people in detention.

Every pound you raise will help to ensure that people in immigration detention have access to volunteer visitors, essential resources, and advocacy support – while also contributing to a movement working towards a future without detention.



ONE

About AVID and our community

The Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (AVID) is a UK-wide network of 13 organisations who provide visiting support to people in detention across the UK.

We are connected by our shared belief in the power of visitors to reduce the isolation of people in detention. We work collectively towards a future without immigration detention.

Visitors can be a lifeline to people held in immigration detention, and visitor groups often act as informal human rights monitors – becoming ‘eyes and ears’ for people who are isolated and detained.

Read more about members of the AVID network [here](#).

[AVID members](#) have come together to create this toolkit to inspire and guide our community of volunteers and supporters to find creative ways to support visitor groups to fulfil their vital work through fundraising activities.

You can use the tips and ideas set out below to fundraise for your chosen visitor group within our network.

Please contact their team directly and/or AVID for any advice or resources you might need to get fundraising!

With Special Thanks

To Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (GDWG) for putting this toolkit together and to Beyond Detention, Detention Action, Scottish Detainee Visitors for adding your fundraising success stories, testimonies and pictures which bring this toolkit to life. [The Unchained Collective](#) for co-producing Removed which is referenced in this toolkit. Also a shout out to [David Moyo](#) for his powerful illustrations. To all AVID members for your continued commitment to supporting people in immigration detention.



AVID Members



Durham Visitors Groups (DVG)



TWO

Why volunteer-led fundraising matters

Fundraising is one of the most powerful ways ordinary people create extraordinary change.

It is a powerful way to raise awareness about immigration detention, an issue that many people know little about beyond the media headlines.

When you fundraise, you are not only helping to cover vital costs – you are helping to break silence around detention, challenge harmful narratives, and show people inside that they are not forgotten.

Every conversation you spark and every pound you raise strengthens a community of solidarity.

by David Moyo [@davidmoyo2026](https://twitter.com/davidmoyo2026) for AVID, 2025

“

I was detained for nearly three years, with every legal appeal exhausted and my spirits crushed. It seemed like there was no light at the end of the tunnel. But then, Detention Action came into my life. Initially, I was skeptical—after all, what could anyone do after everything that had happened? But within six months, they had made significant progress on my case. Thanks to their relentless advocacy, I secured immigration bail and was finally reunited with my family. Detention Action was a beacon of hope when everything seemed lost. So, to all who are still waiting, keep faith. There is a network of support ready to fight for you, even when it feels like no one else will.”

Detained person at Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre to Detention Action.



Your Fundraising Toolkit

Here are some resources that you can use to inform people about detention, help start conversations and explain why you care, whilst fundraising:



Visit **Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group's** website to hear directly from people who have experienced immigration detention and their calls for change as part of the [Walking Inquiry](#).



Visit **Detention Action's** website to access their [Introduction to Detention: 2024 Briefing Series](#).



Share **AVID** and [The Unchained Collective's](#) awareness-raising animation, [Removed](#). *Removed* tells the story of one woman, Hope, from the moment she is taken from her home – without warning, without trial, in the middle of the night – to a detention centre.



Watch [Hidden Stories \(2014\)](#), a short film marking 20 years of volunteer visiting, featuring testimonies from visitors and people with lived experience about the impact of visiting on individuals, communities, and attitudes to detention.



Download [these timelines](#) on the history of immigration detention and solidarity with people in detention to build understanding of how detention has developed over time.



Visit **AVID's Knowledge Hub** for guides, facts and figures on detention.



AVID's handbook for visitors provides a more in depth overview of immigration detention, related policy and legislation and guidance for visitors.

“

What you do truly makes a difference... many people would otherwise feel completely forgotten.

Previously detained person to Detention Action.



THREE

How your fundraising can make a difference

The funds you raise will go directly towards supporting people in detention and helping us to collectively challenge the immeasurable harm detention causes.

