

Why are there so many asylum seekers & refugees in Liverpool?

- ◆ **Home Office (HO) Procedure. When someone arrives in the UK and claims asylum:**
 - ❖ That claim must be made at Croydon, no matter where the person entered the country or how.
 - ❖ Once the claim is made, the Border Agency (BA) will issue a "routing letter", which will instruct an external HO contractor such as SERCO or G4S to remove an asylum seeker (and any dependants) to a designated city, which will usually have an HO agency office e.g. Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool.
 - ❖ The HO housing contractor is then responsible for the provision of initial hostel and dispersed housing (see fact sheet 1). The asylum seeker has no choice where they are housed, and it is not unusual for someone to be sent to one city, even if they have family housed in another city.
 - ❖ Because Liverpool is a major HO centre, which is the only centre in the country to accept final claims, and because private housing is cheap; the HO houses more asylum seekers here than any other city.

Why are asylum seekers & refugees only living in certain parts of Liverpool?

- ◆ **Liverpool City Council, Merseyside Police, and third sector agencies such as HOPE work together to try to ensure a safe environment for everyone.**
 - ❖ All four initial assessment hostels are located within a two mile radius of each other, and within walking distance of the HO agency. This enables asylum seekers, in theory at least, to have easy access to initial health checks provided by Urgent Care 24, basic advice from Migrant Help, and a very limited support system.
 - ❖ The recent and very rapid increase in numbers, due mostly to the worsening situation in the Middle East, has resulted in considerable pressure being placed on this system. As a result SERCO do not have sufficient hostel places available, and some new arrivals have been housed in hotels such as Premier Inn. They are expected to purchase their own food there.
 - ❖ The City Council works with a number of agencies to ensure that people are not placed in areas of Liverpool deemed to be unsafe. At

Are we likely to see a rise in the crime rates due to so many asylum seekers & refugees?

- ◆ **Possibly, but only because asylum seekers and refugees are often victims of crime.**
 - ❖ Sadly, although Liverpool is very proud to be recognised as a "City of Sanctuary", not everyone wants to welcome newly arrived asylum seekers. Asylum seekers, their accommodation, and their places of worship have all come under attack in the last year, our volunteers amongst them.
- ◆ People have been arriving in Liverpool from across the world for centuries, which is why we have the oldest Chinese community in Europe, together with the oldest Somali and Sudanese communities in the UK. All these communities have made very significant and positive contributions to our city.
 - ❖ The current groups of new arrivals, if what we see at HOPE is anything to go by, will also have a positive and lasting contribution to make. The doctor who featured in fact sheet 1 will, together with several other medical professionals we have worked with, soon requalify and be able to work as a doctor again. Our volunteer featured in this issue, will have requalified as a teacher within the next two months.

But won't all these new arrivals put pressure on our schools, hospitals, and social services?

◆ **Do not believe all the number games being played by politicians & the media.**

- ❖ Liverpool is currently home to around 2,000 asylum seekers and their families. In a city which has seen a decline in population over the last two decades, and with school rolls static, this is not a high number of people for a large city such as ours to absorb.
- ❖ Across the UK there were 23,400 claims for asylum in 2014 compared to 500,000 in Germany, and 567,000 in Sweden. Both will take far more this year. Our numbers are static
- ❖ Because people have no choice but to live here whilst their claim is processed, they will often move to other parts of the UK as soon as they are granted leave to remain. This can be because there is an established community in a particular area e.g. the Sikh community in Liverpool is tiny compared to that in Slough. They may move

What can we do to help you, help us to help them?

◆ **Ask us questions**

- ❖ These three fact sheets are not intended to give definitive answers to all the questions, concerns, and maybe even objections you may have. We have tried to be as objective as possible, but we know that you may have issues that we haven't answered. The questions we have used in the fact sheets are those we are most frequently asked. We would like to ask you for your queries, so that we can try to answer those in a future series of fact sheets, or personally if it is urgent. Contact us via email, or Twitter @Hopefoodbank or our Facebook page

◆ **Donate:** We have tried to make it simple and easy for you to donate. You can take your donations to:

- ❖ **Liverpool Cathedral**
- ❖ **Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral**
- ❖ **Quaker Meeting House**
- ❖ **Liverpool Parish Church**
- ❖ **Stall #154 St John's Market**

◆ **Volunteer:** The best way to find out more is to ask the asylum seekers themselves, which is how we have learned.

HOPE

REFUGEE CRISIS A BASIC INFORMATION GUIDE No: 3 Love Thy Neighbour?



Basel Isa (l), a (Syrian) Kurdish refugee volunteer, helps "J" a Pharmacist from the Al Kindi Hospital Aleppo, and his newly arrived son in a scene from the recent **HOPE** video

How You Can Help **HOPE** To Help Newly Arrived Asylum Seekers & Refugees

But Who Is My Neighbour?

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