



# **Midlands Migrant Support Annual Report 2024**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ending 31st December 2024**

**Registered Charity no: 1174056**

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## 1. A brief history of Midlands Migrant Support

Midlands Migrant Support (MMS) - formerly Morton Hall Visitor's Group - has provided crucial friendship and practical support to people in immigration detention across the East Midlands for the last thirteen years.

Being in immigration detention almost always has a detrimental impact on a person's mental health and wellbeing. But through our network of volunteer visitors, MMS aims to:

- ease the isolation and anxiety experienced by people in detention by providing emotional and practical support;
- signpost to services that offer specialist advice and guidance;
- act as unofficial human rights monitors by observing the conditions in immigration detention and highlighting these realities to the public.

At the same time, we advocate for the rights of detained people and raise public awareness about their plight, as well as the broader legal situation for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. By raising awareness of these issues, we aim to promote more tolerance and understanding in our local communities.

MMS was first formed in 2011 following the conversion of Morton Hall prison in Swinderby, Lincolnshire, to an Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). Our visits continued - supporting hundreds of people at a deeply distressing time in their lives - until Morton Hall closed its doors in August 2021.

Following Morton Hall's closure, its grounds were repurposed into the Swinderby residential short-term holding facility (RSTHF) and HMP Morton Hall, a prison exclusively for 'foreign nationals.'

Swinderby can hold up to 37 men at a time, for a maximum of seven days each. People are normally held in RSTHF facilities for two main reasons: for screening, or as a staging post before removal from the UK. Both of these situations can be extremely stressful for the detained person. The quick turnaround in the facility also marks a departure from the type of befriending services we provided at the IRC, where volunteers built relationships with their clients over a sustained period of time.

We first began offering drop-in sessions at the Swinderby RSTHF shortly after its October 2022 opening. Since then, we have supported over 300 clients as they navigate these challenging circumstances.

In 2024, we were thrilled to finally begin offering our befriending services at HMP Morton Hall. So far, we have supported four clients at the prison and have had one-to-one conversations with more than 15 men serving a sentence at the prison. We look forward to growing our presence at HMP Morton Hall - and providing crucial emotional and practical

support to our clients as they navigate challenging circumstances - in the months and years to come.

Although much has changed in recent years, our group's mission remains constant. MMS will keep doing everything we can to support migrants experiencing detention in the East Midlands, whatever form that might take.



## 2. Chair's Report

2024 has been another year of progress and perseverance for Midlands Migrant Support.

Our focus remained on continuing to build our visiting presence at Swinderby Short-Term Holding Facility and HMP Morton Hall. Fortunately, our determination at HMP Morton Hall has paid off. We officially began offering our visiting service in HMP Morton Hall in July. Already we are seeing our presence grow, as our word-of-mouth reputation leads to an increasing number of referrals into our service.

At the same time, 2024 was not without its challenges. Home Office rules mean we are no longer able to access the common spaces at Swinderby - creating a new layer of difficulty with advertising our services. Our group has been working hard alongside centre management to adapt to these changes and find new ways to spread the word to prospective clients.

The wider national landscape has brought a mixed picture, too. Positively, the government laid legislation to repeal some of the most inhumane elements of the Conservative's assault on our asylum system. More locally, we are thrilled that the local former RAF base Scampton is no longer going to be repurposed as quasi-detention accommodation for asylum seekers.

Yet still, there is work to be done. That same legislation includes provisions to make it easier to put people in immigration detention - making clear the need for groups like ours continue.

As always, the trustees are extremely grateful to the team behind MMS. Gemma Goodwin has continued to be the driving force behind much of our success. We were thrilled to welcome a new Project Coordinator, Mima Alayej, to the team this Autumn as Gemma's job share partner. Mima has gotten off to a flying start, and we are so excited to see what she achieves in the years to come.

Our volunteer visitors remain the heart of our group, and I would like to say a huge thank you to each and every one of you. Your dedication and hard work never goes unnoticed. We are equally thankful to our bookkeeper Cassie, and our examiner of accounts, Carly Bell. Similarly, we were lucky to welcome long-time volunteer Anas Yaghi to our trustee board this year.

