

NACCOM

THE NO ACCOMMODATION NETWORK

CIO no 1162434



Impact Report / 2020



Bringing an end to destitution amongst people seeking asylum, refugees and migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds living in the UK.

www.naccom.org.uk

NACCOM team 2019 - 2020



Incoming:
Renae Mann
National Director
(September 2020)



Outgoing:
Hazel Williams
National Director
(in post from November 2017 –
July 2020)



Angela Stapley
Operations Coordinator



Hannah Gurnham
Communications Coordinator



Diane Balsillie
Operations Coordinator
(maternity cover until August 2020)



Jessie Seal
Campaigns and Policy
Coordinator



Lucy Smith
Campaigns and Policy
Coordinator



Paul Catterall
Network Development Worker



Dave Smith
Network Development Worker
(retired December 2019)



Katie Fawcett
Network Development Worker

**NACCOM is grateful to the following
organisations for funding in 2019-20**



Sam And Bella Sebba Charitable Trust

A B Charitable Trust

Trustees

Julian Prior, Chair

Jonny Darling

Catherine Houlcroft

Jochen Kortlaender

Caron Boulghassoul

Washington Ali

Abed Moubayed (Resigned 28th October 2019)

Rachel Bee (Resigned 17th October 2019)

For more information on our staff and Trustees, please visit:
www.naccom.org.uk/meettheteam

Our Vision and Goals

Our vision

NACCOM is committed to bringing an end to destitution amongst asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds living in the UK.

Our mission

NACCOM exists to promote best practice in and support the establishment of accommodation projects that reduce destitution amongst asylum seekers. In addition, they may also support migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and / or refugees facing barriers to accessing affordable housing.

Our values

- A thirst for justice
- Solidarity – We stand alongside those who have experience of destitution and those who support them
- Inclusion of refugees, people seeking asylum and migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds
- Collective working within and beyond the network
- Shared resources, knowledge, ideas, expertise and good practice
- Openness, transparency and accessibility

We do this by:



Providing networking opportunities to encourage, empower and connect members



Sharing knowledge and promoting best practice to provide pathways out of destitution



Working with others (including those with lived experience) to raise awareness of destitution and campaign for a just and humane asylum system



Gathering and disseminating data on the scale of destitution and positive outcomes achieved by members

Key Strategic Goals 2018 – 2020

1

Supporting members to become more sustainable and effective to increase the number of people they accommodate.

3

Tackle the root causes of destitution through policy, lobbying and awareness raising.

2

Enabling those with lived experience to share their insight and experiences so that working in partnership with NACCOM and other organisations, the human face of destitution has a raised profile and their opinions inform our work.

4

Ensure NACCOM is a well-resourced and strategic organisation.

(To review our Key Strategic Goals in full please visit www.naccomm.org.uk/AboutUs)



Foreword

Hazel Williams | Outgoing National Director



"It really has been an unprecedented year of change in every way"



We started this year with a new Prime Minister; a snap general election that confirmed Boris Johnson's Conservative Government was in power with an unprecedented majority. The election clashed with our plans for a media launch of a joint report about Section 4 delays with Refugee Action, and purdah kyboshed our advocacy plans. Whilst this was disappointing, we remained hopeful - Boris has previously suggested an amnesty for undocumented migrants. Unfortunately, he seems to have backtracked on this.

Then in March a global Covid-19 pandemic was declared, and our members had to move quickly to adjust to lockdown rules. In exceptionally challenging circumstances, there have been small rays of light. It has been inspiring and humbling to see how organisations across the network have responded to ensure that those who desperately need support can still access it.

The power of the NACCOM network came into its own when we were able to collect evidence from members on what was happening on the ground during the pandemic. Using this vital information, we co-ordinated a quick response through a joint letter to the Prime Minister with over 80 other organisations calling for urgent policy changes, including a halt to asylum evictions. Having worked in the sector for 17 years or so, this is one of the only times I have seen the government positively respond to a policy ask so quickly.

The pandemic has triggered changes to homelessness policy which are unprecedented. There is still much work to be done however, over the next year to secure these as lasting changes, ensuring that no-one is evicted into homelessness and that the NRPF condition is scrapped. Nevertheless, the legacy of Covid-19 has seen a fundamental change in how members approach accommodation provision and develop new practices in partnership with people who are experiencing homelessness.

