

UK Detention Centres Factsheet (September 2016)

It can be hard to keep track of the shadowy world of the Home Office's immigration detention centres, where over 3,000 people are locked up. The Home Office has recently announced the closure of two immigration detention centres, Cedars and Dungavel, but said less about the fact that others are being expanded. Meanwhile, in a system largely run by private security corporations, two major contracts held by G4S and Tascor are up for re-tender. This factsheet gives an overview of the main sites and companies involved at the current time.

As of September 2016, the Home Office has 12 migration prisons:

- **Nine long-term “Immigration Removal Centres” (IRCs)** where adults can be detained indefinitely. These are: Colnbrook and Harmondsworth near Heathrow airport; Brook House and Tinsley House at Gatwick Airport; Campsfield House in Oxfordshire, Dungavel House in Lanarkshire (which is set to close), Morton Hall in Lincolnshire, The Verne in Dorset, and Yarl's Wood in Bedfordshire.ⁱ
- **One “pre-departure accommodation” (PDA) centre: Cedars**, near Gatwick, where families with children are held for up to one week. This is now closing.
- **Two stand-alone “residential short term holding facilities” (RSTHFs)**, where adults can be held for up to one week. These are Larne House in Antrim and Pennine House at Manchester Airport. (There is also another RSHTF within the Yarl's Wood complex.) A new short term facility is planned near Glasgow Airport, partially replacing Dungavel House.
- NB: this list does not include another 30-plus “non-residential” holding centres where people are detained for short periods.

A number of major changes have recently been announced. These are the main ones we are aware of:

- **On 21 July 2016 the government announced that Cedars will close.** A new unit for families with children will open in Tinsley House IRC.ⁱⁱ
- **On 8 September, the government announced that Dungavel will close.** A new “short term holding facility” will open near Glasgow airport.ⁱⁱⁱ
- These closures follow the shutting of two other detention centres in 2015: Dover IRC in November 2015; and Haslar IRC in March 2015. The number of detention centres is currently falling, but existing centres are being expanded.
- The Home Office has contracted Wates Construction to **expand the Gatwick Detention Centres (Brook House and Tinsley House) by a reported 100 places.**^{iv}
- **Two important contracts are currently up for re-tender:** management of the Gatwick detention centres (Brook House and Tinsley House)^v; and “escorting and travel services”, which includes most “short-term holding facilities”.^{vi}

A few overall figures:

- **Around 3,000 people are held in immigration detention centres at any one time.** A

few hundred more immigration detainees are held in the general prison system: 363 people as of 28 March 2016. Most people are inside for less than 29 days (63% of those leaving detention between March 2015 and March 2016); but several hundred are held for over a year (292 of those leaving detention in that period, of whom 43 had been in detention for two years or longer.) Altogether, over 32,000 people were put in detention in the 12 months up to March 2016, including 110 children.^{vii}

- **The numbers of detainees has gone down slightly over the last year.** At the end of March 2016, there were 2,925 people in detention, 16% lower than the 3,483 detained at the end of March 2015. The drop may relate to the closing of two detention centres (Haslar and Dover) in 2015, as well as changes to the “detained fast track” system of automatically detaining many asylum seekers while their cases are heard, which was ruled illegal in 2015.^{viii}
- However, this may not be a long-run trend. In March 2015 the Government shelved a plan to more than double the size of Campsfield IRC.^{ix} But since then it has been carrying out building work to expand the capacity of other IRCs, and we can’t assume there won’t be new IRCs on the cards.