Throughout the change, Midlands Migrant Support will continue adapting to meet whatever need presents itself in our community. And we will do whatever we can to provide friendship, solidarity and support to those who need it.

Carey Roach  
Chair, Midlands Migrant Support

### 3. Coordinator's Report

It's been a full and eventful year—rich with new experiences, valuable learning, meaningful connections, and the inevitable challenges that come with growth.

Our volunteer team has continued to expand, bringing with it a broader range of skills, languages, and personalities which will enrich our group and the visits we carry out. We're incredibly fortunate to work alongside such committed and passionate individuals. Their dedication to supporting people facing the hardship of detention is nothing short of inspiring.

Being a volunteer visitor is no easy task. It often involves emotionally demanding situations and complex dynamics, yet our volunteers show up time and time again—with empathy, resilience, and unwavering commitment. They not only give their time to visit those in detention, but also actively participate in group meetings and embrace both internal and external training opportunities to grow in their roles. Their willingness to support one another and continually develop as a team is a testament to the strength and spirit of this community. We want to take this opportunity to say a really big thank you to each and every one of them.

As always, our trustee board has been an incredible source of support. We're deeply grateful for their guidance, expertise, and patience—they continue to play a vital role in helping us navigate challenges and grow as an organisation. Thank you!

After much back and forth, we were finally able to launch our visits to HMP Morton Hall, beginning with a mix of large group sessions and one-to-one conversations with potential clients. This marks an exciting milestone for us, made possible by a great deal of behind-the-scenes work and coordination.

Although changes at Swinderby meant we were no longer able to run our drop-in sessions within the communal areas, we remain committed to finding meaningful ways to offer support within the centre. Rather than stepping back, we've adapted our approach - delivering staff training sessions to raise awareness of the challenges faced by the men in detention and to highlight the ways we can offer support. We've also worked to maintain our visibility within the centre by displaying posters and key information throughout the site. We're continuing to explore new and meaningful ways to stay connected and provide support wherever possible.

We were pleased to learn that the proposed open detention facility for asylum seekers at Scampton, which we had been preparing for, will no longer be going ahead following the change in government. While this marks a significant shift, our commitment to supporting people in our community remains unchanged. We're now looking forward to exploring new opportunities to provide support beyond detention settings and continue advocating for more compassionate and community-based approaches.

Gemma Goodwin & Mima Alayej  
Project Coordinators, Midlands Migrant Support

## 4. Activities, Achievement and Performance

### Responding to Change

This year, MMS continued with the strategy agreed by the Trustees in 2022 to focus on delivering our services at two local centres: the Swinderby RSTHF and HMP Morton Hall.

In the first half of 2024, our visiting network at Swinderby RSTHF continued to grow. On average, we offered drop-in sessions for Swinderby residents twice weekly. However, significant change came in May when Home Office rules meant we could no longer access the communal spaces at Swinderby.

Traditionally, we hosted our drop-in sessions in the communal living areas where residents were more likely to already be spending time, allowing potential clients to organically interact with our services. However, following the rule changes our drop-in sessions now take place in visiting rooms separate from these communal areas. Centre staff now enter the communal areas on our behalf to ask prospective clients if they wanted a visitor.

This has created new challenges with advertising our services to potential clients. As a result, we have seen take-up of our sessions sadly fall.

In response, we spent the second half of 2024 working with the centre management and staff to overcome these barriers. Our actions included:

- Lobbying centre and Home Office management to reconsider their decision, explaining the impact it was having on our service. This included writing a letter and attending a meeting with a Home Office representative in September 2024;
- Designing new posters advertising our services to be provided in every bedroom at Swinderby; and
- Developing training to be provided to all Swinderby staff explaining our services, with the aim of enabling them to raise awareness of MMS amongst potential clients on our behalf. This will continue to be delivered in early 2025.

We are hopeful that with these new measures, MMS will be able to continue making a positive impact at Swinderby RSTHF.