In May, the Black Lives Matter protests highlighted the gross inequalities we have in our society and how disproportionately people of colour are impacted. Importantly, it has opened up a space for more public recognition that the Hostile Environment policies causing destitution stem from a system founded on structural racism. Within the refugee sector it has led to more openness about calling out this structural racism, something which has been frustratingly lacking in the past.

This will be my last Foreword, as I leave NACCOM for a new role at the Justice Together Initiative, where I will continue the fight for access to justice for people in the immigration system. I'd like to extend a huge thank you to all our member organisations, staff and Trustees. It has been an absolute privilege to work at NACCOM; I have learnt so much from the work of members and people who find themselves destitute. I will never cease to be amazed by their tenacity, commitment and drive to do the right thing.



Foreword

Julian Prior | Chair of Trustees

It is hard to believe that NACCOM celebrated its fifth year as an independent charity back in June. Whilst the network has been in existence for much longer than this, the last five years have been one of accelerated growth and development as we have attracted funding to support more members than ever and collectively advocate for an end to destitution. This astonishing response to destitution by member organisations, despite limited resources, is to be celebrated.

However, the Government's recent announcement (Sept 2020) to discontinue accommodation for those with NRPF status whilst also introducing increasingly restrictive measures to try and head off a second wave of the coronavirus is alarming. I know how concerned members are about the coming months for those in this vulnerable position and the likely strain it will put on us as we try to provide solutions to mitigate the worst effects of destitution across the UK. Whilst the network is strong and continues to grow and respond creatively to this challenge, it should not be seen by Government as the safety net for so many with NRPF status. Therefore, the need to keep up the pressure for a reverse of this decision is vital to prevent a significant increase in destitution.

For the last two and a half years Hazel Williams has brilliantly led NACCOM and developed an outstanding staff team. I am very grateful for all that she has contributed to NACCOM and whilst sorry to see her move on, I am confident that her skills and experience will bring about much needed resources to the sector to access legal advice and support. Following a thorough recruitment process Renae Mann was appointed to the role of National Director. I am thrilled we have been able to appoint someone of such calibre and experience and look forward to working closely with Renae as she settles into the role.

Over the next few months, we will be reviewing our strategy and goals both in terms of how we have met current objectives as well as planning our focus for the next

three years. It will be a timely review given the significant impact of the Coronavirus. We will be consulting widely with members, people with lived experience of destitution, funders and other stakeholders as to their needs from the network going forward. We plan to publish our new strategy and goals in spring 2021.

This year we have strengthened the Board by inviting three new people to join us to explore whether they should be nominated to become trustees. I am delighted to be proposing to members at our AGM in September that Phil Davies, Sara-Jane Gay and Shukry should all become trustees as they bring a wealth of complimentary skills and experience that will add diversity and depth to the Board. I am very grateful for the continued input and wisdom from our existing trustees; Jochen, Caron, Jonny, Catherine and Washington, in what, I know has been a demanding year for us all.

I would also like to pay tribute to NACCOM's founder, Dave Smith, who retired in December. For many years Dave single-handedly co-ordinated the network and carried the vision of bringing organisations together to encourage one another, share good practice, and develop solutions to the challenges we face. Whilst the network has developed significantly since those early years, the vision and values remain the same for which we have Dave to thank. His determination, networking skills, humility and love for the people he works with and on behalf of have been a real inspiration to me.

Despite being a very difficult year, I take great encouragement from the collective impact that the network has had this year as outlined in this report. Whilst there is much more to do and many significant challenges ahead, I remain optimistic that together we can make the case with increasing effectiveness that destitution is both inhumane and extremely counter-productive in resolving vulnerable people's immigration situation.



"Thank you for your part in this collective endeavour."



Key milestones 2019 - 2020

July 2019



Hosting convention, London

NACCOM held a hosting convention in London to celebrate and highlight the vital role that hosting can play in ending destitution. The event was attended by over 120 people, and delegates heard from hosts, guests and hosting organisations via a series of panel discussions and workshops.

Open letter to the new Home Secretary

NACCOM joined with other organisations in the sector to write to Priti Patel on her appointment as Home Secretary, outlining key policy changes needed to make the immigration system fairer and more humane, including ending the Hostile Environment.

September 2019

Member hub meetings

We kick-started our Autumn series of hub meetings, bringing together members from across the UK to meet in regional hubs, to connect and share good practice.

