

Refugees and asylum seekers in Kingston upon Hull:

An analysis of needs and service
provision

March 2017

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North Bank Forum for Voluntary Organisations Limited

www.northbankforum.org.uk

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Report



commissioned by:



Executive summary

Background

This analysis was commissioned at the end of 2016 and carried out January to March 2017. Oversight was undertaken by a steering group comprising representatives from Hull City of Sanctuary, the Refugee Council, British Red Cross and Goodwin Development Trust.

The purpose of the analysis was to provide evidence that would support a strategic approach to meeting the needs of refugees and asylum seekers in Kingston-Upon-Hull in a cohesive and responsive way. It also represents an opportunity for the sector, including the steering group members, to assess how limited resources can be shared more effectively and collaboration improved to create better outcomes.

The scale and nature of support in Hull for asylum seekers and refugees has undergone significant changes over the past 24 months, particularly since the closure of regional umbrella organisation Northern Refugee Centre. New and additional needs have developed following changes to the scope of Legal Aid, and further impacts are anticipated as a result of the implementation of the Immigration Act 2016 (see Context).

Research was carried out by North Bank Forum, a regional infrastructure charity. The lead researcher was Pippa Robson.

Key findings

The research found that:

There are genuine gaps in services, particularly in terms of legal advice, certain types of accommodation and long-term integration support. In other cases, gaps are based on funding, capacity and co-ordination – services exist but do not or cannot meet demand, for example English language support and interpretation. There are also barriers – services exist but are not readily accessed by refugees and asylum seekers for a variety of reasons, for example benefits advice, housing support and health services.

'To come to this country is a dream. Our country is not like this. Young people, they can give and give. They didn't have any chance in their country... they can work in this country and they can help to build the country.' (Gateway participant)

Some services – and gaps in services – are applicable to both refugees and asylum seekers. In other cases, gaps or challenges are different for each group. It was also highlighted through interviews that there are differences in the support needs of people arriving as refugees through the Gateway programme and Syrian Vulnerable

Persons Relocation Scheme (VPRS), and those that gain refugee status while living in the UK but often continue to experience destitution despite having recourse to public funds.

There is evidence of well-established and effective partnership working between organisations that support refugees and asylum seekers in Hull, with the drop-in at Open Doors being one example. However, multi-agency partnerships and Hull's involvement at regional and strategic levels could be improved. This goes beyond the common recommendation that organisations 'could work together more effectively' – interviews highlighted that Hull can be isolated in terms of strategic regional links, and that historic approaches have created barriers to positive cross-sector working. Relationships between regional organisations and those with a specific, local focus have been affected by scarcity of funding, differing levels of capacity and the closure of the Northern Refugee Centre.

Where services cannot meet demand, or are not available, there are increased risks of exploitation. Many examples were given by interviewees of the vulnerable state of destitute asylum seekers and refugees and the ways in which they were exploited through substandard or inadequate legal advice, poor accommodation and work. The nature of this exploitation is such that very few people feel able to vocalise the treatment they have received or take their cases forward, meaning exploitation continues.

The majority of services working with asylum seekers agreed that more help is needed to guide and support this group through the process when they have exhausted appeal rights. This included practical and emotional help to understand their position (which may require further legal advice) and support to come to terms with the decision.

Volunteers play a vital role in the delivery of services; many providers rely on volunteers in a variety of roles. Just as important is the opportunity for service users to volunteer, providing integration, skills development and the chance to 'give back'.

Recommendations

The findings from this research suggest there is a need for:

- Better strategic representation at a regional level to ensure Hull can influence, contribute to best practice and benefit from shared learning, with potential for the voluntary sector to lead multi-agency partnership meetings
- Improved collaboration and co-ordination of certain services, for example English language provision, translation and interpretation, and integration
- Free or low-cost legal advice
- Facilitation to access mainstream services – the role of a 'middle man' to co-ordinate support and help people to navigate systems, supported by an increased training offer for those services that appear less accessible

- The capacity and 'space' to campaign and influence, to create better outcomes for asylum seekers and refugees in the future
- Further feasibility work on developing centralised co-ordination of volunteers, including volunteer training and support, and quality placements
- A more formalised, constructive process for frontline workers to address issues with other services when they arise – this includes voluntary sector, mainstream and/or public sector services

1. Introduction

This review has been prompted by the closure of the Northern Refugee Centre (NRC) in December 2015. In April 2013, Asylum Seekers and Refugees of Kingston upon Hull (ARKH) – Hull’s primary refugee and asylum seeker advice service – became part of NRC through a formal merger process. NRC provided advice, advocacy and support services to asylum seekers, refugees and EU migrants across the Hull area. The closure of NRC has increased pressure on other NGO services and statutory agencies and created a void for refugees and asylum seekers to get help.

The numbers of asylum seekers in Hull remains high in comparison to the percentage per head of population, and the closure of NRC has had an impact on the drop-in at Open Doors and destitution services such as the British Red Cross.

There are other factors, including increased need and changes in support services in Hull, that make a strategic review of refugee and migrant advice provision timely. There has been no previous review of provision in the light of these changes, and no up-to-date, city-wide strategy outlining future plans for meeting the needs of migrants.

This report will examine the cumulative effect of recent developments on the lives and situations of people claiming asylum, or transitioning from the asylum process after receiving refugee status.

Objectives

This report aims to:

- Provide an assessment of current provision of support services for refugees and asylum seekers in Hull
- Explore the met and unmet needs of refugees and asylum seekers in Hull
- Analyse the effectiveness of relationships between support organisations, referral organisations and other relevant agencies
- Set any findings into a regional and national context where appropriate
- Provide a set of recommendations for future action, based on gathered evidence

North Bank Forum

North Bank Forum is a voluntary and community sector membership organisation offering support, advice and information. Its vision is ‘People in communities have the services they need to ensure their health and social wellbeing’ and its mission is

‘To inform, support and influence the development of services to reflect the needs of their users.’

It operates across Yorkshire and the Humber and provides representation for a wide range of civil society organisations, from residents’ associations to national charities, and for members of the public and their communities.

For further information please visit <http://www.northbankforum.org.uk/>

2. Context

Regional and national factors

Regional profile¹

There are multiple reasons for migration. In addition to seeking refuge or asylum, migrants come to Yorkshire and Humber to work and study. The overall number of new migrant workers coming to the region in 2015 was 42,000 – an increase of 3,000 from the previous year. International students in Bradford, Hull, Kirklees, Leeds, Sheffield and York totalled 32,800 in the 2014/2015 academic year.

Between January 2016 and January 2017, Yorkshire and Humber saw a 17% increase in the number of asylum seekers and refugees in the region (5,230 compared to 4,440).

The numbers of supported asylum seekers in Hull was 360 as of January 2017, representing an increase of 75 people compared to the previous year.

In their 2016 regional migration profile, Migration Yorkshire state that almost 10 in every 1000 new GP registrations in Yorkshire and Humber are made by people who previously lived abroad, with the highest rates found in Sheffield, Leeds and York. Across the area, Hull has the highest proportion of people who are non-British (9%).

Legal Aid²

In 2013, the enactment of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LAPSO) Act removed entire areas of law from the scope of Legal Aid. This included almost all immigration work – the only areas remaining in scope were asylum, human trafficking, immigration detention, victims of domestic violence and judicial review.

Impacts include fewer solicitor firms taking on immigration work, reducing access to free legal advice and increasing the likelihood of exploitation.³

Immigration Act 2016⁴

The Immigration Act received royal assent in May 2016. The key provisions of the act include:

- Harsher punishments for illegal working – for employers and workers

¹ Data from Migration Yorkshire

² Data from Chambers Student <http://www.chambersstudent.co.uk/where-to-start/newsletter/legal-aid-cuts-and-reforms> and The Justice Gap <http://thejusticegap.com/2016/04/carries-cost-three-years-laspo-legal-aid-cuts/>

³ <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2016/03/real-impact-legal-aid-cuts>

⁴ Data from Rightsinfo.org and Simpson Millar solicitors

- Further restrictions to access to services – people without leave to remain cannot rent privately, drive or have a bank account
- Proposals for significant changes to asylum support system, including access to support for families and Appeal Rights Exhausted (ARE) asylum seekers
- Changes to support for former looked-after children who are asylum seekers
- Migrants cannot submit an appeal against a decision following a human rights or immigration application while in the UK – they are required to submit an out-of-country appeal

Detailed regulations will not be released until September 2017. Therefore, the extent to which the new provisions will be put into practice, and the impact this will have on migrants - particularly vulnerable migrants - has not yet been established.

Dubs scheme

In February 2017, the UK government announced it would be ending the Dubs scheme – their commitment to providing a safe haven for what was expected to be in the region of 3,000 child refugees. At the time of the announcement, 350 children had been brought to the UK under the scheme.

Despite a number of protests and campaigns to overturn the decision, the Immigration Minister Robert Goodwill confirmed in a written statement that only one further group of 150 children would be brought to the UK before the scheme's closure.⁵

This decision will not necessarily reduce the number of unaccompanied minors coming to Hull due to the implementation of the national dispersal scheme.⁶

EU referendum

On the 23rd of June 2016, Britain voted to leave the European Union. While the key terms on freedom of movement are yet to be decided, it is likely that the impact on migration will be significant – including migration for work and study.

It is also likely that there will be an impact on the numbers of people accessing immigration advice, including citizenship and visas. There have also been reports of an increase in hate crime following the referendum⁷ and this may have an impact on the lived experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in the UK and in Hull.

Independent advice

In 2013, the Refugee Council was unsuccessful in its bid for continued Home Office funding for the provision of independent advice to dispersed adult asylum seekers.