Every visitor group in the AVID network supports people in detention in slightly different ways; however, we are all united in our care for, and advocacy with, people in immigration detention.

To give a sense of the difference your support can make:



= **phone credit** to at least two people in detention



= at least 20 hours of **interpreting** for people in detention



= helps our teams **reach out** and run **drop-in sessions** for people in detention.

Any and all raised funds are incredibly appreciated by our community. However much you raise, you are helping someone feel less alone.

FOUR

Where do I start?

Planning a fundraising event or activity is simple and can be done in six simple steps!

1 Start with something you'll enjoy or that fits well into your current life and skillset.

You can find a range of creative ideas in the next section to kickstart your thinking.

2 Involve others.

Fundraising is better together. Invite people to be part of what you're doing – friends, colleagues, neighbours, or community groups.

Depending on the activity you are planning, you can approach local businesses to see if they can support you by providing a space for your event, acting as a sponsor or donating goods and services. You could also invite staff, other volunteers or people with lived experience of detention to speak about their work at your event.

Please reach out to our community to find a suitable speaker. You can find contact details for AVID under "How we Can Help You" on page 30 of this toolkit.

3 Set a target.

Pick a realistic yet inspiring amount to help motivate you and your supporters!



4 Plan and promote your fundraiser.

If you're organising an event, start your plans early and lock in a date and time to keep you on track. If you're doing an online campaign, choosing an event platform – such as JustGiving, GoFundMe, and Raisely – is a helpful starting point and picking a good end date can help to motivate your supporters.

When promoting, it's great to share your story and your motivations for fundraising as well as communicating the difference that it will make.

Don't forget to use social media to promote your campaign!

Social media top tips:

- Post regularly to keep up the momentum
- The best time of the day to post are 8 am and 5 pm, or the time that suits your audience
- Remember to tag us or tag the visitor group you are fundraising for and we can also help maximise your reach, and we would also love say our thanks for your effort.

Find AVID on social media here:





-  [AVID \(@aviddetention\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)
-  www.facebook.com/AVIDdetention
-  [AVID \(Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees\) | LinkedIn](#)
-  [@aviddetention.bsky.social – Bluesky](https://bsky.app/profile/aviddetention.bsky.social)

Illustration by David Moyo, for AVID's Members Charter Values: Anti-Racism, 2025

5 Thank your supporters and celebrate your impact!

Sharing a 'We did it!' message with your networks and thanking them for their support is a great way to keep people involved in your fundraiser.

6 Send your donation.

There are a few easy ways to send in what you've raised – all of the visitor groups in our community, and AVID, can receive your funds online, by cheque, or by phone, so please just get in touch with us or the group you're fundraising for and we'll help you with the easiest option. We're here to help – if you're unsure which option to use or need support, please contact enquiries@aviddetention.org.uk or 0207 281 0533 and we'll guide you.

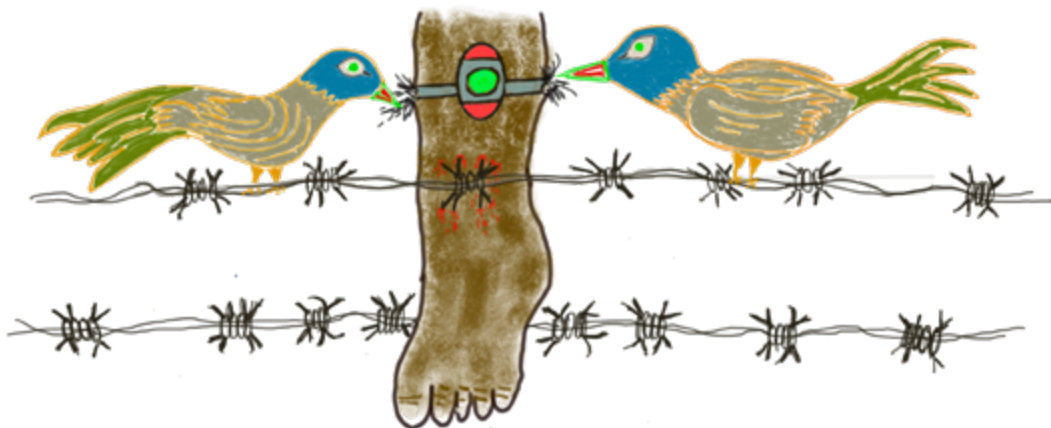


Illustration by David Moyo, for AVID's Members Charter Values: Care, 2025

Use this as a starting point to message potential supporters and involve others.