Missing the Safety Net – a joint report

Refugee Action and NACCOM published *Missing the Safety Net*, a report which revealed that vulnerable people refused asylum in the UK, including pregnant women and those with serious mental health conditions, are being failed by the Government's asylum support system due to long delays waiting for Section 4 support.

Member Survey 2019 launch

We published our Annual Survey data, containing vital evidence and statistics that help paint a picture of the scale and experiences of destitution in the network for the 2018-2019 period.

October 2019



NACCOM's Annual Conference and AGM, Leeds

Our Annual Conference and AGM was held in Leeds in 2019. Over 120 members, partners, people with lived experience and others from across the sector came together to celebrate, discuss and share ideas on our collective vision and work to end destitution.

NACCOM launches new

Housing Toolkit We launched the latest in our series of Toolkits; our Housing Toolkit followed Hosting and Funding Toolkits, providing a useful resource for anyone running, or thinking of setting up, a property scheme for people experiencing destitution.

November 2019

Gathering evidence of issues with the with the AIRE and AASC contract

NACCOM worked with sector partners and members to gather evidence on emerging failings with the Advice Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) and Asylum Accommodation and Support Services Contract (AASC) contracts. In a joint letter sent to the Minister for Safeguarding and Vulnerability, alongside other charities we warned of long delays in accessing vital asylum support were putting people at risk.

December 2019

Our five key policy asks for the new Government

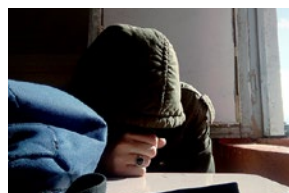
With the election of Boris Johnson as Prime Minister with a significant majority, we published our five key policy asks for the new cabinet to consider, which would help bring an end to destitution as part of the asylum process.



Founder of NACCOM, Dave

Smith, retires We said farewell to NACCOM founder and Network Development Worker Dave Smith, who retired from the charity 13 years after he started the network as an informal coalition of projects in 2006. NACCOM now has a network of 126 member projects all across the UK, which last year accommodated 3,373 people experiencing destitution.

January 2020



Ending Migrant Homelessness Conference

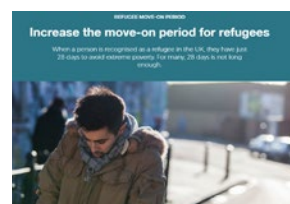
NACCOM, Crisis and the Homes For Cathy group of Housing Associations hosted a one-day event that brought together Housing Associations, charities and other accommodation providers to share ideas and find solutions for expanding accommodation provision, specifically for people experiencing homelessness and destitution as a result of their immigration status.



Katie Fawcett joins the team

We were pleased to welcome Katie Fawcett as our new Network Development Worker. Katie's experience as a co-founder and leader of member projects *St Augustine's Centre* and *Happy Days* in West Yorkshire makes her a valuable addition to the team.

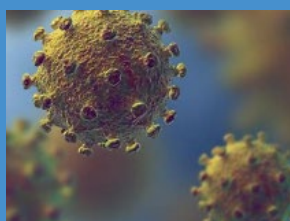
February 2020



Evidence from NACCOM used in British Red Cross cost-benefit analysis of extending the move-on period Data from NACCOM's Annual Survey was used in this important report from the British Red Cross, which published evidence and analysis to show the cost benefit of extending the 28-day move-on period to 56-days would have an overall financial benefit of between £4 million and £7 million each year.

Pandemic response

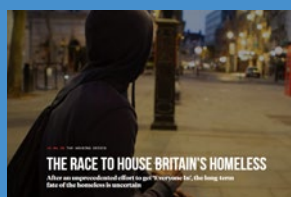
March 2020



We call for urgent action to protect people experiencing destitution during the pandemic At the onset of the pandemic, NACCOM coordinated a joint letter to the Prime Minister from over 80 sector organisations, calling for urgent action to protect people experiencing homelessness and destitution during the pandemic, ensuring that everyone – regardless of immigration status - has access to safe, self-contained accommodation, healthcare and support during this unprecedented public health crisis.



Launch of Google group, Covid-19 resources and weekly members' call Our weekly members' "Covid-19 response" online meeting was launched, bringing together charities bringing together charities from across the network to collectively respond and adapt during the pandemic. We created an online resources hub to assist and support members and partners, launched our Google Group to aid information sharing during the pandemic, and moved our regional member hub meetings online.



National media coverage

We worked with national media outlets, the BBC, The Guardian, The Independent, the Huffington Post and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism to raise awareness of key issues facing people seeking asylum and refugees during the pandemic, and connected journalists to people with lived experience wanting to share their stories.