Private Contractors:

- **Seven out of nine IRCs are currently run by private companies.** The companies are Mitie (Colnbrook, Harmondsworth, Campsfield House); G4S (Brook House, Tinsley House); Serco (Yarl's Wood); GEO (Dungavel). The remaining two (Morton Hall and The Verne) are run by the state (Her Majesty's Prison Service – HMPS).
- G4S also runs Cedars, with “children's services” provided by charity Barnardo's.
- Another private company, Tascor, runs the two stand-alone “Residential Short Term Holding Facilities” (RSHTFs). It also runs the large majority of over 30 non-residential SHTFs, where people are usually (but not always) held for less than 24 hours. This is as part of the major overall contract for “escorting and travel services”, which is currently up for re-tender.
- Other private companies have contracts for healthcare services, cleaning, and more. Some of these are detailed below.

Detention Centre details:

Heathrow centres:

- Colnbrook IRC

A4 Bath Road/Colnbrook by-pass, UB7 0FX

Capacity of 369 males and 29 females.^x

Opened in August 2004.

Currently run by Mitie (contract 2014-2022).^{xi}

Healthcare: Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL).^{xii}

Colnbrook is the highest security detention centre, built to the same standards as a Category B prison.

NB: there was formerly also a separate Short Term Holding Facility at Colnbrook, this has now closed.

- Harmondsworth IRC

A4 Bath Road/Colnbrook by-pass, UB7 0FX

Capacity of 676 male detainees.^{xiii} The largest UK detention centre.

Currently run by Mitie (contract 2014-2022, previously GEO).^{xiv}

Healthcare: Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL).^{xv}

Gatwick centres:

- Brook House IRC

Perimeter Road South, Gatwick airport, RH6 0PQ

Opened 2009.

Current capacity of approximately 448 male detainees.^{xvi}

Currently run by G4S.

The contract for the management of the Gatwick detention centres is due to expire in 2017 and is currently being re-tendered.^{xvii}

Healthcare: G4S Medical.^{xviii}

In 2015 building contracts for “construction of additional accommodation at Brook and Tinsley houses” were awarded to Mott MacDonald and Currie Brown.^{xix}

Brook House is now being expanded by 60 places.^{xx} The £1.7 million construction contract, which began in August 2016 and is due to end in November 2017, has been awarded to Wates Construction.^{xxi}

- Tinsley House IRC

Perimeter Road South, Gatwick airport, RH6 0PQ.

Capacity of approximately 119 male detainees and 35 family members.^{xxii}

Currently run by G4S.

The contract for the management of the Gatwick detention centres is due to expire in 2017 and is currently being re-tendered.^{xxiii}

Healthcare: G4S.^{xxiv}

Cleaning contracted to Aramark.^{xxv}

In 2015 building contracts for “construction of additional accommodation at Brook and Tinsley houses” were awarded to Mott MacDonald and Currie Brown.^{xxvi}

Tinsley House is now being expanded by 40 places.^{xxvii} The £1.7 million construction contract, which began in August 2016 and is due to end in November 2017, has been awarded to Wates Construction.^{xxviii}

- Cedars

Brighton Road, Pease Pottage, RH11 9AD

'Pre-departure accommodation' for families with children.

Run by G4S.

'Children's services' are provided by children's charity Barnardo's.^{xxxix}

NB: On 21/7/2016 the Immigration Minister announced that Cedars will close, instead a new family unit will be opened at Tinsley House.^{xxx} Barnardo's issued a statement the same day criticising the plan, which suggests that they won't be part of the new arrangement.^{xxxi}

Elsewhere:

- Campsfield House

Langford Lane, Kidlington, Oxon, OX5 1RE

Capacity of 282 male prisoners (recently expanded from 276).^{xxxii}

Opened as IRC in 1993, before that it was a young offenders' prison.

Run by Mitie.^{xxxiii}

Health services run by Care UK (taken over from The Practice PLC, contract awarded April 2016).^{xxxiv}

- Dungavel House

Strathaven, South Lanarkshire, ML10 6RF

Capacity of 249: 235 male, 14 female.

Originally an aristocratic hunting lodge, later a prison, opened as an IRC in 2001.^{xxxv}

Run by GEO.