I am writing to you to ask for your support to raise vital funds for _____ and support people currently detained in _____

Every day in the UK, people are locked up for immigration reasons – without trial and without knowing when they will be free.

I have been visiting people in detention for ___ number of months/ years. {Add more about your experience here, for example}

- I started visiting because...
- A moment I will never forget is when...
- I have personal experience of immigration detention. This experience left its mark on me...

Every day, visitors meet people in detention who are struggling with the impacts of being detained and face challenges accessing adequate support. We meet people who have come to the UK to seek sanctuary, who have struggled to regularise their immigration status due to the hostile environment policies, who have experienced trafficking or are survivors of modern slavery. The impacts of immigration detention on people's physical and mental health are well documented. It has been described by people detained as "mental torture", especially because people detained do not know when they will be released.

Visitors play a vital role, acting as a friend and ally in what can be an extremely dark and difficult moment, whilst helping the person they are visiting to understand their rights and access further support.

To raise awareness and funds for this vital role, I am _____

By supporting this event/activity, you are part of a community of welcome and solidarity.

More specifically, funds that are raised will go towards _____

FIVE

Fundraising ideas

There are so many creative ways to raise funds and awareness for immigration detention visitor groups!

Below are some ideas and related fundraising success stories from members of the AVID network to get you inspired.

Love bringing people together?

From small community gatherings to larger public events, hosting an event is a great way to bring people together while raising funds.

These are some ideas to get you started:

Film Screening

Screen AVID and The Unchained Collective's animation, *Removed*, or another topical film followed by a Q&A to raise awareness of immigration detention and raise funds through ticket sales.

Music gigs or performances

If you or your friends are musicians or performers, host a concert with proceeds going to your visitor group.



Quiz nights

Always a favourite! You can add a round on migration, community or social justice to help raise awareness as well as funds.

Bake sales or coffee mornings

A simple and sociable way to raise funds. Set up at your workplace, community centre, or local café and share information about the work of visitor groups alongside your delicious bakes.



Art and craft sales or exhibitions

Sell your own creations or collaborate with local artists to host an exhibition with proceeds going to your visitor group.

Car boot, book, clothes swap or bric-a-brac sales

Declutter while doing good! Invite friends and neighbours to donate items and turn unwanted goods into vital funds!

Raffles or auctions

These can be great additions to any event. Try an auction of promises (offering time, skills or experiences) to make it more personal and engaging.



Sports events

Organise a football tournament, five-a-side match, or fun run and donate the entry fees.



Success story
Scottish Detainee Visitors'
Annual Ceilidh

scottishdetaineevisitors

Scottish Detainee Visitors (SDV) hold a fundraising ceilidh – with a live band – during the Christmas period every year. As well as funds raised through ticket sales, they hold a fundraising raffle and take donations on the night.

Having a recurring event has helped them to keep organisation time down as they use the same venue and band each year:



The first one took a little more organisation than later ones as it was all new, but we've been lucky enough to have been able to use the same venue and band each year, and that cuts down on the organisation time.

Ticket Tailor takes the pain out of ticket sales, and a donation bar and raffle on the night are excellent for raising additional sums - buying a couple of card readers has been a brilliant investment. Local businesses and social enterprises have been generous in donating food and raffle prizes.

After three years, we've got most of the organisation down to a fine art, and by the time the night comes round, we can all just enjoy it as a great way to end the year.