April 2020



Our key asks in relation to Covid-19 As the pandemic evolved and we received feedback from members about the impact of Covid-19 on both frontline charities and individuals in our network, we developed key policy asks and called for urgent action to protect them. We also joined with sector partners to support calls for action on policy areas including ending No Recourse to Public Funds restrictions, raising asylum support rates, and protecting migrants from Covid-19.

Online workshops and responding to members' needs

Our support for members, based on their feedback, included online *mental health and wellbeing workshops*, a *Mental Health First Aid course*, and *HR coaching and guidance opportunities*, with resources created around *adapting housing and hosting projects during lockdown*, *translated guidance for accommodation providers*, and *brokering deals with payment card providers* so that members could continue to provide destitution payments to guests.

May 2020

House of Commons
Housing, Communities and
Local Government Committee

Protecting rough sleepers and renters: Interim Report

First Report of Session 2019–21

Evidencing destitution We submitted written evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government inquiry on Housing, Homelessness and Private Rental Sector and presented to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Universal Credit, focusing on the experiences of people who are new refugees. We gave oral evidence to the Work and Pensions Select Committee which fed into the DWP Response to Coronavirus report (published June 2020).

NACCOM provided strategic input and diligence support to the *Migration Exchange Respond and Adapt Programme*, providing grants, an Information and Data Hub, and development support to frontline organisations in response to the pandemic. We administered grant payments to organisations in coordination with *Refugee Action* later in the summer.

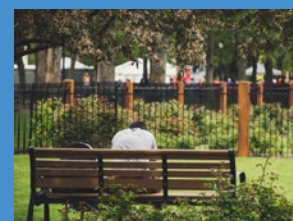
June 2020

Imagine

15-21 JUNE 2020

Refugee Week 2020

We participated in Refugee Week 2020 by sharing insights from members and stories of lived experience from our Community Reporting Group around the theme of Imagine.



In collaboration with Asylum Matters, we produced a briefing on the risks of asylum evictions and ongoing concerns about the risks of homelessness amongst people with No Recourse to Public Funds. We worked with Asylum Matters and local members to connect with Local Authorities in key dispersal areas to address these concerns. We met with representatives from the Homelessness Taskforce and were signatories to the #NoOneLeftOut open letter to Local Authorities.

Lucy Smith (Campaigns and Policy Co-ordinator) and Angela Stapley (Operations Co-ordinator) return from maternity leave, and we prepare to say goodbye to Hazel Williams, National Director and Diane Balsillie, Operations Coordinator.

Advocacy and campaigns

Navigating crisis while still disrupting destitution

Our advocacy and campaigns work aims to stand alongside people suffering in our communities and raise the voices of those who need change the most. This past year has highlighted how devastating crises can be for communities who already live with destitution and homelessness. Two crisis points in the past year have brought the inadequacy of the Hostile Environment into sharp focus and have underlined the importance of working collectively for vital policy change.

The first moment was in September 2019, when the transition of the **Advice Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE)** contract and **Asylum Accommodation and Support Services Contract (AASC)** left people unable to access support and in unsafe accommodation. The second has been the Covid-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the public health dangers faced by individuals made vulnerable by the current immigration system. Throughout both these 'crisis points', having quick access to information that paints a vital picture of the challenges and successes of the whole of the NACCOM network has been vital.

Sharing evidence

We drew on information shared by our members to illustrate the failure and impact of Government policy on people in an immigration system that denies them dignity and housing. We gave evidence to the Work and Pensions Select Committee, the All Party Parliamentary Groups on Universal Credit and Ending Homelessness, the [National Audit Office Inquiry into Universal Credit](#) and the inquiry into the [AIRE/AASC contracts](#).

We have contributed to Select Committee inquiries on Homelessness, Work and Pensions response to

Covid-19 and Asylum Support, and are in regular communication with Local Authorities and government departments about these issues, for example through the National Asylum Stakeholder Forums (NASFs).

Collaborations with like-minded organisations in the sector are vital to furthering our aims. We shared evidence from the NACCOM Annual Survey with other organisations, and contributed to research including the [joint report with Refugee Action and other partners into Section 4 delays in September 2019](#), and the [British Red Cross Cost Benefit Analysis into extending the move-on period for refugees in February 2020](#).

