



Asylum Seekers and Refugees

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The Newsflash is a bi-monthly round up of publications, information, events, funding and jobs relating to asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers for anyone who wants to keep up to date with the latest developments.

The newsflash is produced by the East of England Local Government Association - Strategic Migration Partnership.

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Asylum Seekers and Refugees – including refugee resettlement

ARP: Afghan Resettlement Programme

This [guidance](#) sets out details of the Afghan Resettlement Programme (ARP), which brings together existing Afghan resettlement schemes in to a single programme including the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS).

From the spring 2025, all arrivals on the Afghan Resettlement Programme will be provided with transitional accommodation for up to 9 months. This will be a mixture of serviced accommodation, hotels, and the continued but reduced use of Ministry of Defence (MOD) barracks across the country.

The UK Government will continue to fund and offer settled housing to support half of these arrivals – those who are the hardest to house. This will be through capital funding, community sponsorship and some MOD Service Family Accommodation (SFA).

Under ARP, local authorities will be able to claim £24,110 per arrival over three years, replacing the former integration tariff of £20,520 per arrival. The new tariff now incorporates transitional accommodation wraparound support funding, housing and homelessness support, Flexible Housing Fund, and Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness Support Funds, which are no longer available as separate funding pots outside of the new single, unified tariff. Funding Instructions providing more detail on this funding are due to be published soon.

Ukraine Schemes

Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme

For Ukrainian individuals who have been given permission to be in the UK under one of the Ukraine Schemes, they are now able to apply under the [Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme](#) for a further 18 months permission to stay. The scheme opened to applications on 04 February 2025, when the previous Ukraine Extension Scheme closed.

If you're a Ukrainian national, or the family member of a Ukrainian national, and are living in the UK with existing permission on one of the Ukraine schemes, you may be eligible to apply for UPE to continue living in the UK for up to a further 18 months. It is free to apply. If your application is successful, you will be able to continue to live, work and study in the UK and access public funds.

[Guidance for councils supporting guests](#) who hold (or previously held) Homes for Ukraine permission and have applied, or will be applying, for permission under the Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme has also been published, as well as [guidance for sponsors](#).

Homes for Ukraine

Please note, on 31 January 2025, [guidance for Ukrainian nationals and their immediate family members](#) who wish to come to the UK under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme has also been updated to set out that parents and legal guardians who are acting as sponsors for their child under the scheme are no longer required to have settled status or British or Irish citizenship as long as all other eligibility criteria under Homes for Ukraine has been met.

Chartered Institute of Housing – Winter 2024/25 Newsletter

The latest [newsletter](#) from the CIH is now available and covers many subjects, including:

- Refugee homelessness – relief at last?
- How housing providers are helping to tackle rising homelessness amongst migrants and refugees
- Asylum accommodation and local connection for rehousing purposes

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- Migrants and housing in the UK
- Dangers of the new 'eVisas'
- Latest court cases on accommodation issues

Put together by the CIH's Housing Rights team, it is full of interesting articles.

Ministry of Justice Consultation on Civil Legal Aid: Towards a sustainable future

The government has launched an [open consultation](#) on proposals for Housing and Immigration fee increases and exploring contract reform. The consultation will consider increases to civil legal aid fees for housing and debt work, and Immigration and Asylum work, together with seeking further evidence on potential changes to some aspects of contractual requirements. Views are welcome by completing the [online survey](#). The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 21 March 2025.

Resources for arrivals experiencing stress or tension

[Solace](#), a charity based in Leeds, provide psychotherapy to refugees and asylum seekers. They have produced a [number of videos](#) for new arrivals which are available in English, Albanian, Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish Sorani, Pashto, Tigrinya and Urdu. The videos are aimed at supporting people experiencing stress or tension as a result of their refugee/asylum journey and will be of interest to anyone supporting these clients.

Physical and mental health support for people seeking asylum

It can be difficult for people seeking asylum to access mainstream mental health services.

The Home Office Asylum Mental Health and Wellbeing team has created a [document](#) to help asylum seekers find non-governmental organisations that offer direct or indirect mental health support.

How to email the Asylum Central Communications Hub

The Home Office has produced [guidance](#) on the information required when emailing the Asylum Central Communications Hub. The guidance details what information is required, depending on the query and also provides email templates to help.

Flourish Together

Hertfordshire Mind Network offers their [Flourish Service](#) which provides advice, information, onward referral and holistic support to refugees and asylum seekers who are experiencing mental ill health, or need support with their mental wellbeing or daily challenges. On occasions, Flourish Together events are held and have been very well received by those who attended, with much positive feedback from participants who enjoyed the opportunity to meet other young people in a similar position.

For further information, please email Flourish@hertsmindnetwork.org

Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill: call for evidence – UK Parliament

Do you have relevant expertise and experience or a special interest in the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill, which is currently passing through Parliament? If so, you can [submit your views](#) in writing to the House of Commons Public Bill Committee which is going to consider this Bill.