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/08/dubs-scheme-lone-child-refugees-uk-closed-down>

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/20/unaccompanied-child-refugees-to-be-dispersed-through-uk>

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/oct/13/hate-crimes-eu-referendum-home-office-figures-confirm>

The Asylum Help service is now delivered by Migrant Help, based in Kent. The new service, delivered primarily through telephone support, has created some additional barriers to access, with potential beneficiaries being more likely to turn to local, face-to-face services for help.

Accommodation

Housing for asylum seekers is currently provided in the region by G4S, who were awarded contracts in March 2012 under the Compass framework (Commercial and Operating Managers Procuring Asylum Support). In Hull and other areas, G4S sub-contract much of this provision to Target.

The National Audit Office has acknowledged that Yorkshire and Humber was one of the regions where 'transition to the new contracts took longer than originally planned'⁸. The contracts were due to end in August 2017 but have been extended to 2019 pending consultation⁹.

Reports indicate that the contracts are not financially viable at their current level – this may have an impact on service delivery.

Local factors

Migration profile¹⁰

Unlike other cities in Yorkshire and the Humber, Hull does not have a long history of immigration, despite being a port. The chart below¹¹ demonstrates the percentage increase of foreign-born residents between the 2001 and 2011 census.

Different immigration measures suggest between 2,700 and 3,400 new long-term immigrants (those expected to stay more than a year) arrived in Hull in 2015. Approximately 1,050 short-term immigrants visited the city in 2015 to work or study for up to 12 months.

Home Office figures show 356 asylum seekers being supported in Hull at the start of October 2016 while awaiting a decision on their claim. Of those people, 336 were in supported accommodation, while 20 were receiving subsistence-only support.

Between October 2015 and October 2016, five resettled Syrians arrived in Hull. There is a commitment to support a further 100 people through this programme in Hull over the next three years through the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

⁸ <https://www.nao.org.uk/report/compass-contracts-provision-accommodation-asylum-seekers/>

⁹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2016/12/08/government-extends-asylum-contracts-g4s-serco-2019/>

¹⁰ Data from Migration Yorkshire's December 2016 summary of migration trends in Hull

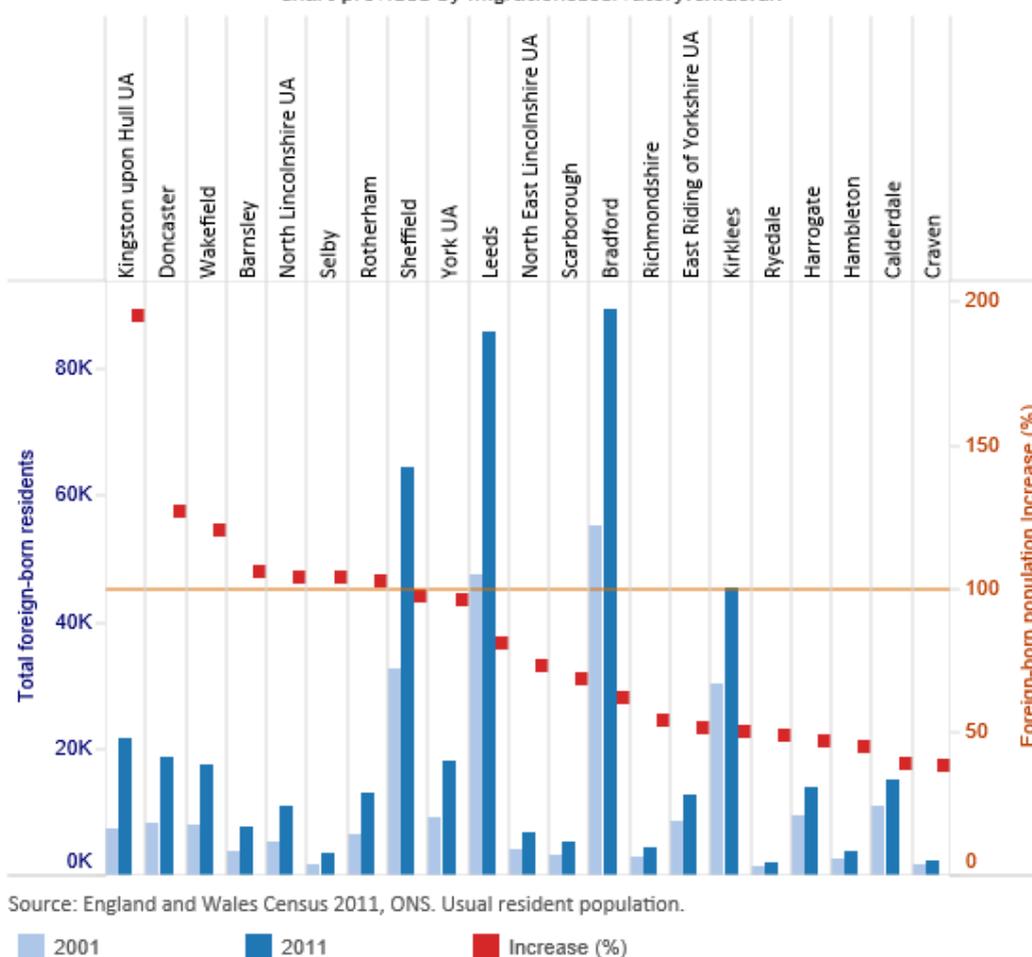
¹¹ <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/yorkshire-and-the-humber-census-profile/>

10% of people in Hull were born outside the UK, slightly higher than the 9% average across Yorkshire and Humber, with the majority settled in the Myton and Newland wards.

Nearly 3,800 pupils at school in Hull have a first language that is not English. This represents 14% of primary and 10% of secondary pupils – a slight increase on the previous year but lower than the regional average.

Foreign-born residents of Yorkshire and the Humber: 2001-2011

Chart provided by migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk



'There are fewer organisations [supporting refugees and asylum seekers] in Hull than in other Yorkshire towns and cities. If you go to, say Huddersfield or Leeds, there are lots of groups... when you look at the numbers of dispersed asylum seekers in those areas compared to Hull, it's disproportionate' – national charity

Data from the Office for National Statistics indicates future net migration will fall in the next few years.

Hull as a designated City of Sanctuary

The City of Sanctuary movement began in October 2005 in Sheffield; with the backing of the City Council and more than 70 local organisations, Sheffield became the UK's first 'City of Sanctuary' in

2007. Hull set up its working group in 2010, and since then has been working to foster a culture of hospitality and friendship in the city and beyond through:

- Supporting numerous local organisations and raising awareness of issues affecting refugees
- The provision of accommodation to destitute refused asylum seekers undertaking legal processes for the recognition of their asylum claims at Sanctuary House in Hull, occupied by 14 different individuals over the past six years
- The delivery of learning programmes in Cottingham High School
- Sporting activities for refugees
- 'Streams of Sanctuary' - working towards exemplary achievements in supporting refugees
- Hosting Hull Refugee Week
- Coordinating numerous events celebrating the contribution of Refugees during Hull Refugee Week

City of Culture

Hull is the UK City of Culture in 2017. While this is not specifically relevant to asylum seekers and refugees, many of the celebrations and activities have, and will be, focused on the cultural fabric of the city, with immigration and 'arrivals' being part of that diversity.

The City of Culture status has also meant Hull's annual events, for example Hull Pride, will be on a larger scale than before. Hull Refugee Week is an example of this and plans are in place for the event to build on previous years to raise the profile regionally and nationally.

Emerging services

At the time of compiling this report, several new or planned local services were highlighted:

Community Integration and Advocacy Centre – a newly registered charity aiming to work with all migrant groups, with plans to register to give OISC level 3 advice

Hosting scheme – Open Doors (see Service provision in Hull) are in the process of establishing a hosting scheme that will increase the number of housing placements for refused asylum seekers

One Humber – an emerging service, linked to translation providers AA Global, which is planning to offer reduced cost translation and interpretation services to community-based organisations

3. Methodology and scope

This analysis was undertaken in three stages:

i) Stakeholder mapping

A list of stakeholders to contact was drawn from NBF's own database, the researcher's contacts, and information shared at the inception meeting with Goodwin Development Trust, Hull City of Sanctuary, British Red Cross and Refugee Council. See Appendix B.

ii) Secondary data review

A variety of online, academic and sector-based sources were used to give context and provide an evidence base for recommendations and research methodology. All data sources are referenced as appropriate.

iii) Primary data gathering

Interviews were semi-structured, carried out face-to-face or by telephone. All interviews were recorded; informed consent was sought and participants were given information about confidentiality and anonymity.

All comments by service users have been anonymised. Where appropriate, stakeholder organisations have been identified e.g. in relation to services provided. All participants were given the option of anonymised comments.

Scope

The focus of the report is the needs of asylum seekers and refugees that are currently living in Hull or receiving support in Hull. The needs of other minority groups or migrants, for example EU migrants, are not considered other than to provide context. Individual, in-depth case studies were not undertaken as part of this report; anonymised cases are referred to in order to highlight issues.

The following services and support functions were analysed:

- OISC regulated advice
- Accommodation support
- Health-related services including counselling and sexual health
- Support with destitution
- Translation/interpretation

Data was also gathered on:

- Training for advisors and other staff and volunteers
- The level of collaboration and partnership working across the sector
- Needs of young people/unaccompanied minors
- Examples of exploitation and what can happen if needs are not met

Some organisations that took part in the research worked specifically with asylum seekers and refugees; others worked with refugees only. Some organisations had a remit to work with black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, and therefore often had a higher level of contact with refugees and asylum seekers than generic services.

Other services that took part worked with all sectors of the community; work with refugees and asylum seekers was therefore only a small part of their activity and they are included here primarily as referral organisations.

Information about organisational/worker remits is highlighted in this report to clarify the extent of their work with refugees and asylum seekers.

