



Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary

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President Lord Roger Roberts of Llandudno

LD4SOS Comment on the March 2019 HASC on Immigration Detention: 'Cavalier' Home Office failing in its responsibility for immigration detention

Time after time in recent years reports have come out on Immigration Detention. There has been the All Party Parliamentary Group, two Shaw Reports, and a recent one from the [Joint Committee on Human Rights](#). And yet there is little progress on ending the disgrace of immigration detention.

A [damning report](#) has come out from the cross party [House of Commons Select Committee](#) on Home Affairs (HASC). It has looked into Immigration Detention and the evidence based report is highly critical, often using the word “*drastically*” and “*disgraceful*” to describe what is happening.

It lists, paragraph after paragraph, matters that have supposed to have been improved, but have not. Particularly for those who are vulnerable, not supposed to be detained, and yet still are.

The report condemns lack of transparency, in the Home Office not reporting, or even recording, important information. It condemns the lack of independent oversight in decision making. It condemns decision makers not ever meeting the detainee face to face. In fact it condemns much, and calls for real action for radical change. It asks for progress on ATD (alternatives to detention). All of which we agree with.

We can agree with its statement “*there is rapidly growing consensus on the need for reform*” We call on the Home Office to urgently take steps for that reform, and as Liberal Democrats, we will continue to battle till it is won.

Detention Forum continues its hard work to bring people together to campaign, we are very happy to work with them and endorse their [statement here](#).

A fuller LD4SOS policy briefing on Immigration Detention in the UK is [here](#), but the main points of our existing policy, all of which are called for in the Report, are:

- ✓ **Detention to be subject to judicial review within 72 hours, and to be no more than 28 days overall.**
- ✓ **Detention to be used only as a last resort, for as few days as possible, for as short a time as possible.**
- ✓ **A drastic reduction in the detention estate, which can, and should, be done.**
- ✓ **An end to the detention of all vulnerable people. This includes victims of torture, those with mental illness and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, victims of gender based violence, pregnant women, and people with learning difficulties.**
- ✓ **Alternatives to detention through case-worker support in the community. • Better conditions in both refugee housing and in detention. Whilst welcoming, and supporting all moves for improvements in conditions, we continue to say that the Government must not let small improvements distract attention from there being very little need at all for Immigration Detention.**