Kate, Director SDV



By the time the night comes round, we can all just enjoy it as a great way to end the year.



Love sharing your skills?

You can also use your talents and passions to connect people and raise money at the same time by hosting a workshop or class for people in your community. Why not try:

Yoga or mindfulness sessions

Host a donation-based class at a local hall or park.

Art workshops

Share your creative skills through sessions like printmaking, zine making, origami or creating posters. You can connect this to immigration detention and related issues by bringing media cuttings, inspiring quotes and testimonies from people who have experienced detention.

Cooking classes or supper clubs

Invite friends to cook and eat together. Themed nights or recipes from around the world can make great talking points about migration and community.

EXAMPLE [Watch the reel we made](#) with chef Ixta Belfrage and Rose, where Rose cooks the jollof rice she missed while she was detained and shares her story. Comment on the post or DM AVID to get Rose's recipe for jollof rice!



You are my last hope in this detention.

Detained person at Gatwick Immigration Removal Centre to GDWG.



Success story Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group's Supper Clubs

GDWG

In 2024, the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (GDWG) community came together to create a recipe book called '[Tales from Our Table](#)', featuring recipes from around the world.

Building on this idea, members of GDWG organised a supper club, inviting people to share food and learn more about immigration detention. The event not only raised an incredible amount but also brought people together - spreading awareness and joy through the power of good food.



Love a challenge?

Taking on a personal challenge is an inspiring way to engage your friends and networks. Whether physical, creative, or endurance-based, challenges show real commitment, and people love to sponsor them!

Challenge yourself through:

Sponsored runs or walks –

From a local 5k to a half marathon or a walk-a-thon, every step makes a difference. You could even try the Couch to 5K programme and invite sponsorship along the way.

Cycling challenges

Organise a group bike ride or set your own target distance.

Sponsored swims

Whether it's in a pool or open water, challenge yourself to complete a set distance or number of laps.

"Give it up" challenge

Give up caffeine, chocolate, social media, or something else for a set time and ask for sponsorship to keep you accountable!

Adrenaline challenges

Feeling brave? Skydiving, bungee jumping or abseiling are unforgettable ways to raise awareness and funds.



Connect your challenge to an awareness raising statistic on immigration detention. For example:

- The distance from the detention centre you visit to the nearest train station (form of public transport).
- The number of immigration detention bed spaces.
- The number of days lost in detention.

Contact AVID or your visitor group for facts and figures.



Success story

AVID's Young Fundraiser climbing Mount Everest from her home in Devon!



During lockdown, a young supporter (aged 8 years old at that time) decided to climb the equivalent of Mount Everest on her stairs at home with her mum and sisters. This is 2,212 flights of stairs!

They said about the experience:

"It was tiring, but it was also very satisfying at the same time. I would just like people in detention to know that we are thinking of them".

The challenge raised an incredible amount for AVID's work supporting people in detention and you can read more about her achievement [here](#).

Love organising at work or in your community?

Fundraising can be a powerful way to engage your colleagues or neighbours and spark meaningful conversations about detention and solidarity.

Try holding:

Community or workplace collections

Set up a donation box in a shared space and encourage small, regular contributions.

Foreign coin exchange

Collect spare or leftover foreign currency and swap it for donations.

Clothes or book donations

Organise a collection point for good quality second-hand clothes or books and donate proceeds from sales.

Coffee mornings or lunch-and-learns

Pair fundraising with awareness by sharing AVID's resources or inviting a guest speaker to talk about detention.

EXAMPLE Check out our [Instagram page](#) to watch short reels featuring visitor experiences and testimonial videos – these real stories bring the work and impact of visiting to life and are great to share with your networks.

Payroll giving

Encourage your workplace to support visitor groups through regular payroll donations or matched-funding schemes.



Success story Beyond Detention's 'Cash 4 Coins' Donations Pot



Beyond Detention's Community in Bedford set up a "spare change" pot to collect any loose coins – including foreign, out-of-date, and even unidentifiable ones!