Definitions used in this report

Refugees – used here to mean people that have arrived in the UK with refugee status through the Gateway resettlement programme or Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme, and people that have been granted refugee status in-country after arriving in the UK as asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers – used here to mean people that have arrived in the UK seeking asylum, and who are awaiting the outcome of that claim or a subsequent appeal for protection.

Refused asylum seekers – used here to mean people that have had a claim for asylum refused and have exhausted all appeal rights; they may be in the process of returning to their country, or making a fresh application based on new evidence to demonstrate protection need

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children/minors – used here to mean people under the age of 18 that have arrived in the UK without an adult family member and are under the care of the relevant local authority.

Economic migrants – used here to mean people that have arrived in the UK on a work-related visa, or from EU countries under the freedom of movement legislation. Whilst this group, and other BME populations, are not the focus of this report, they are defined here as some services that work with asylum seekers and refugees also provide support for BME groups and economic migrants.

4. Service provision in Hull

Below is a summary of services currently provided in Hull for asylum seekers and refugees as identified in the course of this analysis. Services have been collated on an organisational/project basis – Section 5 looks at services on a themed basis.

Refugee Council

Services	12 months' support for refugees arriving through the Gateway Programme and the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme – integration and language, and co-ordination of health, housing, benefits and education. Provision of a women's group. Run the Health Access for Refugees Programme (HARP). Support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children through the Refugee Council Children's Section (funded by Home Office to cover Yorkshire)
Method	One-to-one support, drop-ins, speakers
Beneficiary group	Approximately 90 refugees a year, different nationalities, women are prioritised by Gateway so majority are women with children. Hull have committed to take 100 Syrian refugees over the next three years through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme; this group will also be supported by Refugee Council.
Referral networks	DWP, local authority (housing), safeguarding teams, GP, health visitors, school nurses, TB nurses. Part of multi-agency steering group. Organise for other organisations to come to briefings for refugees to introduce their services, e.g. Haven.
Use of volunteers	Yes, approx. 30 active volunteers in different roles: English conversation practice Using computers

British Red Cross

Services	Provide impartial information, advocacy and support to help individuals to manage the impact of, and find sustainable routes out of destitution. Signposting/referral to other services and agencies supporting refugees and asylum seekers, including health, education, welfare and legal services. Emergency destitution provisions for those at risk of destitution with no access to statutory support including supermarket vouchers. International Family Tracing Service help individuals trace family members who they have lost contact with as a result of conflict, natural disaster and migration. Women's group for family joiners.
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	Registered to provide OISC level one advice but in practice they don't operate this.
Method	Face-to-face at Open Doors. Some one-to-one casework appointments but there is limited capacity to take on additional cases despite identified need. Peer support through women's group. International Family Tracing Service through one-to-one appointments, home visits and outreach drop-in
Beneficiary group	Destitute asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants – 225 beneficiaries were supported in 2016
Referral networks	All stakeholders and providers at Open Doors. Family tracing – social services and foster carers.
Use of volunteers	Dependent on volunteers – it is primarily a volunteer-led project (part of the British Red Cross operating ethos).

Goodwin Development Trust – Haven Project

Services	Counselling (used to be evenly split between therapeutic and practical support)
Method	Face-to-face, with interpretation
Beneficiary group	Asylum seekers and refugees; approx. 75% women. Adults and children.
Referral networks	Refugee Council refer – Haven attend drop-in and project workers from Refugee Council refer in. NHS, mental health/Let's Talk teams, Trauma Team, Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHs), GPs, Social Services, schools, police and self-referrals. Refer to school and university pastoral care. Also to Trauma Team and CAMHs for higher-tier cases. Also the Doula Project.
Use of volunteers	Yes but only a small number – many have gone on to do other things.

Hull City of Sanctuary

Services	Support for a house for destitute asylum seekers (currently 3 men, total 17 housed); hosting refugee week, finance and management; education sessions at Cottingham High School (year 9); 'Sport for All' scheme to encourage sporting activities; bicycle provision.
Method	Hands-on support for the house and school teaching, with refugees; regular committee meetings, provision of kit, hire of facilities; provision of refurbished bikes.
Beneficiary group	All asylum seekers and refugees in Hull and East Riding.
Referral networks	Wide range of contacts.
Use of volunteers	Approximately 10 committee members.

Riverside

Services	Accommodation-related support – ‘Connecting Communities’ In practice support with benefits, finding housing, school places and getting National Insurance numbers
Method	Face-to-face
Beneficiary group	BME and refugees at the point of transition. Cannot work with asylum seekers that do not have recourse to public funds.
Referral networks	Refer asylum seekers to British Red Cross via Open Doors
Use of volunteers	Not known

Target

Services	Accommodation under the COMPASS contract
Method	Through private landlords, HMOs, housing associations
Beneficiary group	Asylum seekers, currently in the region of 370 housed in Hull
Referral networks	Not known
Use of volunteers	Not known

Open Doors

Services	Advice and guidance, and food and clothes bank provision. Also offer social activities (music, social media, coffee mornings), an after-school club for BME children, language classes (English and Arabic), befriending, IT classes and an allotment project. Run the Volunteer Interpretation and Translation Service that provides volunteers to other charity-sector services in Hull Developing a hosting scheme for refused asylum seekers with Boaz Trust. Also host a large-scale drop-in every Thursday that facilitates multi-agency provision – regular attendees include Riverside, British Red Cross, Mesmac, ReNew, Ashiana (slavery and trafficking) and the TB (tuberculosis) Nurse Team
Method	Drop-in and specific activities for groups
Beneficiary group	All asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, with an average of 300 clients per week. Includes support for around 50 Syrians that have not come through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.
Referral networks	Acts as a hub for other services, wide referral network
Use of volunteers	Approximately 60 volunteers, with around 30-40 attending each week

Humber Community Advice Services

Services	Advice and support, registered to OISC level 1. Focus on supporting marginalised groups with exploitation issues (for example accommodation), support with finding work, integration support, advice and guidance on benefits and health and wellbeing issues
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Method	Face-to-face at their premises
Beneficiary group	All migrants and BME groups
Referral networks	Not known
Use of volunteers	Not known

Humber All Nations Alliance

Services	Umbrella organisation for BME groups across the Humber. Integration support, events and social activities. Delivery of a CCG-funded mental and health and wellbeing project for BME communities
Method	One-to-one support, events, attendance at strategic groups and meetings
Beneficiary group	All BME communities including asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants. HANA have a membership of 58 voluntary groups and organisations.
Referral networks	Receive referrals from councils, CCGs and police and a wide number of VCS organisations.
Use of volunteers	Approx. 25-30 active volunteers

Mesmac

Services	Sexual health services; HIV testing
Method	Face-to-face at outreach locations
Beneficiary group	Dedicated BME worker/project – not specific to asylum seekers and refugees
Referral networks	TB nurses, ReNew. Trying to set up a BME workers' network, hostels, stop smoking services, housing – Riverside, dentists
Use of volunteers	Not known

ReNew

Services	Support with drug and alcohol misuse, including counselling and support for family members
Method	One-to-one and group work at outreach locations
Beneficiary group	Dedicated BME worker/project – not specific to asylum seekers and refugees
Referral networks	Skills for Communities, GPs, Job Centre, DWP, health services, Haven, Riverside, Mind
Use of volunteers	Not known

Public sector provision:

GP support is provided at The Quays. Hull City Council are responsible for organising and providing accommodation for refugees that come through the Gateway programme or Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

Relevant training taking place in Hull highlighted through this research:

- Cultural Awareness and Cultural Competency training – delivered by the Safeguarding Board at Endeavour
- Migration Yorkshire deliver training on an annual basis to local authorities including Hull – this is occasionally extended to VCS providers
- Financial capability and accredited legal advice qualifications (not specialist immigration/asylum) are provided by Hull and East Riding Citizens Advice Bureau, including the Level 2 Certificate in Supporting Legal Advice Provision and Level 3 Certificate in Providing Initial Legal Information and Advice

5. Key findings

The key findings of this analysis have been themed into the following areas:

- Barriers – services exist, but are not, or cannot be, readily accessed by asylum seekers and refugees for a variety of reasons
- Service gaps or challenges – services do not exist, or are severely challenged in terms of capacity or other issues
- Collaboration – the ability of services and sectors to work in partnership to meet need
- Exploitation – examples of the issues that can develop when adequate services are not in place
- Children and unaccompanied minors – issues related specifically to support for children
- Volunteers – the use of volunteers and their roles in the sector, the potential for supported asylum seekers and refugees to become volunteers

This section also details any additional findings and the changes that stakeholders would like to see to make it easier for needs of refugees and asylum seekers to be met.

Barriers

Language

Service providers and refugees spoke of language as a barrier to integration and education, for example parents being unable to help children with homework, or older children unable to progress to further/higher education due a lack of higher level language skills.

Language is not only a barrier to integration, but can also contribute to crisis – for example for asylum seekers who do not immediately seek help in reading important letters.

There were indications that English language provision, including ESOL and other classes, is not well co-ordinated across the city:

‘ESOL is the other struggle. When I first joined Gateway, the ESOL was provided within the programme, they knew what days we had the drop-in and made sure classes were on days that didn’t

‘Speaking as a mother, our problem now is education. To learn English we had one lesson a week. How can my children learn English and be able to go to university? I thought they would be able to continue their education... one of my sons was doing medicine back home...that has been a big shock for me. They need to have a very high level to go to university. In the one year, we needed to concentrate on English, not just one lesson a week but for the full week.’ (Gateway participant)

clash, and refugees had access to both. When JCP picked up on mandatory referrals to ESOL as part of the jobseekers' agreement, it's generally through the college... it excludes those that have childcare needs, and the partners of

'I am an educated woman back home, but when I came to this country... because of the language I found myself feeling like I didn't know anything. I have to ask my children.' (Gateway participant)

JSA applicants, who can't go to the college' – Refugee Council

The placing of language learning in the needs of asylum seekers and refugees was also referred to in several interviews. While the Government's focus might be on learning English, many services felt there were barriers to learning above and beyond the availability of lessons, for example a lack of literacy in their own language and the need to deal with immediate issues like trauma before being

able to focus on language.

Asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers are often excluded from learning English at college due to funding rules. Another barrier to language learning is the lack of childcare provision, which can have a negative impact on women being able to attend classes.

Access to services

It was raised by the steering group and within interviews that there was an important difference between genuine gaps in service provision – where services in Hull do not exist – and barriers to accessing existing services that might not be set up to accommodate asylum seekers and refugees.

'There is a barrier in accessing mainstream advice services in terms of that referral route in. If the advice is there, it's how timely that is. If it takes three weeks to get an appointment, that's three weeks of destitution' – VCS provider organisation

Referrals for welfare benefits advice, which could be made to commissioned services like Citizens Advice Bureau and Hull Advice, were more likely to be made to specialist services. Some organisations were keen to use 'mainstream' where possible:

'We will send them to the Wilson Centre [CAB and Hull Advice] but in those situations we try to send an accompanying letter – even if they are refugees that have been here a long time, the depth of their English might not be enough to explain complex cases' – VCS provider organisation

Support to access mainstream services, for example mental health services, was highlighted as a gap by several service providers:

‘There is a real lack of understanding between... well cultural differences really, how to engage and how to support a client group that is perhaps not familiar with mental health as a concept’ – VCS provider organisation

‘They [statutory services] tend to refer to us because they don’t feel they have the expertise to deal with them [refugees and asylum seekers]’ – VCS provider organisation

Different reasons for not accessing mainstream services were highlighted:

‘It’s about language, confidence and trust. People from these communities normally go to places where they feel most supported. Word of mouth is effective if the service is good; if someone goes somewhere and has a negative experience that will affect other members of the community and the chances they will go there.’ – VCS provider organisation

Changes in the way sectors are structured – for example schools moving out of Local Education Authority control after gaining academy status – can create barriers:

‘We do specific counselling for young people... those at school age are seen at school, though not all of the schools are co-operative. Some are very good, but with others it has taken months to build relationships and they can be restrictive.’ – VCS provider organisation

There may also be restrictions on mainstream services and their funding that do not apply to organisations working in the voluntary sector:

‘It’s the longer-term therapy, not everyone believes it is necessary but with trauma it is... no matter how hard they try the health services cannot get it agreed strategically that they see people for more than the 10, 12 appointments...’ – VCS provider organisation

Another barrier to accessing services highlighted through the interviews was the uncertain nature of life as an asylum seeker – essentially a reduced ability to deal with issues like mental health or trauma while awaiting asylum decisions. This may prevent people from accessing services, or create a delay:

‘They’ve often been here [in Hull] for a little while, and got all of those practical problems sorted before they feel there is time for them. Men especially arrive on a bit of a high – they’ve got their family here – but then over the months you see them start to go downhill’ – VCS provider organisation

The HARP project (Health Access for Refugees Programme), which is run by Refugee Council, offers guidance and support to refugees and asylum seekers on accessing health services appropriately – for example what can be provided a GP. The service gives health briefings at centres like Wakefield, before dispersal, and

drop-ins that build on that advice through health befrienders. In Hull, the service works from the Open Doors drop-in.

Exploitation and knowledge of rights

There was evidence that exploitation is more likely to occur when people are not aware of their rights.

‘Sometimes they get bad services and they think it’s because of their skin colour... but we have to reassure them that it’s not that... it’s knowing what they are asking for, it’s knowing what your rights are, what you are entitled to. Because most of our customers don’t know any of those things, they don’t know what their rights are, or what they are entitled to, or how it should be, so they accept being really badly treated’ – VCS provider organisation

The majority of examples of exploitation given by service providers related to asylum seekers, who pay money to inappropriate parties for advice.

However, exploitation extends to all vulnerable migrant groups:

‘If they are in an HMO (house of multiple occupancy), like NASS accommodation, we hear about people letting them stay on, staying on the floor. We often hear about people sleeping in the lounge of the HMO. But people are so vulnerable to exploitation when that happens, we hear all the time about people providing ‘services’ in exchange for being able to stay with people’ – VCS provider organisation

It was clear from interviews that asylum seekers and refugees experiencing exploitation are generally reluctant to acknowledge it. Services felt that they rarely heard ‘the whole story’ and needed a long time to build the necessary trust for people to disclose their experiences.

Service gaps or challenges

Funding

Funding cuts across the voluntary and statutory sectors have undoubtedly had a significant impact on ability to meet needs:

‘...generally just services being overstretched... we ring the Council five or six times a day on behalf of clients, whenever you call them you’re on hold. They ask if they can call us back but it’s hard if the client is going. There seems to be less staff, less resources, but it’s the same everywhere’ – VCS provider organisation

There was also a concern that services would not be able to cope with increased numbers of asylum seekers and refugees:

'We know that we're going to be taking in more refugees, which is fantastic, they need a place of safety, and I'm proud to say that's what this city is doing. But you need somewhere for them to live, you need schools, you need money so they can eat... we're all trying to manage as best as we can but where's the breaking point going to be?' – VCS provider organisation

There was also evidence that charitable agencies are delivering support outside of their funded remit because of the extreme and unmet need:

'...maybe helping them with their benefits situation, what is available for them, how to apply – I say that reluctantly as it not our natural area of work but we've had to pick up some of that' – VCS provider organisation

'We help people to set up community groups and support themselves. There's no funding for that though, we do that through the other funding we get. It's part of our identity but we can't always meet the need' – VCS provider organisation

There was acknowledgement that funding from public sector agencies might increase if voluntary sector organisations were better at demonstrating their role as professional service providers:

'We didn't do a very good job of selling ourselves and showing that we could adhere to the NHS standard policies and procedures. We're funded by the Big Lottery but the reality is we do need to look for contracts' – VCS provider organisation

There are also positive examples:

'We met with the four local Humber Clinical Commissioning Groups and they were very understanding, they asked what we would charge and they were happy with that. And it's working very well. But that's on a sessional, per client basis to cover costs. And only for the Syrian programme' – VCS provider organisation

Integration and transition support

Services that support new arrivals to understand a wide range of cultural and social differences do exist – the community development roles at HANA and Refugee Council were described as 'crucial' to integration. Humber Community Advice Services and Open Doors also provide peer support, befriending and social activities that aid integration. However, there was no evidence of a linked-up or comprehensive programme.

HANA provide integration support through events, such as an International Football Tournament and a fashion show for all cultures. They also provide social activities, for example based around food and music. As an umbrella organisation, HANA has

a membership of 58 groups, many of whom are made up of people from asylum seeker and refugee backgrounds.

There is also an issue around the transition from asylum seeker to refugee in terms of housing – when asylum seekers in NASS accommodation are given leave to remain, they are given 28 days’ notice to vacate their property:

‘...they get four weeks to find somewhere else. And it’s finding somewhere for them to live, it’s setting them up with benefits, but first, getting their National Insurance number... we try to find them accommodation, even a hostel, but it’s so hard’ – VCS provider organisation

‘It was so hard [after the 12 months of Gateway support ended]. We came from a country that is not advanced like this one. So I felt this country was so fast, to catch up was impossible. I felt like I was still at the beginning, just beginning to understand how life works, not at the end.’
(Gateway participant)

Riverside deal with approximately one case a week of this type.

Men can also struggle with integration:

‘They had networks of their own in their countries. They are outside, they are talking to other men, they are playing games... they have an important role that is clearly defined. They have a role in bringing up young men, who look to the older men for guidance... that disappears here, instantly.’ – VCS provider organisation

Many interviewees spoke of the issues that can occur within refugee and asylum seeker communities. There should be no assumption made that refugees and asylum seekers will always create their own networks among people from their own country:

‘We’ve had people who’ve said they wouldn’t have a particular interpreter because that interpreter had a role back in the [refugee] camp, and these people got out before them; they might be terrified of them being in an official role’ – VCS provider organisation

Some of the more established refugee communities, such as the Iraqi community, have experienced higher levels of integration, for example in terms of jobs, higher education, understanding systems and personal relationships.

This is one of the factors that increase the need for good quality integration support to provide different choices and opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers:

‘The family has to be in a good place, mental health-wise, to want to leave the security of their home and what they know [in order to integrate]’ – VCS provider organisation

Interpretation and translation

There are services in Hull that are commissioned to provide interpretation and translation, or who charge for services, including AA Global. While services like GPs have a statutory duty to provide interpretation, a lack of awareness or preparation can mean provision is not always available when it is needed.

Open Doors has, for several years, delivered a volunteer-led interpretation and translation service (VITS). This service has been used to support other volunteer organisations that may not have the budget for paid interpreters.

In terms of emerging services, attempts are being made by One Humber to set up a low-cost interpreter network. One Humber is a new organisation in the process of attaining charitable status, with links to AA Global, who are contracted to provide translation services for Hull Clinical Commissioning Group. The aim of the network is to provide trained interpreters for community services like Goodwin Development Trust's Doula Project (birthing partners for vulnerable or isolated women) and the Preston Road Women's Centre Affordable Justice programme (legal advice for women experiencing domestic violence). One Humber are planning to establish a service that offers the consistency and quality of paid interpretation at a cost that is achievable for community organisations.