Healthcare provided by NHS Lanarkshire.^{xxxvi}

The Home Office has now announced that Dungavel House will close. A new short term facility will be built next to Glasgow Airport, and detainees are likely to be moved from there to detention centres in England.^{xxxvii}

- Morton Hall

Swinderby, Lincolnshire, LN6 9PT

Capacity of 392 males.^{xxxviii}

Opened as IRC in 2011, previously various other kinds of prison for men, women and youth since 1958.

Run by Her Majesty's Prison Service (HMPS).

However, "Facilities Management", which includes responsibility for works, maintenance and stores, was contracted-out to Amey plc in June 2015.^{xxxix}

Healthcare: Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (replacing G4S).^{xl}

Education services provided by Lincoln College.^{xli}

- The Verne

Isle of Portland, Dorset, DT5 1EQ

Built on an island, an old prison from the 1840s. Reopened as a migration prison in 2014.

Capacity of 580 male prisoners.

Run by HMPS.

Health services run by Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust (DHUFT).^{xlii}

Provision of recycling bins in 2015 by Leafield Environmental Ltd. ^{xliii}

- Yarl's Wood

Twinwoods Business Park, Thurleigh Road, Milton Ernest, Bedford MK44 1FD

Purpose built as an IRC, opened in 2001.

Average occupancy 349, women and adult families.^{xliv}

Run by Serco (contract 2014-2023).^{xlv}

Healthcare: G4S.^{xlvi}

There is also a “residential short term holding facility” where 38 males can be held for up to a week.^{xlvii}

Residential Short Term Holding Facilities (RSTHFs)

In these short-term detention centres, adults can be held for up to one week: seven days if removal directions issued, otherwise five days. Technically, there are three such facilities: one for male prisoners, which is part of the Yarl's Wood IRC complex; and the two stand-alone facilities described below.

- Larne House

2 Hope Street, Larne, Antrim, BT40 1UR

Formerly a police station cellblock.

Capacity of 19, male and female.

Run by Tascor.^{xlviii}

- Pennine House

Room 1506-1510, Terminal 2, Manchester Airport, M90 4AG

Capacity of 32, male and female.

Run by Tascor.^{xlix}

NB: confusingly, these two RSTHFs are also on the Home Office's list of “IRCs” on its website.

Along with the closure of Dungavel House, the Home Office has announced plans to build a new Short Term Holding Facility in Abbotsinch Road beside Glasgow Airport, with 51 places. This will require planning permission from Renfrewshire council.¹

Short Term Holding Facilities (STHFs) / “holding rooms”

There are also over 30 other “short term holding facilities”. These are, on the whole, small complexes of cells, either at ports or at reporting centres (where asylum seekers and other migrants have to “sign on” at regular intervals). People are usually held for less than 24 hours;

however, large numbers have been kept for several days in the busy holding centres at Dover and Folkestone ports.^{li}

Three are in France: at Calais port, Coquelles (by the Eurotunnel), and Dunkerque.

Tascor currently runs the majority of holding centres. However the STHFs at Dunkerques, Cardiff, Bristol and Longport Freight Shed (Folkestone) are run directly by Home Office staff.^{lii}

The contract to “manage detainees” at STHFs, as part of the big £500 million contract to run “escorting and travel” services, is currently up for re-tender.^{liii}

ⁱ<https://www.gov.uk/immigration-removal-centre/overview>

ⁱⁱ<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-07-21/HCWS114>

ⁱⁱⁱ[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-37307435;](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-37307435)
<http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/blogs/dungavels-demise-is-welcome-but-now-we-must-stop-its>

^{iv}<http://detentionforum.org.uk/another-100-beds-at-gatwick-site-expansion-by-stealth/>

^v<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/d0f3ed51-4746-4971-b619-d57c322db7c3>

^{vi}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/a7893eef-3df8-4ce9-8b41-ace6986f02f6>

