



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

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Yarl's Wood Immigration Detention Centre

Thank you for contacting me about the Yarl's Wood protests.

Ensuring that individuals abide by immigration rules is an essential part of an effective immigration system. This includes individuals leaving the UK if they have no lawful basis to remain. While it is preferable that those with no right to remain in the UK leave voluntarily, and measures are in place to assist those who wish to do so, this does not always happen, and detention is therefore an important tool.

The dignity and welfare of all individuals detained is crucial, and any decision to detain is made on a case-by-case basis, taking into account individual circumstances. Home Office officials work with any individual with no right to be in the UK, including those at Yarl's Wood and in the community, to assist with their return if they decide to leave the UK. 95 per cent of people without the right to be here are managed in the community and most people detained under immigration powers spend only very short periods in detention.

In 2017, 92 per cent of people were detained for four months or less, and nearly two thirds were detained for less than a month. As well as regular reviews of detention, individuals can apply for bail at any time.

The provision of 24-hour, seven-day-a-week healthcare in all immigration removal centres ensures that detainees have ready access to medical professionals and levels of primary care in line with individuals in the community. Any detainees who choose to refuse food or fluid, including the reducing number of residents at Yarl's Wood who are currently refusing food, are closely monitored by on-site healthcare professionals. We must continue to protect the welfare and dignity of those in detention, and I will always seek to make sure we set the highest standards to ensure the safety and well-being of detainees.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP