

APPG Ending Homelessness – enquiry into nrpf migrant homelessness

**List of LMP members who contributed evidence**

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**1a What are the causes homelessness among this group**

<i>Causes of homelessness</i>	<b>Single NRPF</b>	<b>NRPF Families</b>
<i>Termination of Section 4 accommodation</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Termination of Section 95 accommodation</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Eviction from Initial Accommodation (termination of Section 98)</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Incorrect assessment to entitlement of support by the Home Office</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Incorrect assessment to entitlement of support by the Local Authority</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Confusion over right to rent legislation (“can this person still stay with me lawfully?”)</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Wearing out welcome with friends/relatives</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Hospital discharge</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Trafficking</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Pregnancy</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Lack of ability to access affordable accommodation</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Poverty</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Relationship breakdown</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Fleeing domestic violence and abuse</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>28 day transition period. Shortage of social housing and the bureaucratic mainstream benefit system.</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Those on release from immigration detention are at risk of becoming destitute if there's no prearranged accommodation/support for them on exiting detention, or if the arrangement (be it informal stays with family and friends) breaks down.</i>	<b>x</b>	

1b What are the consequences of homelessness among this group

<i>Consequences of homelessness</i>	<b>Single NRPF</b>	<b>NRPF Families</b>
<i>Rough sleeping</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Cold</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Malnutrition</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Loneliness/isolation</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Loss of contact with legal/support services</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Increased likelihood of illegal working</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Increased risk of harm or exploitation</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Increased susceptibility to political extremist beliefs</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Loss of physical/ mental health</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Increased/problematic drug alcohol use</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Increased begging or other forms of perceived anti-social behaviour</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Public alarm and distress</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Frequent attempts to access public services - even though they will be unable to assist</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Taking action to get out of destitution is exceptionally hard when living with destitution: the physical and mental strain reduces peoples' capacity to act</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>The stress and strain of constantly looking for somewhere new to stay each day not necessarily sleeping on a bed, not having a postal address and sometimes not having a mobile phone</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>

**2 What usually happens when migrants with NRPF approach authorities for help (both in terms of families with children who the LA has a duty of care towards and single homeless people)**

<i>What usually happens</i>	<b>Single NRPF</b>	<b>NRPF Families</b>
<i>Signposting to St George's Crypt or Nightshelter</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Signposting to PAFRAS or British Red Cross for destitution support</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Signposting to Home Office Removals Team</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Offered a ticket "home"</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>If no local connection, told to return to area of last local connection</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Offered Temporary Accommodation pending investigations</i>		<b>x</b>
<i>Referral to Children's Services under s17</i>		<b>x</b>
<i>Referral to Adult Social Care under Care Act (where applicable)</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Sometimes there is no action</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>

**3a Examples of best practice**

<b>Best practice</b>	<b>Single NRPF</b>	<b>NRPF Families</b>
<i>Nightshelter for homeless and destitute NRPF</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Grace Hosting Scheme, providing emergency accommodation to destitute asylum seekers and refugees</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Ring fenced domestic violence beds for women with NRPF</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>Leeds' severe weather protocol provides beds for all people who need them, regardless of immigration status when temperatures forecast to dip below freezing for 3 consecutive nights</i>	<b>x</b>	
<i>"Housing first" approach for all groups</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Destitution services to upskill to deliver OISC Level 2 advice and invest in volunteer casework resource to deliver non-complex advice</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Destitution services to upskill to be able to challenge mainstream support decisions (eg s.17, Care Act) and issue pre-action protocol letters</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>

<i>An Integrated model of support where accommodation providers work alongside emergency and practical support, mental and physical health providers and immigration advice to de-escalate crisis and support migrants to move out of homelessness and destitution and make positive and lasting changes to their situation.</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Mental health and well-being support for staff and volunteer teams in the sector reducing burn out and ensure consistency for service-users</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>