A minority of organisations have been able to incorporate the cost of translation/interpretation services into their budgets, including Haven and Refugee Council. Many others rely on volunteers:

'We don't have the funding from our organisation for interpreters. So we rely on volunteer interpreters, if we can't get volunteers they may have a friend or family member that speaks English that they might utilise. If they don't have one of those... they're really helpful, if we've helped them, they come and support... they all come and help each other. They do look after each other' – VCS provider organisation

'For the first appointment, we try to have an interpreter – we usually manage to get volunteers through Open Doors. After that, the volunteer who is supporting them has to find their way... but they are supporting them in their home and they will manage to understand each other' – Home-Start Hull

However, volunteer interpreters and family members can be inappropriate:

We can't use friends and family... if you are taking a sexual history they might not say... but that's the same with people from this country too, we don't test people together' – Yorkshire Mesmac

'One thing that has improved hugely – children are not used as interpreters [for family members] nearly as much as they used to be' – VCS provider organisation

Lack of availability of interpreters can have significant negative impact:

‘We were helping a woman with severe alcohol issues. A couple of sessions were cancelled because we couldn’t get an interpreter and that was the end of her world basically, she gets so much from the sessions it sustains her until the next session and if they are taken out of her calendar... Sometimes you feel you are building a relationship with an interpreter then you get someone else and it’s like you are starting again’ – VCS provider organisation

While there is evidence that interpretation and translation is not an issue for all services, there appears to be a lack of consistency:

‘It’s so hit and miss... it would be helpful if all the agencies that provide interpretation in Hull could come together and provide a standard they agree to...private companies won’t always do that though’ – VCS provider organisation

Advice

‘There is currently no-one doing free immigration or asylum casework in Hull or East Riding’ – Hull and East Riding Citizens Advice Bureau

High quality, free (or affordable) legal advice for asylum seekers was highlighted by the majority of organisations as a gap in Hull, particularly following the closure of NRC and ARKH:

‘It’s a huge gap in terms of getting people access to free immigration legal advice for asylum claims. Not the things like visa applications and the more straightforward stuff, it’s having that complex immigration advice.’ - VCS provider organisation

‘There are solicitors that can do immigration work – all the points-based applications, work visas, EU nationals. They are regulated under SRA for immigration, not asylum law. They can do citizenship, travel documents and family reunion – which was taken out of the scope of asylum law and therefore now has no Legal Aid. With SRA you can only do one or the other – immigration or asylum’ – VCS provider organisation

‘There’s a lack of the ‘this is where you are, this is where you need to get to, this is the process’ advice, the basic support people need to get through the asylum-seeking process’ – VCS provider organisation

‘There are people in the city with the right qualifications but if the organisation they work for is not set up to give advice they cannot do it. And it changes all the time, you have to keep up to date’ – VCS provider organisation

Very few organisations in Hull are currently set up to offer legal advice, and there are no Asylum Legal Aid solicitors operating in the city. Interviewees had different views

on the importance of having an Asylum Legal Aid solicitor in Hull. In normal circumstances, asylum seekers are allocated a Legal Aid solicitor at the initial accommodation centre from which they are 'dispersed' – this means that they do have access to Legal Aid and legal advice for their initial asylum claim, and that it would not be practical in most cases for another solicitor to take the claim on in their destination city.

However, access to legal advice is not only required at initial application; support to prepare fresh claims when new evidence of a need for protection becomes available is one of the only routes out of destitution.

Additionally, restrictions imposed by cuts to Legal Aid contracts mean solicitors often don't have time for in-depth investigations, and the complex nature of asylum claims can be exacerbated by having a solicitor that may be based many miles from where they live:

'My case was refused; now my solicitor is making an appeal for me. They are in Leeds. It's very hard, for me, going to Leeds. I have been two times, three times, but it's hard for me – the money. Sometimes the Church helps me, sometimes other guys, Iranian guys. Sometimes I can use the telephone but then they say they need to see me to do writing.' – Asylum seeker

'To prepare an asylum case is intensive, and you do need to meet for many, many hours just to prepare the witness statement' – VCS provider organisation

'Access to a Legal Aid solicitor can be one of only routes out of destitution for appeal rights exhausted asylum seekers. They may have new evidence to submit or further representations to be considered by Home Office' – VCS provider organisation

British Red Cross is able to give OISC Level 1 advice but in practice do not deliver it:

'We are accredited to level 1 but we don't do it in Hull because historically there were other organisations, like ARKH, that did it, and our purpose is helping people out of crisis; we don't see it as doing that. There is an argument that a citizenship application or a travel document isn't a crisis response' – British Red Cross

Citizens Advice Bureau do not provide specialist casework or advice, but can offer support through their generalist drop-in and can give OISC Level 1 advice. In practice, they do not see many refugees and asylum seekers:

'We had a call from a woman who had been taken to a detention centre, lifted from her house at 4am. She was terrified. Luckily our therapeutic worker knew legally that it wasn't right, we got in touch with immigration services and it turned out it shouldn't have happened. All her rights had been ignored. It was so lucky this particular worker knew... if ARKH still existed they would have known that, and it's the knowledge around rights that is missing.' - VCS provider organisation

‘We know the need is there but they are going elsewhere, often to places where they are exploited’ – VCS provider organisation

Legal advice is less of an issue for those with refugee status arriving through the Gateway programme or Syrian VPRS but the Refugee Council acknowledge there is a gap:

‘It’s an issue for refugees if they want family reunion. We’ve watched legal advisors come and go. We had services in Hull when I first started, then we were sending people to Leeds, then we had services back in Hull, then sending people to Sheffield. It’s still a gap.’ – VCS provider organisation

While the British Red Cross provide a family tracing service, which gives information to asylum seekers and refugees on family members that are back home or in other countries, they are then unable to support family reunion cases – there is currently no free advice in this area (OISC Level 2):

‘We can refer to the Sheffield Law Clinic and to Leeds, but at the moment they are not accepting any new cases because they don’t have the capacity’ – British Red Cross

Also highlighted was the lack of available support and advice for people who are being removed from the country, and the difference between legal advice and other types of advice and support:

‘For example, people may need advocacy support with other statutory services such as asylum support and the Local Authority, and helping people to return home if they decide to do this. This can require specialist knowledge and significant time; it’s complex but is not done by legal reps. This is something that British Red Cross (or others) can do, but our capacity is limited.’ - British Red Cross

A new charity (see Local Factors), Community Integration and Advocacy Centre (CIAC), is planning to provide Level 3 OISC advice, subsidised or funded through charged-for services.

Crisis and destitution

Several interviewees spoke about the meaning and definition of destitution in the context of asylum seekers and refugees. It is noted here that destitution is more than poverty; the term is used here to denote extreme and multiple deprivation in terms of accommodation, access to services and inability to meet basic human needs.

Service statistics from British Red Cross suggest there were at least 225 people experiencing destitution in 2016 in Hull.

British Red Cross provide specific services to support asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants with

sustainable routes out of destitution. However, they recognise the need to provide more casework instead of dealing with crises:

‘It’s about the difference between providing someone with an instant destitution provision, which is like a sticking plaster on a broken leg, and providing people with the space to understand their situation, their rights, their entitlements; help them find sustainable routes out of destitution and empower them to resolve issues as they arise in future. And I think that’s the difference in having capacity to run like an emergency drop-in service, where a lot of our time is spent on administration of things like giving out food vouchers, and not being able to really sit down with people and work with them on an intensive basis.’ – VCS provider organisation

As highlighted in this report, destitution is not confined to those with no recourse to public funds (e.g. refused asylum seekers). It can also happen at the point refugee status is granted:

‘...the NASS support will stop, their income will stop, but their benefits might take two months to get up and running, so essentially they’re destitute. They are at the mercy of their friends, they will sleep on the floor... that’s not any way for someone to live, let alone someone who is new to the country, doesn’t speak the language, is probably scared and quite possibly traumatised, is missing their family.’ – VCS provider organisation

Accommodation

Accommodation is more than housing; several interviewees highlighted the importance of stable accommodation as a basis for accessing other services and for feeling stable, secure and part of a community.

Accommodation is also an area where the needs and gaps can be different according to ‘status’ – asylum seekers are able to access housing while their asylum claim outcome is pending, but if it is refused this support is withdrawn, often resulting in homelessness. Even if their claim is accepted and they are granted leave to remain, they can face significant housing issues and destitution; refugees arriving through the Gateway programme or Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme have accommodation organised in advance of their arrival and this brings greater stability.

Housing for dispersed asylum seekers is provided in Hull by Target via a sub-contractual arrangement with G4S under the COMPASS framework. Target were identified as being ‘one of the better providers’, although it is acknowledged that the housing contracts have generally been problematic across the region, with only the very cheapest accommodation used in order to keep costs down.

In some areas, this can have the effect of placing more asylum seekers in ‘clusters’ and houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) in the poorest communities, impacting on

community cohesion and increasing the perception that the levels of asylum seekers is higher than it is. This was not specifically highlighted as an issue in Hull, however.

One of the main accommodation issues relates to transition between asylum seeker status and the attainment of refugee status. As highlighted earlier in the report, having to move out of COMPASS housing 28 days after being granted leave to remain means finding an alternative where few exist, often compounded by other barriers including a delay in receiving a National Insurance number and access to welfare benefits:

‘Usually if it’s a single person, they will be in shared housing. If they are lucky they might get a Council house, but it’s usually a shared house, 6 or 7 sharing a house, a kitchen. And that’s only if we can find them something’ (housing worker talking about transition)

Housing for refugees arriving through the Gateway programme and Syrian VPRS is facilitated by Hull City Council and there were indications that this system works well; accommodations support is therefore not an unmet need for this group. Interviews highlighted the differences between the experiences of asylum seekers that receive refugee status in Hull, and those arriving on Gateway/Syrian VPRS:

‘When we came to the house, it was furnished. They showed us everything, how everything worked. They explained what to do if something went wrong. I couldn’t believe it, I was crying, I was happy – I had a house, I had safety, I was going to settle in that house. It was a big thing. You can’t imagine.’ - Gateway participant.

There is currently no hosting scheme in Hull for refused asylum seekers – to put this in context there are several schemes operating in West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire. Hosting schemes link refused asylum seekers with people who are willing to provide rooms without receiving payment. Open Doors are in the process of developing a scheme in Hull with support from local people and potential funders.

