

Not in Our Name

Did you know that ...?

- the UK has a longstanding unfair, cruel, confusing and ineffective immigration system. Many doubt the Nationality & Borders Act 2022 will change this
- we support a very small proportion of the world's refugees, around 40% of whom are at-risk women and girls; our system is generally insensitive to this
- we're the only European country able by law to detain people indefinitely in Immigration Removal Centres
- record numbers have crossed the Channel in dangerous small boats since BREXIT, and have no idea for some time on arrival where or if they will be accommodated, detained and/or removed
- asylum seekers fleeing war and persecution cannot by definition be 'illegal', whether arriving by 'irregular' means or not; yet many are misidentified as economic migrants, facing indignity and destitution in the UK because of administrative failings or delays
- many persecuted asylum seekers necessarily arrive without documentation, money or belongings, experiencing serious difficulties evidencing claims
- tired Home Office staff do their best, but systems are stretched, migrant data is poor, and biometrics are not always recorded
- asylum seeker emergency hotel use has almost trebled since 2020 despite daily costs of c.£5m and Home Office pledges (but no clear plan) to end the practice
- so-called 'temporary' hotels have seen hundreds accommodated for 12+ months, and thousands for 6+, a brutal unreality. Without charity support many of these trapped asylum seeker families lack access to space, cash, clothing, footwear, medication, mobile phones, internet data, nutritious food, as well as legal, education and health services
- large military-style reception centres lack primary healthcare, and the visible security measures, surveillance, and shared living spaces amplify mental stress
- plans to expel people seeking asylum to Rwanda degrade our nation's morality, and cruelly remove hope. There are far better and cheaper ways to tackle evil traffickers
- asylum seekers have a higher prevalence of chronic disease and worse physical and mental health than the general population.
- many arriving here have experienced violence and associated abuse during their journey. Inappropriate behaviour does trigger trauma responses for some

- compassionate amendments to the original Nationality and Borders bill to protect at-risk children, women, individuals with a disability, survivors of torture, LGBTQ+ and others were rejected. The Act therefore contains few safeguarding measures for vulnerable people.
- most arriving here are prohibited from working, but desperately wish to do so (and pay taxes), utilising many of the skills we need; this ban expensively fuels loneliness, skill-fade, further trauma, voicelessness and poor integration
- around 60% of asylum claims are rejected by the Home Office, often leading to costly and delayed Appeals which regularly overturn flawed initial decisions
- unentitled migrants are charged for secondary health care, and hospitals have dedicated staff chasing down the bills
- many migrants voluntarily return to their countries of origin
- asylum support is just under £40 per person per week, with accommodation provided on a no-choice basis anywhere in the UK
- even if granted 'leave to remain' (maybe taking years) many remain destitute and homeless; despite joyful relief the limbo continues when eviction notices give just 28-days to 'move on' entirely from asylum support
- reuniting with children under 18 and partners is very challenging, and only granted if the family cannot live elsewhere
- there are few automatic routes to permanent UK settlement, and refugees must re-apply to extend their leave beyond a few years.

The Home Office is *not* the enemy, and many staff work very hard. But, as a nation we must stand up and do better than this.

Portsmouth City of Sanctuary is strictly independent and unashamedly humanitarian. We focus locally and regionally on delivered outputs and outcomes, in collaboration with many, to welcome and treat all those we support with dignity, compassion and respect. We embrace volunteers and those with lived experience to inform our casework and projects, and we are keen to accept any financial or practical assistance community members may provide.