### 3b Recommendations for how we can tackle migrant homelessness

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Single NRPF</b>	<b>NRPF Families</b>
<i>Inclusion of Homeless Migrants needs in Key Local Strategies (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health and Well Being Plan, Housing Needs Survey &amp; Strategy, Community Safety Planning</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>LA funds ring-fenced domestic violence beds for women with NRPF</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Better and more effective use of Care Act Assessments for Older People and people with long term life limiting conditions who are also NRPF</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Hospital discharge protocols with Homeless Teams to ensure at-risk patients who no longer require in-patient care are adequately assessed under Care Act and accommodation provided at the point of discharge</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Closer working between destitution services and mainstream homelessness orgs, to ensure targeted support</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Tailored training to mainstream homelessness orgs, Social Services and other statutory services on the causes, consequences and complexities of homelessness among migrant communities</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Build cross-sector relationships to be able to work effectively through complex cases and in the best interests of the client</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>City-wide audit of NRPF accommodation supply and demand, to ensure accurate assessment of need and targeted provision of support</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>The Government must recommit to applying existing policy and guidance consistently in all cases - (Refugee Action: slipping through cracks 07/2017)</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Individual Homeless plans/pathways designed for key groups - to provide guidance to homeless officers on suitable actions and</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>

<i>recommended routes into stable accommodation</i>		
<i>Asylum accommodation provider to be included as a public body with a duty to refer under the Homelessness Reduction Act, both for those granted leave and those receiving a refusal.</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Improve access to quality legal advice</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>An end to end asylum support system, including adequate levels of support and accommodation for those with a refused asylum claim</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>
<i>Better access to rent deposit schemes and incentives for Landlords to sign-up to these</i>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>

### **Additional information**

1. LMP members are very concerned about the pending changes to support entitlements for families under the Immigration Act 2016 which threatens to increase levels of homelessness among asylum seeking families and singles adults including young care leavers from the age of 18.
2. The 'Hostile Environment' created through Home Office policy has increased barriers to housing, financial support, work, bank accounts and not only exacerbates homelessness but also increases the level of vulnerability and pushes those in need further away from advice and support services.
3. Delays in accessing legal advice result in prolonged homelessness. Many legal aid providers report that the funds available to draft a Further Submissions do not cover costs. In Leeds, we have seen a bottle-neck effect and waiting times increase. Once the Further Submissions are prepared further delays are experienced with Home Office appointments to submit being given approximately 8-10 weeks in advance. During this waiting time single asylum seekers often continue to live in destitution, the Home Office will refuse asylum support until the submissions have been made.
4. Refugee Action's Choices service offered an independent, impartial and confidential advice service for migrants to consider their options around voluntary return. The Home Office withdrew funding for this programme in 2015 and since then the sector has felt a real gap in this support pushing nrpf migrants further into destitution and situations of high risk including trafficking and exploitation.
5. Home Office funding, such as the Controlling Migration Fund, have had restricted application routes and requirements to actively work in partnership with the Home Office Immigration Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) Teams. This compromises independence and breaks trust with communities and therefore are unlikely to be taken up by organisations with the relationship, expertise and position to engage effectively with nrpf migrants.

6. LMP members are concerned mainstream and statutory services have a gap in knowledge of the asylum system and legal advice, this can lead to poor decision making and ill-informed assessments. A recent case in Leeds saw a mother with two children have their s.17 support terminated as the nrpf panel assessed that the client's solicitor had been 'sitting' on the case for too long and presumed this was because there was little or no merit. The decision was challenged and the support extended, however, the family were put under a great deal of stress which will impact on their relationship and trust with authorities and therefore their ability to engage with services and move-out of homelessness.
7. The sheer demand for homelessness support among migrant communities results in very busy drop-ins and high caseloads. In 2017 services in Leeds provided advice to over 700 migrants living in destitution, homelessness or temporary and insecure accommodation. Energy is so often taken up by de-escalating crisis situations and meeting immediate needs that it can be really challenging to find time to work proactively with service-users. There is value in exploring different models of early action to support migrant communities to move into a safer place sooner and prevent homelessness and crisis situations from reoccurring.
8. The maximum number of bed spaces available in Leeds for destitute asylum seekers and refugees at any one time is 37 (21 Grace Hosting Project, 10 WYDAN Night Shelter and 6 St.Monica's) with an additional 4 compassionate bed spaces at St. George's Crypt. LMP recognise the need has increased for nrpf/destitute bed spaces and are very concerned that both Grace Hosting Project and WYDAN are facing significant funding challenges this year.
9. Across the West Yorkshire region the maximum number of nrpf bed spaces available at any one time are: Bradford 22, Wakefield 9, Huddersfield 9 and Halifax 4.
10. LMP are concerned that since Brexit there have been reports of a rise in detention of EU citizens not exercising their treaty rights. We were pleased to see the ruling in December 2017 that saw it become unlawful to forcibly remove EU rough sleepers.

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