A small number of refused asylum seekers are, however, accommodated at Sanctuary House in Hull through the support of Hull City of Sanctuary and Open Doors. This accommodation, which is owned by a Catholic church in Cottingham, is crucial in preventing destitution but cannot help everyone in this position:

‘It’s very hard [awaiting a decision]. I think about the future but... I lost everything. I have a home now which is very important. I am safe here. But I need a life, a real life. I go to see friends, go to Church, and come home again. This is my life.’ – Asylum seeker living at Sanctuary House

Further small-scale provision is offered at International House, which belongs to a local Methodist Church – a further three or four people are accommodated here. Rent is paid by Open Doors:

‘There are more people on our list, destitute asylum seekers, but we can’t offer them accommodation because we have no money to pay the rent.’ – Open Doors

Collaboration between services and joined-up working

Interviews highlighted good examples of joined-up working, as well as areas where the interaction between service and sectors could be improved:

‘I think my greatest concern is the referrals into statutory organisations and the level of understanding in those statutory services and how that can be a barrier in itself, and if there is any work we can do to smooth that referral process between... particularly with the local authority, the adult social care teams, the children’s social care services.’

‘I’m seeing more partnership working, there is still that mentality where you hear a lot of ‘treading on each other’s toes’ – you’re working with people, if you think you can do a better job or you think you can provide a better pathway, then tread on the toes! It’s about helping the person. I think that’s just the way companies are target driven now’.

There is a multi-agency meeting that includes voluntary and community sector organisations and public sector bodies. Those stakeholder that referred to the meeting did so in a positive way, although it was acknowledged that it could work more effectively:

‘We’ve got the multi-agency meeting, for refugees and asylum seekers. And what we did try to do was get the voluntary organisations to meet up before the multi-agency meeting, so if we had a common theme, we were approaching it with a united voice. And that worked well for a while but people found it difficult to find the time... it drifted but we ought to pick that up again.’

There were other indications that participating organisations want to work more closely:

‘We’d like to look at our capacity to extend our casework appointments in an external setting. Maybe in a hub type situation with other services. I think that really works having services under one roof in a central building.’

‘I’d like to see that co-ordination of the voluntary sector. I’d like to see that strengthen. It can feel like there is a lack of trust, and it’s all really around funding – that’s the only issue because we’ve all got the same goal, we all want to help people and get the best for people.’

‘I think it’s just that ‘better working together’, and making sure there is a clear understanding of who is doing what and there isn’t duplication. We know the Immigration Act is going to have significant impact on our service, on

destitution and people being able to find the support they need, quickly, to avoid entering crisis. So having that really clear understanding of who is doing what, and just working together better – that's really important'.

There were also positive examples of services working well together:

We've had a Somalian lady who was living with her children and getting racial abuse every day from a neighbour. It had been going on for months until she built up a rapport with us and was able to tell us. And we got the police involved, the Council, and we got her moved. And she's so much happier. Her children have moved school. One of the problems was, in Somalia, her experience of the police was very poor – they weren't people you could trust... She took a lot of encouragement to actually report it. And the good thing was they all worked together, all the agencies, the police, the Council, everybody. As soon as she reported it everyone was involved and it got sorted very quickly, very efficiently.' – VCS provider organisation

'We've had the leader of the Council in, and other councillors. We get good support from our local area teams, the Wyke team and the Myton team. The leader really appreciates our work, he gave us funding from the discretionary fund. The area teams come here and they know us.' – VCS provider organisation

There were several indications that *people*, rather than organisations or services, worked well together:

'If I was to refer people I'd go through the network I know, I do know people at the Council. Or for example if I didn't know anyone, I'd ask, for example a colleague, do you know anyone?'

This may have the unintended consequence of personal relationships being used to facilitate outcomes rather than clients themselves becoming familiar with access services directly:

'In terms of an equal relationship [with organisations], we might know an individual in an organisation, so we could ring them and say 'that's what we need for this client'... I think that wasn't always enabling for the client or the organisations we were dealing with.'

There was an element of VCS organisations not always having positive relationships with statutory bodies because of the nature of the challenges – 'our default position was going into battle!' This can solve immediate problems but create issues in terms of building long-term relationships.

Benefits of better relationships were highlighted – 'it gave clients access to more people that could help them... without that we were creating a dependency. And it was better for them, often other services had a lot more knowledge.'

Communication between services was highlighted as a potential barrier to working better together. For example, several services acknowledged that they did not always address issues directly with other organisations – if they had referred a client who had then had a bad experience, they would not refer any more. In other examples, services did directly address issues, leading to more positive outcomes longer-term.

There was a sense from the majority of interviews that improving joined-up working is *essential*, rather than just a goal to aim for. This view was echoed by the Big Lottery Fund:

‘One of our main concerns is around collaboration and partnerships, seeing more of that connectivity which benefits people. Not least because funders’ money is getting stretched; supporting multiple projects isn’t always possible.’

Support for children and unaccompanied minors

Children that come to the UK with refugee status are supported by the Refugee Council as part of the Gateway programme and Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. Children are also counselled through the therapeutic support offered by Haven, who will support school-age children in educational settings.

In addition, Hull currently supports approximately 12 unaccompanied minors a year, who are included in the city’s overall looked-after children statistics. These include children that have arrived through ‘irregular’ routes and who only have limited leave to remain - minors are not able to make a claim for asylum until they turn 18. This can lead to young people who are integrated in communities experiencing fear, disruption and even deportation when they become adults:

‘One lad that comes to us, he was well settled, had applied to college, got a girlfriend, speaks with a Hull accent. One day he is told he needs to report to the police station... we don’t know the full circumstances but we found out he had been deported.’

At a regional level, stakeholders suggested there were challenges in terms of a consistent approach to supporting this group:

‘In theory, they should be assessed properly, and appropriate accommodation set up. It obviously depends on their age, and their vulnerability and needs... some will be with foster carers, some will be in semi-independent living, some will be in a children’s home. But it all depends on availability and provision in each local authority area’ – voluntary sector provider

In Hull, Refugee Council are funded by the Home Office to provide support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking migrants, including helping them to understand the asylum process and ensuring they have a solicitor so they can access Legal Aid and

start preparing their case. The process of making an application for asylum when they turn 18 is complex:

‘Children’s claims are often found to be not credible... nearly everything they say and do is held against them.’

‘It’s really difficult because they have to do their interviews when they arrive, that can be maybe two or three really intense and gruelling interviews. And if you’re young you might not understand the importance... we’ve had some issues with interpreters not speaking the right language and children being poorly represented.’

British Red Cross provide an International Family Tracing Service which works with unaccompanied minors. Between January 2017 and March 2017 they have supported 7 young people:

‘The majority are those that have travelled themselves, maybe ended up in France then travelled by lorry to the UK. They’re not on a refugee programme... I haven’t personally seen anyone arrive through the Dubs scheme.’

One of the main issues raised by services in relation to support for children was the availability of school places – which is a wider issue outside of the asylum seeker and refugee community.

There was acknowledgement that the issue is sensitive and that public sector and other providers are not always resourced to deal with the complexities:

‘But equally, it goes the other way as well, we know that the challenge of care leavers is going to put a huge amount of pressure on social workers who are working with looked-after children. And they are, for the first time, going to have to be looking at destitution services, potentially, for children a lot quicker, and maybe there is a lot more engagement we could do to make sure our services are well-known to them and that we are all working in the best interests of the beneficiary.’

While the overall numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are low compared to other groups, this is likely to change under new dispersal programmes:

‘There used to be a strong concentration of unaccompanied minors in Kent because – people would come in through Dover, then Kent social services has... there are a lot of services there, so there are a lot of unaccompanied asylum seeker children there. It’s been decided that it’s too much of a concentration... there is going to be dispersal across the country, so the numbers are going to go up across the country. So the numbers will go up’. – VCS provider organisation

Volunteers

‘Volunteers enable us to do more.’ – VCS provider organisation

The vast majority of organisations that support asylum seekers and refugees in Hull use volunteers to complement the services provided by paid staff.

‘I think we’re incredibly vulnerable by having a service that is dependent on volunteers; we have to run the service in a safe way, and when we have a drop-in, it’s being able to manage the need but balance that with the need to recruit, train and support volunteers. As British Red Cross, we’re fortunate to have the benefits of being part of a national organisation in terms of training and support for volunteers.’ – British Red Cross

‘It’s good to have volunteers, brilliant, but if we like to have sustainability and run something on a long-term basis we have to have someone there who is paid staff.’ – VCS provider organisation

‘I know there is so much engagement in community activities in Hull, and all of the arts projects that have come out of the City of Culture, I think there is a really strong, vibrant community in Hull and I think that’s really evident. And there is a lot of will within the community to engage and to celebrate itself and be involved, which I think it quite special.’ – VCS provider organisation

‘We are quite lucky, we get so many people coming in and wanting to volunteer, but still we are short of volunteers with specific skills, like supporting the practical needs of our clients like education and job skills.’

There are a variety of roles for volunteers in the sector, including advice and guidance, issuing food vouchers and other crisis support, conversational English, translation/interpretation and running groups:

‘We’ve got quite a few now that were refugees on the programme. So they’ll come in and do a lot of the local orientation for us. So if you’ve got someone that’s got a hospital appointment at Castle Hill but they’ve never been before, there was a time when one of the support workers would have gone on the bus with them, but we have volunteers that have been through the programme and they remember all that and they are happy to go and meet someone in the town centre and take them to the hospital.’

‘We’ve started to be clearer about the roles and the particular skills we need, which has narrowed it down – they have to have a proper role. We have a volunteer therapist who is really good; she didn’t have refugee and asylum seeker experience so it’s helping her build that.’