Meanwhile, our presence in HMP Morton Hall has grown significantly. In January, following several years of negotiations regarding access, we received the go-ahead from management to begin offering our services.

HMP Morton Hall is a prison exclusively for ‘foreign nationals’, which includes people detained both under immigration powers and those serving custodial sentences. Preparing to deliver our services included lengthy security vetting processes for our volunteers, as well as upskilling to understand the nuances of visiting in a prison environment and ensure we are offering the best possible, tailored support.



MMS were delighted to make our first visit at Morton Hall in April. We have been working hard since then to grow awareness of our group and build a positive word-of-mouth reputation. We continue to enjoy a productive relationship with prison management and look forward to expanding our presence at the prison in the coming year.

At the same time, we also continued to respond to evolving needs in our local area - whether preparing for a possible asylum accommodation site at the former RAF station Scampton, or exploring other opportunities to support migrants living in our community.

### Volunteers

Our volunteers - visitors, trustees and people who support with essential administrative activities - remain the key to MMS' success. We extend our thanks for their continued commitment to our cause.

In 2024, we had a dedicated network of 9 active volunteer visitors who regularly facilitated our visiting sessions at Swinderby and HMP Morton Hall. We were also delighted to welcome three new volunteers to our group this year.

However, keeping our existing volunteers engaged remained a priority throughout 2024 - particularly in light of reduced visiting opportunities at Swinderby. This has been facilitated by our Project Coordinators, who ran three volunteer meetings to share best practice and provide peer support to visitors.



A highlight of this was a special event in September which brought together MMS volunteers, trustees and staff in-person for the first time in over a year. At the event, we celebrated our achievements, shared learnings from the year, built closer partnerships across the organisations and fostered a shared sense of purpose. We also took part in training exercises delivered by our esteemed trustee colleague, Dr Clara Della Croce, who shared her expertise on visiting in prisons.

Volunteers are also kept engaged through our regular newsletters, which brings together important news and contributions from members.

Our trustee board remains strong, with 5 active trustees who help out with day-to-day activities alongside their strategic responsibilities.



We also recruited a new volunteer administrator this summer, who has helped to ensure that MMS' day-to-day operations keep running smoothly, from triaging referrals to managing our volunteer inbox. She is also responsible for responding to new volunteer applications.

### Visits

MMS ran 53 drop-in sessions at Swinderby RSTHF this year, supporting 149 clients in total from a range of nationalities. We recorded visiting people from over 22 nationalities, with Albanian and Romanian making up the majority of our clients.

The support we provided at these visits took a variety of forms - ranging from a friendly chat, offering more specific emotional support, to providing money for mobile phone top-ups. We also assisted with communications with centre management, and made referrals to other charities for further support.

At each visit, we sought to offer our services to every individual detained at the centre. However, this became challenging in May 2024 when informed by centre management that our access would be limited to the reception area due to Home Office rules.

We will continue to monitor visit requests and work with management to ensure that people held at Swinderby RSTHF are able to access our services.

Alongside our work at Swinderby RSTHF, we are delighted to report that we have established a visitor service at HMP Morton Hall for both people detained under immigration powers and for other non British nationals serving custodial sentences. This required volunteers to undertake security vettings and attend the prison to verify their identity.

As a result, in 2024, we visited the prison on 8 occasions - supporting one client with regular visits and running drop-in style clinics, where we supported 14 other individuals. We also distributed promotional materials to raise awareness of our service and generate referrals.

Since establishing our visiting service at HMP Morton Hall, we have also been working tirelessly with other visitor groups and NGOs across the UK to ensure relevant organisations are aware of our agreement with HMP Morton Hall and are able to easily refer their clients detained at the prison to us, should they wish to receive visits from our volunteers. In 2024, we received referrals from Lincolnshire Action Trust and Medical Justice.

### Training

As we continued to adjust to visiting in a short-term holding facility and prison - as opposed to an IRC where MMS have traditionally operated - training to ensure that our visitors were equipped to properly support our clients remained a priority.

For Morton Hall, we developed and delivered specific training for our volunteers that helped

them understand the nuances of prison regimes and how this differs to IRCs and RSTHFs.