The Public Bill Committee on the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill will meet for the first time on Thursday 27 February 2025 and will report by 5pm on Thursday 20 March. When the Committee concludes its consideration of the Bill it is no longer able to receive written evidence, and it can conclude earlier than the deadline of 5pm on Thursday 20 March 2025. You are strongly advised to submit your written evidence as soon as possible.



See the Refugee Council's response to the Bill, [here](#)

Migration

EU Settlement Scheme Looked After Children guidance pack

The Home Office recently updated the published [EUSS Looked After Children guidance pack for Local Authorities](#). This new guidance has been created to include information on the High Court judgment in the linked cases of Warwickshire County Council v ML and others and Northamptonshire County Council v GZ and others [2021] EWHC 783 (fam); joining family members arriving in the UK from 1 January 2021; reasonable grounds for late applications to the scheme; British citizenship fees for children in care and the fee waiver guidance at: [Affordability fee waiver](#); Citizenship registration for individuals under the age of 18; the 'view and prove your immigration status' service; and the removal of the scope to seek an administrative review of an eligible decision under the EUSS made on or after 5 October 2023.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) status automation

The Home Office is introducing a [new process](#) to automatically convert eligible pre-settled status holders to settled status, without the need for them to make a further application. This will make the process of acquiring settled status (indefinite leave to enter or remain, usually granted if the applicant has been resident for 5 years) far more streamlined and straightforward for thousands of people who hold pre-settled status. The Home Office expects to issue the first grants of settled status under this process from late January 2025.

Banking and eVisas Customer Guidance

The Government have produced a [self-help guide](#) designed to 'assist refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable people in self-advocation with banks as they transition to eVisa'. It includes a detailed step-by-step guide on the process a person should follow to share their immigration status and identity with banks.

Home Office transparency data on Returns from the UK and illegal working activity since July 2024

The Home Office has published a [statistical release](#) covering returns from the UK and illegal working activity since 5 July 2024. It provides an overview of the number of people who have been returned from the UK, and the ongoing effort to tackle the illegal employment and exploitation of vulnerable people in the UK. It is intended to provide the public with clear and timely statistics in an area of high public interest.

New Independent Commission on Community and Cohesion

British Future is supporting a [new independent commission](#) on Community and Cohesion commencing this spring. The commission will seek to understand how to strengthen community connectedness, cohesion and resilience, developing recommendations for policymakers and a collective vision for the future of our communities. British Future are now inviting contributions to a call for evidence to help shape the early phase of the commission.

If you have insights, experiences, or ideas about how we can build more connected, cohesive and resilient communities, British Future want to hear from you. They are seeking written submissions or short videos that focus on various topics and questions. All evidence, however brief, will be gratefully received. For further details, please visit their [website](#).

Research

Deaths in the Channel – what needs to change

In January 2025, the Refugee Council published their briefing paper '[Deaths in the Channel – what needs to change](#)'. In summary, it details how 2024 was the deadliest year on record for people crossing the Channel in small

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boats – at least 69 people died. There is no official Government data published confirming the numbers or providing information on those who have lost their lives and the Government appears to have accepted that enforcement action against the smuggling gangs has made the journeys more dangerous, yet no announcements have been made on improving search and rescue in the Channel.

Working it out: Hong Kongers, employment and the cost of living

British Future conduct research into public attitudes on issues such as immigration, integration and identity. They use their research to help partners develop effective messages that reach and persuade new audiences. They offer constructive policy solutions to people's legitimate concerns and work to find common ground that can bring people together.

They have produced this [report](#), drawing on detailed interviews with recently arrived BN(O) Hong Kongers. It examines the challenges that some face in finding employment and coping with rising living costs.

Poverty among children affected by the UK government asylum and immigration policy

A [new briefing](#) has been submitted to the Child Poverty Unit to inform the strategy in relation to children in asylum seeking and migrant families. The briefing draws primarily on research and analysis concerning children in the asylum and immigration context conducted by researchers based at the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion, London School of Economics and Political Science and COMPAS, University of Oxford.

Key messages in the briefing include:

- Children in migrant and asylum seeking families living in the UK are at a disproportionately high risk of poverty and destitution.
- Lifting NRPF visa conditions from resident households would bring parity to families with children so that they could access support under the same conditions as their peers.
- Immigration and asylum policy is a key lever for the government in tackling child poverty because of the role the restrictions play in driving and sustaining poverty among children in migrant and asylum seeking families.

Barriers to safe housing for Black and minoritised migrant women and their children report

The Hibiscus Initiatives organisation has published a [report](#) exploring the 'Barriers to safe housing for Black and minoritised migrant women and their children'. The report forms part of Hibiscus' Safe Housing for Migrant Women project, funded by the Oak Foundation from 2023 to 2025, to improve housing outcomes for migrant women in contact with the criminal justice or immigration services. It is intended to inform the implementation of reforms in law, policy and practice to overcome the barriers to safe housing for migrant women and their children. The report draws on focus groups with Hibiscus's frontline practitioners and service users, data from their casework and desk-based research, and is accompanied by Hibiscus' policy briefing.

UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern – Migration Observatory

This briefing provides an overview of attitudes toward immigration in Britain. The discussion focuses on five questions. First, do people favour or oppose immigration to the UK, and is it seen as one of the most important issues facing the country? Secondly, are attitudes changing over time? Third, how does the UK compare to its European neighbours in its views? Fourth, how do preferences differ by immigrant type? And fifth, how do attitudes differ among people of different ages, different levels of education, and differing political preferences?

Read the findings and briefing in full [here](#)

Unauthorised migration in the UK – Migration Observatory

This [briefing](#) examines unauthorised migration—also known as 'illegal immigration' or 'irregular migration'—in the UK, including the difficulties in defining and measuring it and evidence on its nature and scale.



Migrants and Housing in the UK – Migration Observatory

This briefing provides statistics on migration and housing in the UK. Some key points from the briefing include:

- People born abroad had lower home ownership rates than the UK born (43% vs 67%). The foreign-born were more likely to be in the private rental sector but had similar levels of participation in social housing.
- Migrants' home ownership rates increase over time: in 2021, 68% of foreign-born people who arrived in the UK at least 20 years earlier owned their own home, compared to 17% of those who had arrived in the past 5 years.
- Social housing allocations in the UK are not made on the basis of immigration status or nationality. In 2021, 15% of people living in social housing were born outside the UK, lower than the foreign-born share of the UK population.
- There is some evidence that migration has contributed to increases in average UK house prices.

Find out more [here](#).

Events and Training

Webinar: Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children: Understanding Their Journey – 26 February

This webinar that explores the unique challenges faced by unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASCs) and the support systems in place to help them navigate their journey. This session is designed for legal professionals, social workers, educators, and advocates working with vulnerable children and young people.

When and where

Date and time: Wednesday 26 February, 6pm-7.30pm

Location: Online

Click [here](#) for tickets.

Norfolk Community Law Service (NCLS) – 4 October 2025

NCLS' purpose is to identify unmet legal needs in Norfolk and to work with partner agencies to provide a free service to meet that need. They aim to provide access to justice and equality, targeting their services at disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including migrants.

NCLS are celebrating their 40th anniversary this year and have a number of [events planned](#) in 2025 to acknowledge this milestone. Their main event is taking place on 04 October 2025

Location: Sprowston Manor Hotel, Norwich - *“an evening of fabulous food, music, auction/raffle and comedy”*.

EU Settlement Scheme Looked After Children planned Winter 2025 Workshops

The Home Office has provided details of their workshops in respect of EU Settlement Scheme application processes, which may be of interest to colleagues applying for status on behalf of looked-after children.

It is intended that the workshops will be delivered via Microsoft Teams on the following dates:

Wednesday 26 February 2025 between 11-12pm

Wednesday 26 March 2025 between 11-12pm



Details regarding the topics to be covered in each of these workshops will be available closer to the time but will essentially cover the processes of application via the EU Settlement Scheme, and next steps in respect of citizenship.

If you would like to attend any, or all of these sessions please, register your interest by emailing the team at EUSVT@homeoffice.gov.uk

Funding

City of Sanctuary UK Awards

Recently, the Sanctuary Awards programme has made [awards](#) to several organisations in Norfolk.

The following schools have been newly awarded Schools of Sanctuary:

- Heartsease Primary Academy
- Clover Hill VA Infant and Nursery School
- St Michael's VA Junior School

Norfolk Libraries are now Library Services of Sanctuary (this applies to all their libraries).

Norfolk County Council Looked After Children and Young People Health Team have achieved Place of Sanctuary Awards.

Congratulations to all.

Jobs

Suffolk Refugee Support – Housing Advice Worker

Suffolk Refugee Support are looking to recruit a Housing Advice Worker to lead on their work providing refugees and asylum seekers in Suffolk with housing-related advice and guidance.

Hours: 24 hours per week (negotiable)

Salary: £18,514 per annum (pro rata from £27,000 FTE for 35 hours per week)

Deadline: 25 February 2025, 12 noon

Interview date: 5 March 2025

Further details can be found [here](#).

Suffolk Refugee Support - Employment and Training Coordinator

The Employment & Training Coordinator will lead a small team supporting refugees to improve their job opportunities and gain sustainable employment.

Hours: 35 hours per week (negotiable)

Salary: £29,000 per annum

Deadline: 12 March 2025, 12 noon

Interview date: w/c 17 March 2025

Further details can be found [here](#).



Women for Refugee Women – Policy and Research Manager

Women for Refugee Women are looking for a Policy and Research Manager to join their campaigns team.

Hours: 35 hours per week*, some flexibility required at evenings and weekends

Location: Old Street, London (at least two days per week in the office)

Salary: £36,400 per annum

Deadline: 24 February, 5pm

Interview date: 6 March.

Click [here](#) for further information.

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