Many examples of service users becoming volunteers, thereby supporting skills development and integration, were highlighted:

‘...we are now engaging clients to lead some of our services, to have roles within our projects. It’s working very well; they get something from us and we get them engaged in constructive activities.’

There were indications that volunteer recruitment and support could be better co-ordinated:

‘It does sound silly sometimes, if you’ve got four local organisations all asking for a volunteer co-ordinator, wouldn’t it be more sensible to have one for all of our volunteers? Train them and share them across organisations?’

‘We are working on funding to get another staff member, maybe full-time or part-time, to create a bit more sustainability [within our volunteer group]’ – VCS provider organisation

Other issues highlighted

- The length of time it can take for people granted refugee status to get a National Insurance number – highlighted by British Red Cross and Riverside
- Tensions within communities – for example among refugee groups from the same countries that have had different experiences
- Families or couples with children being split up or placed in different accommodation
- Everything is going online – housing, benefits – this can exclude various groups but in particular those with low levels of English and computer literacy

Changes

Interviewees were asked what changes – either to services or something wider like legislation - would have the biggest positive impact on ability to meet need:

- ‘Money for interpreters, more houses and more places in schools would be nice!’
- ‘Asylum seekers being allowed to work’
- Refused asylum seekers being seen as people – ‘*Still Human, Still Here*’
- More support for people with qualifications to get through the whole ‘requalification’ process – ‘we see dentists, doctors... they can’t practice’
- An organisation that has that high-level knowledge, but can also do that facilitating work and can co-ordinate support for asylum seekers
- OISC Level 2 asylum caseworkers
- More capacity to do campaigns and research – this helps with funding but also influences change for future clients

- Free legal advice – but it would have to be quality marked and the caseworker needs supervision
- ‘We should be able to volunteer, but be somewhere all day – so we can learn the language, understand how things work. My sons are volunteering for Hull 2017 and they have learned so much.’ (Gateway participant)

Positive factors and examples of good practice

There is a high level of commitment across the voluntary sector to work more effectively together to create improved outcomes for all asylum seekers and refugees. Open Doors was highlighted several times as a good example of ‘hub’ working.

‘To get ready to come here was tiring. We had to pack up, get ready. We were so tired. But the way they welcomed us...it made us forget we were tired. The welcome is so good.’
(Gateway participant)

Campaigns undertaken by some of the partners or agencies involved in this report have led to changes in legislation or policy, for example refugees being able to claim disability benefits without having to be resident for two years, and victims of domestic violence having more immediate access to benefits.

Outcomes for women and children have been improved by referrals into the Doula Project, which is run by Goodwin Development Trust to provide a support network to pregnant women. This service can be extremely valuable for asylum seekers and refugees.

6. Conclusions, recommendations & next steps

Evidence gathered during interviews suggests there are genuine gaps in services, particularly in terms of:

- Legal advice – there were inconsistent views on whether or not there is sufficient need for an Asylum Legal Aid solicitor in Hull. However, there was agreement that there is insufficient free or low-cost legal advice for asylum seekers and refugees in Hull, particularly casework and support to deal with processes and decisions. Exploitation appears to be common but it is difficult to get anything beyond anecdotal evidence
- Accommodation – unlike other cities in the region, there are no hosting schemes providing accommodation for refused asylum seekers who have no recourse to public funds, apart from small-scale provision organised by Hull City of Sanctuary. There is also a lack of housing options for people moving out of Target accommodation after gaining refugee status, though this is not unique to asylum seekers/refugees. The lack of accommodation also creates vulnerability to exploitation
- Long-term integration support – there are several projects and organisations offering low-level integration support. However, in many cases this is poorly-funded, not co-ordinated or, as in the case of the Gateway programme and Syrian VPRS, time limited
- Support to return - all services agreed that increased access to impartial information and support is required to guide asylum seekers through the process when they have exhausted appeal rights and need help to understand their position, come to terms with the decision, and – if it is the right decision – return to their country

In other cases, gaps are based on funding, capacity and co-ordination – services exist but do not meet demand, for example English language support, which is provided through the Gateway programme and VPRS but is not co-ordinated or provided more widely. It can also be limited to basic or conversational skills, meaning those that wish to work or begin further education need additional support. Interpretation is provided for a fee by a number of services, and many build interpretation costs into their projects. Again, however, there is evidence that many services rely on volunteers and ‘make do’ with inconsistent, unreliable or lower-quality services; there is no central co-ordination or agreement on standards.

There are also barriers, where services exist but are not readily accessed by refugees and asylum seekers for a variety of reasons. These reasons include a lack of confidence and awareness, and a reluctance to access new services in unfamiliar

places. This includes cases where delays or failures in statutory services become a contributing factor in destitution, for example the length of time it can take for people with newly granted refugee status to receive a National Insurance number and welfare benefits.

There is evidence of well-established and effective partnership working between organisations that support refugees and asylum seekers in Hull, with the drop-in at Open Doors being one example. However, multi-agency partnerships and Hull's involvement at regional and strategic levels could be improved. This goes beyond the common recommendation that organisations 'could work together more effectively' – interviews highlighted that Hull can be isolated in terms of strategic regional links, and that historic approaches have created barriers to positive cross-sector working. Relationships between regional organisations and those with a specific, local focus have been affected by scarcity of funding, differing levels of capacity and the closure of the Northern Refugee Centre.

Where services cannot meet demand, or are not available, there are increased risks of exploitation. Many examples were given by interviewees of the vulnerable state of destitute asylum seekers and refugees and the ways in which they were exploited through legal advice, poor accommodation and work. The nature of this exploitation is such that very few people feel able to vocalise the treatment they have received or take their cases forward, meaning exploitation continues.

Volunteers play a vital role in the delivery of services; many providers rely on volunteers in a variety of roles – particularly in those organisations where there is a high ratio of clients to paid staff. Just as important is the opportunity for service users to volunteer, providing skills development and the chance to 'give back' – this was seen as a good route for integration and several examples were given of service users becoming paid staff or taken on additional roles. A centralised database of volunteers with their skills and languages could provide greater co-ordination. If centrally funded, a volunteer co-ordinator could ensure volunteers receive the same quality experiences across the sector.

There was evidence that frontline workers need more support and guidance to address referral quality issues as they arise. For example, if they are aware of clients not receiving a good service from another provider, typical responses are to try a different service, solve the issue themselves or use a personal contact within that service – bypassing the 'official' route. If a better process was in place, and they were supported by managers to be confident in feeding back to other services, issues could be highlighted and organisations could work together to improve experiences in the future.

The findings from this research suggest there is a need for:

- Better strategic representation at a regional level to ensure Hull can influence, contribute to best practice and benefit from shared learning, with potential for the voluntary sector to lead multi-agency partnership meetings
- Improved collaboration and co-ordination of certain services, for example English language provision, translation and interpretation, and integration
- Free or low-cost legal advice
- Facilitation to access mainstream services – the role of a ‘middle man’ to co-ordinate support and help people to navigate systems, supported by an increased training offer for those services that appear less accessible
- The capacity and ‘space’ to campaign and influence, to create better outcomes for asylum seekers and refugees in the future
- Further feasibility work on developing centralised co-ordination of volunteers, including volunteer training and support, and quality placements
- A more formalised, constructive process for frontline workers to address issues with other services when they arise – this includes voluntary sector, mainstream and/or public sector services

Next steps

At the draft stage of the report, an event was held for stakeholders to discuss the report’s findings and recommendations.

The additional findings from this event can be found at Appendix A.

Event – 7th April, 2017

The Octagon, Walker Street, Hull

Purpose of event

A wide range of stakeholders were asked to attend the event and received the following invitation:

‘North Bank Forum was commissioned by a partnership of organisations to compile an assessment of the needs of refugees and asylum seekers in Hull.

The report is now in its final stages and the partnership – British Red Cross, Hull City of Sanctuary, Goodwin Development Trust (Haven Project) and Refugee Council - would like to invite you to a stakeholder event to share the findings and contribute your thoughts and experiences.

Many of you have been directly involved in the report – we would like the event to be an opportunity for you to give further feedback, or share your views if you did not take part. The learning from the event will be used to look at support for refugees and asylum seekers in the future.’

People and organisations attending

Name	Organisation
Francis Ahiakpa	Humber All Nations Alliance
Sarah Botterill	Migration Yorkshire
Bill Dennis	Migration Yorkshire
Dianne Hamilton	Goodwin Development Trust
Debbie Hammond	Hull City Council
Christine Hannington	Refugee Council
Lucy Heatley	Healthwatch Hull
Lisa Hilder	Preston Road Women’s Centre
Philip Leach	Target Housing
Frances Ledbury	Pepperells Solicitors
Lynda Lo	Hull City Council
Rob Malyan	Big Lottery Fund
Stephanie Martin	Riverside Care and Support
Jayne Mercer	Hull City of Sanctuary
Pippa Robson	North Bank Forum
Lucy Simmonds	British Red Cross
Bashir Siraj	Open Doors Hull
Lesley Thornley	Citizens Advice Hull & East Riding
Phil Vincent	Home-Start (Hull)

Bev Walker	Humber All Nations Alliance
Eliza Wan	Target Housing
Duncan Wells	Refugee Council
Diane Wheeler	Riverside Care and Support
Katerina Woodcock	Pepperells Solicitors
Jackie Wright	Goodwin Development Trust

Agenda

10.00am	Refreshments and registration
10.15am	Welcome and introductions
10.25am	The report: purpose, stakeholders, interviews, findings and recommendations
11.00am	Discussion groups
12.00pm	Feedback
12.15pm	Next steps and actions
12.30pm	Networking lunch

Pippa Robson from North Bank Forum gave a presentation that outlined the report.

