

**Press release**

**Hearings to commence for the Brook House Inquiry**

The Brook House Inquiry, which was established to investigate the mistreatment of individuals detained at Brook House Immigration Removal Centre, will commence its first phase of public hearings on 23 November 2021.

The hearings will focus on the experience of those within Brook House, including hearing statements from formerly detained individuals about mistreatment that took place at Brook House. The Inquiry will hear from Callum Tulley who secretly filmed the mistreatment shown in the BBC Panorama programme "*Under-Cover: Britain's Immigration Secrets*". The hearings will begin with introductory remarks by the Chair, Kate Eves, and an opening statement from Counsel to the Inquiry, Brian Altman QC. The Inquiry will also hear from a range of Non-Governmental Organisations.

Chaired by Kate Eves, an independent investigator with over 20 years' experience in the detention field, the Inquiry aims to provide a clear picture of what happened to those detained at Brook House between 1 April and 31 August 2017 and make recommendations that will help prevent anything like it from happening again.

Speaking about the upcoming hearings, Eves said:

"These important hearings will provide formerly detained individuals and others with experience of life at Brook House with the opportunity to inform the Inquiry about their experiences. I am pleased that a range of witnesses have come forward to assist our work. Sharing their evidence will be critical in helping the Inquiry build a clear picture of what happened in Brook House during that time, ensuring that the Inquiry can answer the important questions raised by the Panorama documentary and make recommendations to prevent a recurrence of such events.

To help me establish what happened at Brook House and what caused, or contributed to, the mistreatment, I have appointed three experts to examine culture, clinical issues and Use of Force, which are key areas of consideration for the Inquiry."

The hearings will commence from 10am on 23 November at the Inquiry's hearing centre within the International Dispute Resolution Centre, near St Paul's Cathedral. Hearings can be attended in person or livestreamed on the [Inquiry's YouTube channel](#). If you do want to attend in person, please let us know in advance so that the Inquiry can allocate you space. Please also let us know if you would like to access the press facilities (where use of IT and phones is permitted) and we will make arrangements for this.

A transcript will be uploaded to the Inquiry website following each day's hearings. Details of upcoming and previous hearings will be available through the Inquiry's website.

### **About the Chair, Kate Eves**

Kate was appointed as Chair to the Brook House Inquiry in November 2019. She has over 20 years' experience in the detention field, both in the UK and the United States. Kate has worked with HM Inspectorate of Prisons, the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, the Forum for Preventing Deaths in Custody and HM Prison Service, where she led on the national strategy for reducing prison violence.

An independent investigator, Kate has directly supervised over 200 investigations into deaths in prison custody. She has served as Secretary to two cross-government committees on violence prevention and has trained corrections staff on issues relating to jail and prison safety. Kate has worked directly with prisoners and detainees in solitary confinement and with the families of those who have died in custody.

### **About Lead Counsel to the Inquiry, Brian Altman QC**

Brian Altman QC was appointed as Lead Counsel to the Brook House Inquiry in April 2021. He has extensive inquiry experience, having been appointed as Lead Counsel to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in January 2017. Brian has had a long and successful career as Leading Counsel in the most serious and high-profile criminal cases. He was called to the Bar in 1981 and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2008.

### **About the Experts**

Professor Mary Bosworth is the Director of the Centre for Criminology and Fellow of St Cross College at the University of Oxford. She has been asked to examine the staff and management structure, arrangements, and culture at Brook House and to consider whether issues of gender, race and language played any part in any mistreatment of detainees.

Dr James Hard has been appointed to focus on clinical issues. He has been asked to examine the medical records of individual detainees and will also look at clinical provision more widely. He is a GP with substantial experience of clinical practice within the detained environment and has a particular interest in substance misuse.

Mr Jonathan Collier has been appointed to assist in respect of the 'Use of Force' at Brook House. He is an expert in the use of force in custodial settings, with over 25 years' experience as a use of force instructor in prisons and immigration detention environments.