We continue to offer full induction training for new volunteers alongside the opportunity to shadow visits. We delivered this training for 3 new volunteers throughout the year.

In addition to the training designed and delivered by our team, in 2024 members of MMS also participated in:

- Safeguarding training;
- Legal training delivered by AVID and Wilson's Solicitors;
- Deep Dive on Lived Experience Reimbursement & Recruitment;
- Understanding Trauma training;
- Safeguarding and Self Harm online training via 'Me Learning' platform; and
- Training delivered by Right to Remain on 'Thinking with our communities - detention and beyond detention'.



The learnings from these training sessions were then shared throughout our organisation.

### Partnership Work

Much of our partnership work has continued to occur through the AVID network, who act as a consortium for visitor groups across the immigration detention NGO community in the UK. Highlights of this work include:

- Attending AVID's monthly member calls and regular deep dives learning sessions into specific topics;
- Sharing best practice with other visitor groups that work in prison environments;
- Taking advantage of training opportunities offered by AVID; and
- Collaborating with AVID's team of experts to respond to the specific tasks and challenges facing MMS.

Beyond AVID, we have continued membership of Clinks.

Our new work at HMP Morton Hall has also proven a fantastic opportunity to re-establish ties with NGOs such as Medical Justice and Bail for Immigration Detention. These ties have allowed us to raise awareness of MMS' offering and cultivate a strong referral network that is enabling our service to better reach those who need it.

In the first half of the year, we continued to work with other community organisations via the Scampton Alliance to prepare for the possibility of a local RAF station being repurposed to

house asylum seekers. This included attending meetings and mapping out plans for a befriending service we could offer to residents at Scampton.

However, further change came this summer when we received the positive news that the new Labour government has scrapped these plans.

As a result, we spent the last few months of 2024 exploring other opportunities to expand MMS' presence and ability to make a positive impact in our local community. This centred around the possibility of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

We have been working alongside partners such as a local college to begin the early stages of planning what this could look like - including through brainstorming what services we could offer and holding consultation meetings to better understand the local need.

### Organisational Profile

This year, we continued working to raise MMS' profile across our local area with the aim of raising awareness of our projects, forging new local partnerships, and drumming up interest from potential volunteers.

In November, we gave a presentation to the local Women's Institute about our organisation, which was received positively.



### Fundraising

Grants received in 2024 comprised £650 from the Marsh Charitable Trust, £2,000 from Yapp Charitable Trust, £5,000 from 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, and £19,580 from the National Lottery Fund. The National Lottery Fund grant is for a two-year period.

## 5. Trustees' report

The trustees for the year ending 31st December 2024 and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

Name	Position	Dates
Carey Roach	Chair	Appointed March 2022
Cassandra Taylor	Treasurer	Co-Opted September 2022
Bethan Godley	Trustee	Co-Opted July 2022
Clara Della Croce	Trustee	Co-Opted August 2022
Erika Loggin	Trustee	Co-Opted October 2022 Resigned May 2024
Anas Yaghi	Trustee	Co-Opted July 2024

### Charity number

Charity number 1174056. The charity was registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales on 1 August 2017.

### Registered and principal address

Transform Lincoln  
Bridge Central, Portland Street  
Lincoln  
LN5 7NN

### Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd  
25 Kings Hill Avenue  
Kings Hill  
West Malling  
Kent  
ME19 4JQ

### Structure, governance and management

MMS is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that is governed by a constitution adopted on the 1 August 2017

### Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are appointed by the members at the AGM, or co-opted by the rest of the trustee board.

### **Our objectives**

For the public benefit, to relieve the needs of people in detention in the East Midlands who are suffering financial hardship, distress or are otherwise in need by providing emotional support, advocacy and practical support, particularly through - but not limited to - the provision of a trained visiting network.

### **Our main activities**

1. Through a network of trained volunteers, we visit and support people in detention in the Midlands, whether held indefinitely under immigration powers or non-British nationals who are serving custodial sentences.
2. We advocate for the rights of detained people and raise public awareness about their plight, as well as the broader legal situation for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK.