This was followed by facilitated discussion groups with the following instructions:

No rules – you can discuss any aspect of the findings. However, the purpose is:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge the findings – do you agree? • Share your views and ideas – are there any missed opportunities or solutions? • Identify what is missing – are you aware of any gaps or barriers that haven't been mentioned? • Offer additional recommendations • Pledge support – how else can you or your organisation help? |
|--|

Discussions were recorded on flipchart paper before participants shared their conversations in a feedback session. A summary of these discussions is below; findings are themed but in no particular order. Some +comments have been expanded slightly to provide context, otherwise

Legal advice

Lack of Legal Aid – concern that there may not be sufficient numbers in Hull to necessitate a Legal Aid solicitor. General Legal Aid is difficult to access due to restrictions on provision.

There were suggestions that the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) are coming to Hull to investigate examples of bad practice.

The potential for new ways of working was discussed. Possibility of replicating the Affordable Justice model that has been set up by Preston Road Women's Centre:

<http://www.affordablejustice.co.uk/> - using a social enterprise model, hourly rates are approximately one-third of normal commercial rates.

There are opportunities for everyone who offers legal advice to get together (partnership) and give a more regulated service.

Language and interpretation

ESOL – provision is available to specific groups.

Crèche facilities were seen as important in supporting language learning classes. Preston Road Women's Centre provides crèche facilities.

NHS England have established the principles of good interpretation practice. Local provision in Hull varies as there are no consistent standards to which every organisation/agency adheres.

Open Doors can provide volunteer interpreters – it was felt that there was not enough awareness that this service exists.

Language barriers impact on ability to understand asylum and housing decisions etc., and can reduce the amount of time available to support someone post-decision. Could this be helped by having more support by accommodation provider?

There is a big problem with paying for translation; some services like Hull and East Riding Citizens Advice are able to use professional interpreters but still issues with paying for interpreters

Accessing services

There is a role for increased advocacy in supporting people to access services.

General

Difference between drop-in and offering timed appointments – impacts on the quality and effectiveness of support.

Open Doors acknowledged as a unique service in the way it brings other organisations together.

More information about the multi-agency meeting and the terms of reference – who is attending and who should be invited?

Issues like legal advice, post-decision work also exist around the region and outside bigger cities.

Acknowledgement that working together in the future will be crucial to work with changes to legislation.

More use of social media to get information across (e.g. myth-busting), campaign to educate British population.

There should be more examination and discussion on destitute/refused asylum seekers – their situation increases the risk of exploitation and slavery.

More work needed to raise awareness of the importance of using legally registered immigration advice.

Bad feedback about a service needs unpicking and analysing – mixed message etc.

Challenges

Challenge for the voluntary sector to be sustainable; this is across the sector and not just field of asylum seeker and refugee support.

Heavy reliance on volunteers, who come and go. It would be beneficial to co-ordinate volunteers across the city, perhaps a joint co-ordinator role.

Travel costs for fresh submissions/initial asylum claims to Liverpool and Croydon.

Gaps

A city-wide directory of services

Transitional and supported accommodation

Support for integration

A hosting project for destitute/refused asylum seekers

Next steps/future provision and support pledges

Acknowledgement that Hull's City of Culture is involving diverse communities in a positive way.

Improving links with University:

- Using the Leeds/Sheffield model to develop an online directory or 'app' showing services e.g. Sheffield Hackathon (a computer programming

'marathon' where teams put their ideas together to create something exciting in 24 hours)

- Encouraging more community engagement
- Utilising internships/placements for bespoke development and projects e.g. Refugee Council used students to develop an IT module for ESOL (example of good practice)

Migration Yorkshire and British Red Cross pledged to see how they could improve Hull's links to the region

Open Doors pledged to arrange a meeting of key stakeholders that attend the weekly drop-in (purpose not clear – better information sharing?)

Partnership working needed to set up a city-wide voluntary interpretation service that also covers East Riding and builds on the work already being done at Open Doors

Develop unified ways of feeding information to Home Office and other relevant organisations e.g. Local Authority – this was raised in relation to issues such as the length of time it can take to get National Insurance numbers

Stakeholder map

Sources of information for the initial stakeholder mapping:

- Data from steering group members
- Data drawn from North Bank Forum's membership database and the lead researcher's own contacts
- Information taken from secondary e.g. online research

Primary stakeholders

- Hull City of Sanctuary (Peter Campion/Jayne Mercer/Steve Ibbetson)
- Refugee Council (Duncan Wells/Christine Hannington)
- British Red Cross (Lucy Simmonds)
- Haven/Goodwin Development Trust (Jackie Wright/Peter McGurn/Dianne Hamilton)
- Asylum seekers and refugees

Additional suggested stakeholder organisations/providers

- Hull City Council (Gateway and Syrian VPRS accommodation, looked-after children)
- Humber Community Advice Services
- Open Doors
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Private solicitors
- Community Integration and Advocacy Centre
- Healthcare – Health Access for Refugees Project
- Yorkshire Mesmac (sexual health)
- Riverside (housing related support)
- The Doula Project (birthing partner and ante-natal support)
- The Quays – GP and health services
- Schools
- Humberside Police
- Children's Centres
- Hostels and homeless charities
- Funders
- Umbrella organisations
- Faith Groups
- Migrant Help
- Migration Yorkshire

Not all organisations identified in the initial stakeholder map were able to take part in the report. The organisations interviewed are listed below:

- Big Lottery Fund
- British Red Cross
- Citizens Advice Hull & East Riding
- Community Integration and Advocacy Centre
- Goodwin Development Trust (Haven Project)
- Hull City of Sanctuary
- Humber All Nations Alliance
- Home-Start Hull
- Migration Yorkshire
- One Humber
- Open Doors
- Refugee Council
- ReNew
- Riverside
- Target Housing
- The Warren
- Yorkshire Mesmac

Appendix C

Questions for service providers

Interviews with service providers were semi-structured; in practice different follow-up questions were used depending on responses.

The following questions were used as starting points:

1. What changes are you seeing?
2. What agencies and organisations are you working with? Who refers to you and who do you refer people to?
3. How do organisations work together? Across sectors?
4. What unmet needs are you seeing?
5. What changes would you want to see, in any sense, that would make it easier to meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers?
6. Can you share with me any examples of things that have improved, or people who have experienced positive changes?
7. Any other points you would like to raise

Appendix D

Questions for service users

1. How long have you been in Hull?
2. What help have you had?
3. What help do you still need?
4. Has anything good happened while you have been here?
5. Any other points: health, family, where you live

Glossary of terms

Appeal Rights Exhausted (ARE) – the stage in an asylum claim where asylum seekers are informed by the Home Office that they have no further appeal options and no right to stay in the UK, though there may still be legal options to pursue¹²

ARKH – Asylum Seekers and Refugees of Kingston upon Hull, a long-standing Hull-based charity that merged with the Northern Refugee Centre (NRC) in 2013 and was subsequently closed when NRC was dissolved

COMPASS – Commercial and Operating Managers Procuring Asylum Support, a contracting framework used by the Home Office to commission accommodation provision for asylum seekers

Destitute – people who are experiencing significant or overwhelming poverty, including multiple forms of deprivation such as homelessness, no access to healthcare and extreme hunger¹³

Dubs – a scheme named after Lord Dubs' amendment to the Immigration Act which required the Home Secretary to relocate and offer assistance to a specified number of unaccompanied refugee children to Europe. The scheme has now been overturned.¹⁴

ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages. A particular method and set of learning materials for teaching English. The term is only used in this report to denote specific use of the ESOL method; where it is not used the provision should be assumed to relate to generic English language skills learning.

Gateway – The Gateway Protection Programme. A national scheme, delivered in Hull by the Refugee Council, to provide resettlement support to people coming into the UK with refugee status. Applications are made to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and many of the 750 people accepted through the scheme each year come to the UK after spending years in refugee camps.¹⁵

HANA – Humber All Nations Alliance, an umbrella organisation based in Hull that supports black and minority ethnic communities and community groups.

¹² <http://righttoremain.org.uk/toolkit/glossary.html>

¹³ <http://www.redcross.org.uk/About-us/News/2016/January/Record-number-of-UK-asylum-seekers-destitute>

¹⁴ <https://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/news/blog/refugee-children-dubs-or-dublin>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gateway-protection-programme-information-for-organisations/gateway-protection-programme>

HMOs – Houses of Multiple Occupancy, often used by providers operating COMPASS contract to house multiple asylum seekers.

NASS – National Asylum Support Service. Now part of the Immigration and Nationality Department and referred to as Asylum Support. Accommodation and basic financial support for people who are seeking asylum (does not apply to refused asylum seekers). People who are dispersed from initial accommodation centres may be eligible for NASS but receive no choice over the location of accommodation.

NRC – Northern Refugee Centre, a registered charity in operation since 1999. NRC acted as an umbrella organisation for organisations that supported asylum seekers and refugees. NRC merged with a number of other charities, including ARKH, in 2013 but subsequently closed, leaving gaps in services.

OISC – Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner. The body that regulates immigration advice, and publishes reports and information on those regulations. The OISC can prosecute in cases where immigration advice has been given without the necessary regulation.¹⁶

Still Human, Still Here – a national campaign to end the destitution of thousands of refused asylum seekers in the UK, supported by a coalition of more than 60 organisations including Refugee Council and British Red Cross.¹⁷

(Syrian) VPRS – a Home Office programme to give protection to vulnerable Syrians – the first priority cases included the elderly, disabled and victims of sexual violence and torture. There is no fixed quota; Hull has agreed to take 100 people over three years through the programme.¹⁸

VCS – voluntary and community sector. Also referred to as VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise sector), third sector and not-for-profit sector. Those organisations that operate for social benefit and do not distribute profits to shareholder.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-immigration-services-commissioner>

¹⁷ <https://stillhumanstillhere.wordpress.com/>

¹⁸ <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06805>

A report compiled by:

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