^{vii}<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2016/detention>

^{viii}[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2016/detention;](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2016/detention) <http://detentionaction.org.uk/campaigns/end-the-fast-track-to-despair/legal-challenge>

^{ix}<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-31851365>

^x<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Heathrow-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xi}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/6f06e335-cd7d-4bca-9514-43af3602385a>

^{xii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Heathrow-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xiii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Heathrow-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xiv}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/6f06e335-cd7d-4bca-9514-43af3602385a>

^{xv}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Heathrow-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xvi}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/d0f3ed51-4746-4971-b619-d57c322db7c3;>

^{xvii}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/d0f3ed51-4746-4971-b619-d57c322db7c3>

^{xviii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Brook-House-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xix} <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/99393270-0466-4019-bd1d-3a7eae9824c5;>
<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/fbdd92b1-d573-4a69-8cc6-46037c17c445;>
<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/c6e8fdf2-2e4f-47d4-8d2e-75ce5a4f3095>

^{xx}<http://detentionforum.org.uk/another-100-beds-at-gatwick-site-expansion-by-stealth/>

^{xxi}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/0a595539-b76e-4296-8987-6ac7233bc2d7>

^{xxii}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/d0f3ed51-4746-4971-b619-d57c322db7c3>

^{xxiii}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/d0f3ed51-4746-4971-b619-d57c322db7c3>

^{xxiv} www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/.../Tinsley-House-IRC-2015.pdf

^{xxv} www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/.../Tinsley-House-IRC-2015.pdf

^{xxvi} <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/99393270-0466-4019-bd1d-3a7eae9824c5;>
<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/fbdd92b1-d573-4a69-8cc6-46037c17c445;>
<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/c6e8fdf2-2e4f-47d4-8d2e-75ce5a4f3095>

^{xxvii}<http://detentionforum.org.uk/another-100-beds-at-gatwick-site-expansion-by-stealth/>

^{xxviii}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/0a595539-b76e-4296-8987-6ac7233bc2d7>

^{xxix}<https://network23.org/barnardosout/>

^{xxx}<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-07-21/HCWS114>

^{xxxi}https://www.barnardos.org.uk/news/Barnardos-statement-on-Cedars-accommodation/press_releases.htm?ref=117378

^{xxxii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Campsfield-House-2015.pdf>

^{xxxiii}<http://www.mitie.com/services/specialist-services/custodial-services/immigration-services>

^{xxxiv}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/7ce89b1d-5a12-4f9a-a07f-ad42946e3911>

^{xxxv}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Dungavel-2015.pdf>

^{xxxvi}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Morton-Hall-2015.pdf>

^{xxxvii}<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-37307435>;
<http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/blogs/dungavels-demise-is-welcome-but-now-we-must-stop-its>

^{xxxviii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Morton-Hall-2015.pdf>

^{xxxix}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Morton-Hall-2015.pdf>

^{xl}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/296bfa88-f382-401d-92ab-911a9ba5a54c>

^{xli}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Morton-Hall-2015.pdf>

^{xlii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/The-Verne-2015.pdf>

^{xliiii}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/1685cef4-4579-4894-a9f1-e57f74adb999>

^{xliv}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Yarls-Wood-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xlv}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/02227540-2d38-461a-b53c-d344f8738ab9>

^{xlvi}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Yarls-Wood-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xlvii}<http://www.imb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Yarls-Wood-IRC-2015.pdf>

^{xlviii}<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/06/Larne-House-web2016.pdf>

^{xlix}<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/05/Pennine-House-web-2016.pdf>

^l<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-37307435>;
<http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/blogs/dungavels-demise-is-welcome-but-now-we-must-stop-its>

^{li}<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/03/2015-Longport-Dover-Seaport-and-Frontier-web-2015.pdf>

^{lii}<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/a-review-of-short-term-holding-facility-inspections-2011-2015/>

^{liii}<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/a7893eef-3df8-4ce9-8b41-ace6986f02f6>