

The Edith M Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

#9BYPQ6THFF submitted on 7 June 2021

1.1 Please summarise what you are seeking from us

We are seeking funds to enable us to give mobile top-ups to people held in immigration detention in Brook House and Tinsley House at Gatwick Airport and to those who are destitute on release. This will enable those in detention to keep in touch with the outside world and those released to access our and other services. It will reduce reduce the isolation that so many feel be it in detention or on release.

1.2 Tell us more about your project, the impact it will have on those it aims to help, and why you consider the proposed approach to be innovative

People experiencing detention are isolated and suffer extreme anxiety; away from family and friends, often overwhelmed by uncertainty about why they are held with no idea how to access help. There is no time limit on detention and so they do not know when they will be released. Detainees have told us;

“I feel as if I don’t have anything to live for.”

“I prefer they beat me to put me here with nothing”.

“Detention is a mental torture you taken from your family, placed in prison. Very stressful and depression. Many a detainee think self-harm.”

“I changed my character here; now I’m always angry.”

During Covid many were released to places where they knew no one. They were also extremely isolated.

Whether from detention or after detention we can be contacted on our freephone advertised in the two Centres. Other detained persons, Samaritans, the Chaplaincy also refer people to us. Our staff listen with concern and respect, reducing anxiety and letting people know that we care ; important for people already de-humanised by the system. We invite people to an initial meeting to discover how we can assist. Prior to Covid, we had meetings with 500+, during 2020 this reduced but is now increasing again.

We ask whether people would like have a visitor, one of our 70 trained volunteers who visitor for as long as they are held – a few days, a few weeks or many months. Number having a visitor; 161 pre-Covid and 105 post-Covid.

“We feel the world is against us but in a visit we feel a little bit of the world is on our side.”

“She’s my family, my Mum. When she comes I feel better.”

We offer mobile top-ups, the subject of this application, to enable people to keep in touch with their visitor, with family and friends. Quite often the reason they first contact us is to request a top-up. This starts a relationship that enables us to help in many other ways. Number receiving these is usually 900 p.a. but in last 12 months it was 740.

The mobile phone allows those experiencing detention to contact their visitor in-between visits and allows the visitor to do the same. This is extremely important – it means the visitor knows if they are feeling suicidal or need extra support.

It enables contact with an interpreter prior to a visit. An Arabic speaking volunteer reported, “he didn’t know where he was, he was only 18, stressed and confused and not speaking any English. He relaxed

after finding someone speaking his language and when he got the mobile credit to speak to his family he was very pleased.”

Our staff are not permitted to give legal advice but can explain the system and sign-post other agencies. . They enable access to justice. They refer to immigration solicitors and to the charity Bail for Immigration Detainees and provide information about bail.

When Covid caused many to be released to destitution we provided training so that visitors could ‘visit’ by phone. We raised money to give food vouchers. We gave £30 vouchers to 70 people in last 12 months. The mobile was essential to this service enabling us to know where to send the voucher or enabling recipients to receive the voucher on their phone.

Kindness, friendship at a time of crisis reduces anxiety, increases confidence and improves mental health. Although the person experiencing detention can contact our office on our free phone, our staff and volunteers can only contact them if they have credit on their phone. All our services are dependent on being able to keep in touch.

1.3 Which grant-giving categories does your project fulfil?

E - Work with forced migrants, including internally displaced people

1.3e Work with forced migrants, including internally displaced people

The people we support are asylum seekers (50%) and other migrants held in immigration detention and some post-detention. Most have been forced to leave their country for reasons of violence, persecution or hunger; traumatised by experiences in their home country, their journeys here e.g. crossing the Channel in small boats and the hostile environment here.

1.4 Which country is the project based in?

United Kingdom (GB)

1.5 Will the project continue after initial funding has ended?

Yes

1.5b Please give details of how you plan to continue after initial funding has ended

Mobile top-ups are very important for those detained and for those released, often to a place where they know no one. We will continue this service.

We will make other applications specifically for mobile top-ups. We will use our general funds to meet any shortfall.

1.6 How will the project be monitored and evaluated?

Staff record when top-ups are given so we know number receiving and the total given. Pre Covid we posted an evaluation questionnaire to our service users experiencing detention. When released because of Covid, visitors ‘visited’ by phone and their work was evaluated by staff phoning the person who was now living in the community. Every kind word depended on the phone credit.

“When someone calls you it takes away all your thinking, all your stress”.

2.1 Expenditure

EXPENDITURE ITEM	AMOUNT	NOTES
Mobile top-ups	£14	
	£0	
TOTALS	£14,000	

2.2 Income

INCOME SOURCE	TARGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT RAISED	NOTES
Edith Ellis Charitable Trust	£5	£0	
General funds	£9	£0	Unless applications to other trusts are successful, we will cover this cost
TOTALS	£14,000	£0	

2.3 What is the total amount (in £ sterling) your organisation is requesting from The Edith M Ellis Trust?

£5

2.4 Has your organisation made an application to The Edith M Ellis Trust before?

No

2.5 Please state your organisation's annual turnover (in £ sterling)

£273

2.6 Do you wish to upload your audited accounts or financial statement?

No

2.7 Please tell us where payment should be made if your application is successful

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group
00017696
40-52-40

3.1 Your name

Anna Pincus

3.2 Your contact telephone number

07804 903157

3.3 Your position within the organisation

Director

3.4 Your email address

Anna@gdwg.org

3.5 Organisation name

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group

3.6 Please state the status of your organisation

Registered Charity

3.7 Please summarise what your organisation does

Our core work is emotional and practical support to 1000+ p.a. people experiencing immigration detention at Gatwick: a trained volunteer who visits, mobile top-ups, clothes, information enabling access to justice and post-detention walks in the country with our team of sympathetic walkers. We advocate for change, in particular a time limit on detention, through our Refugee Tales project <http://www.refugeetales.org> During Covid we have started to give food vouchers to those released to destitution.

3.8 UK correspondence address for organisation

The Orchard,
1-2 Gleneagles Court
Brighton Road
Crawley, TH10 6AD

3.9 UK telephone number

01293 657070

3.10 UK charity number (if applicable)

Registered Charity 1124328

3.11 Year established

1996

3.12 Website (if applicable)

<http://www.gdwg.org.uk>

3.13 Social media accounts (if applicable)

<https://www.facebook.com/GatDetainees/>

<https://www.instagram.com/gatwickdetaineeswelfaregroup>

<https://twitter.com/GatDetainees>

4.1 How did you hear about The Edith M Ellis Trust?

Directory of Social Change/Funds Online