By encouraging everyone to empty out their drawers and donate coins that would otherwise go to waste, the community raised an impressive amount for their work supporting people detained in Yarl's Wood IRC.



I was detained for almost two years. The experience was devastating. Life inside a detention centre is worse than prison: indefinite, stressful and isolating. I saw people break mentally, some attempting or committing suicide. I became seriously ill, and my mental health suffered profoundly. Even after release, the scars remain – I lost my job, family, dignity and hope. But through the support of Beyond Detention, I found connection, understanding and a path toward healing.

Previously detained person said to Beyond Detention

Prefer simple, everyday actions?

Not every fundraiser needs to be an event. Small, personal actions can make a big difference too.

For example:

Birthday fundraising

Set up a Facebook, JustGiving or GoFundMe fundraiser and ask for donations instead of gifts.

Donate your daily spend

Give the amount you'd usually spend on your morning coffee or commute.

Ongoing giving

Encourage friends and family to set up small monthly donations – collective giving can have a huge impact over time.

Make an introduction to your contacts and connections

Do you know anyone who might be interested in supporting your visitor group? Perhaps they work for a local business, their employer has an interest in developing their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) or their team is looking for new ways to volunteer. Making an introduction to your visitor group can be the starting point of a new partnership.



Success story The Potential of a Simple Connection



One of Beyond Detention's volunteers was talking to a friend over coffee about the impact the charity has.

The friend just happened to be responsible for fundraising at the organisation she worked for, and as a result of this coffee chat, the organisation donated £1500 to Beyond Detention at Christmas!

Any other ideas welcome!

If you have an idea that's not listed here – go for it! We're here to support you with advice, materials, and encouragement along the way.



It can make a huge difference. People often feel isolated in detention centres and unwelcome. Visits let people know they are cared about and that there is work going on to deconstruct an awful, hostile, system.

Volunteer visitor, SDV

SIX

How we can help you

We are here to walk alongside you – with ideas, materials, and encouragement.

Our visitor groups, our visitor community and AVID are here to support you in your fundraising efforts, so please reach out if you:

- Need templates or support with writing any copy (e.g. help with the writing your description on fundraising pages, social media posts or promotion emails).
- Need support with organisational branding (e.g. logo, banners for in-person events, and/or merch that could be sold).
- Need advice on event planning, risk assessment or budget-planning.
- Would like us to feature you through a blogpost or share your fundraiser on social media.
- Are looking for a speaker at your event/activity.

The capacity of each visitor group varies and, whilst some have dedicated fundraisers, others are purely voluntary run.

If your chosen group does not have the resources to support, you can also reach out directly to us.

Contact AVID on:

enquiries@aviddetention.org.uk

0207 281 0533

SEVEN

Fundraising Checklist

Finally, here's a handy checklist to keep you on track:

Task	Completed?
Chosen fundraising activity & set a date	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set a fundraising target	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organised a venue or created an online page	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set and agreed a budget for fundraising activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identified helpers / team / contacts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoted event with story, visuals and links	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set up method for donors to donate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collected funds and recorded donors (Gift Aid if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transferred funds to visitor group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thanked donors & shared results	<input type="checkbox"/>

Use this checklist as a guide – not a test. You don't need to do everything perfectly to make a real difference.



It feels like someone still cares out there

Previously detained person at Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre

Every fundraiser helps someone feel less forgotten.

Thank you for choosing to stand with people in detention and for being part of a growing movement for dignity, justice and freedom.

With thanks, The AVID network

Follow us on social media: search 'AVIDdetention'



[@aviddetention.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/aviddetention.org.uk)



[@AVIDdetention](https://www.instagram.com/aviddetention)



[AVID Detention](https://www.linkedin.com/company/aviddetention)



[AVID Detention](https://www.facebook.com/aviddetention)



Any questions? Get in touch:

enquiries@aviddetention.org.uk

Phone number: 0207 281 0533

www.aviddetention.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1156709