### **Public Benefit Statement**

Our main activities and who we aim to help are described above. All our charitable activities are focused on supporting people in detention and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, our Trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and in particular the prevention and relief of need.

### **Achievements and performance**

Please see Section 4 for a summary of our achievements and performance in 2024.

### **Financial Review**

We started the year with £4,758.20 in the bank. The net receipts for the year were £27,310.36 and the net payments were £14,168.62 - as well as £426.80 in liabilities, which were payments due following the end of the 2024 calendar year that have now all been made.

Grants received in 2024 comprised £650 from The Marsh Charitable Trust, £2,000 from The Yapp Charitable Trust, £5,000 from the 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust and £19,580 from the National Lottery Fund. We also received £19.16 in interest from our bank account. At the end of the year, our closing balance was £18,757.26, with a further £112 in petty cash.

The main item of expenditure was staff wages, which totalled £10,094.13. For the first half of the year, we employed one part-time member of staff, but hired a second member of staff in September.

Other significant items of expenditure were travel and expenses for both staff and volunteers, which came to £1079.37. We continued to employ a bookkeeper to handle our accounts and

pay for a monthly payroll service, totalling £1,059.80 in professional fees.

### **Reserves Policy**

Last year, we adopted a 'reserves policy' which sought to ensure sufficient reserves are maintained to cover the winding up costs should it be desirable or necessary to cease activity. These will be sufficient to cover staff redundancies, utility costs and any professional fees likely to be incurred. The reserves target has been met for 2024.

**Signed on behalf of the trustees:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carey Roach', written in a cursive style.

Carey Roach  
Chair  
Signed: 8th April 2025

## 6. Independent Examiner's Report

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of: Midlands Migrant Support**  
**Registered Charity number: 1174056**  
**The Sycamore Centre, 33A Hungerhill Road, St Anns, Nottingham NG3 4NB**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Midlands Migrant Support, for the year ended 31 December 2024.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible but not required, to be subject to an independent examination, it is my responsibility to examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 of the Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts did not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Carly Bell  
XEML0000019288  
Simpson Accounting and Payroll Services  
Antrim Road  
Lincoln  
LN5 8TF



## 7. Receipts and Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024

				2024			2023
<b>Receipts</b>							
	Donations			61.20			0
	Grants			27,230			15,548
		Marsh Charitable Trust	650		Evan Cornish Foundation	5,000	
		Yapp Charitable Trust	2,000		National Lottery Fund	9,998	
		29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	5,000		Marsh Charitable Trust	550	
		National Lottery Fund	19,580				
	Interest received			19.16			21.47
<b>Total receipts</b>				<b>27,310.36</b>			<b>15,569.47</b>
<b>Payments</b>							
	Wages, NI, Pensions & Payroll		10,094.13			11,303.32	
	Bank charges		126.83			60	
	Insurance		432.25			409.37	
	Office/Admin		450.76			78.25	
	Visitors Travel/Expenses		262.15			321.29	
	Staff Travel/Expenses		817.22			1,538.21	
	Membership/Subscriptions		229.60			104.39	
	Advertising		695.88			1,077.63	
	Equipment		0			0	
	Events		0			35	

	Professional fees		1,059.80			1,020.40	
<b>Total payments</b>				<b>14,168.62</b>			<b>15,912.86</b>
<b>Surplus</b>				<b>12,714.94</b>			<b>-343.39</b>
<b>Statement of Assets and Liabilities</b>				<b>2024</b>			<b>2023</b>
	Cash in bank			18,757.26			4,758.20
	Cash in hand			112			112
	Less liabilities due in year			426.80			
<b>Total</b>				<b>18,442.46</b>			<b>4870.20</b>
	Represented by bank balance b/f			5,188.72			6229.37
	Cash in hand b/f			112			112
	Surplus income over expenditure			18,330.46			-1471.17

## Notes

### *Basis of accounting*

The trustees have taken advantage of section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 and have prepared the accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

### *Taxation*

As a registered charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.