Key achievements throughout the year

As a UK-wide network, with a membership focused on accommodating people who are destitute, NACCOM has been uniquely placed to respond to many of the opportunities for policy change that have arisen this year.

- Together with **Refugee Action** we published '**Missing the Safety Net report**' in September 2019, evidencing the long delays experienced by people awaiting a decision on Section 4 support applications. In our meetings with the Home Office, we also highlighted the challenges that people were experiencing as a result of the AIRE/AASC contracts changeover. These included numerous reports of people being unable to contact Migrant Help regarding their pickups for Section 4 support, and being left waiting without food or accommodation.
- We worked with members to issue a **Westminster Hall debate** briefing for key MPs on support for refugees after receiving an asylum decision, evidencing that nearly all new refugees experience a period of destitution once they are granted status.
- We coordinated **joint letters to the Prime Minister** with key recommendations on how to protect people with insecure immigration status experiencing homelessness, signed by over 80 organisations, and briefed parliamentarians on calls for support for all those who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) in the pandemic¹.
- Alongside contributing written evidence to numerous inquiries, NACCOM gave oral evidence to the **Work and Pensions Select Committee**, focusing on the experiences of people without Leave to Remain who cannot access public funds.
- In collaboration with Asylum Matters, in June 2020 we published a **briefing on the risks of asylum evictions** and related concerns about the risks of homelessness amongst people with NRPF, and supported members to connect with Local Authorities and other stakeholders in key dispersal areas to address these concerns.

Covid-19 response – partnership work at our core:

The emergence of Covid-19 has highlighted the vital work that NACCOM members do to stand in solidarity with people who have been made vulnerable by the Hostile Environment. As the impact of the pandemic became clear, the NACCOM team came together to assess how best we could support members to continue accommodating people and what opportunities there may be to ensure that people with NRPF could access mainstream homelessness and Home Office support.

Destitution at any time is individually devastating and harmful to our wider communities. During the pandemic, we've chosen to highlight this message showing the dangers to individual and public health of people experiencing homelessness simply because of their immigration status. To create our rapid response advocacy strategy, we talked to members and people directly affected. A key theme that emerged was the fear and desperation experienced by the people we work with.

"Yeah, just before the lockdown, everyone was scared to have me in their house, because I have an underlying condition and I am vulnerable. It's almost like I had the virus because I am vulnerable. They didn't want me around anymore, 'look, we don't want you here, we have to isolate' so I have to stay on the street. It's very scary, I was panicking, when I heard if you have an underlying health condition you are more likely to die. So I thought I was going to die, it was very worrying, very dangerous."

- LM from East Africa/West London

The realities faced by many people supported by the NACCOM network have been terrifying and we stand with our members who have experienced avoidable tragedies. We combined this clear message with national research that has consistently shown that people of colour are disproportionately affected by Covid-19. Throughout the pandemic period, we have consistently raised the issue of homelessness support for people with NRPF through all available advocacy routes. We continued to make use of existing lines into the Home Office, while making new links with MPs across the house, Local Authorities, representatives from Public Health and many others.

Whilst the pandemic has brought huge challenges, NACCOM's strong partnership working has meant that we have been able to reach out and bring organisations together to call for change. This was shown in the publication of two joint letters sent to the Prime Minister and signed by over 80 different organisations making seven key recommendations for immediate policy change to protect people with insecure status experiencing homelessness.

The recommendations were noted by senior decision makers and we witnessed unprecedented policy changes. Ultimately, the joint campaigning by the NACCOM network has helped secure the temporary suspension of evictions from asylum accommodation, the widening of access to Section 4 support, and the inclusion of people with NRPF in the Everyone In scheme.

Joining the call to end homelessness for good.

The events of 2020 have shown how fragile our support networks can be and the impact of continuous policy decisions that withdraw support and prevent people accessing help. However, we have also witnessed the strength of communities and the possibilities for significant change. Thousands of people with negative asylum decisions were able to remain in accommodation whilst evictions were paused. Similar numbers of people with NRPF have been able to access Local Authority homelessness services for the first time. Work is underway to maintain many of the improvements that have been seen during the pandemic for people newly recognised as refugees.

The fight is not over, and we are mindful of the ever complex context we operate in as asylum policy comes under fire and Brexit looms ahead. We are clear in our vision that no one should be made destitute. Together with partners across the migrant, homelessness and anti-poverty sectors and beyond, we will continue to campaign for no evictions into homelessness and make the arguments for why everyone must be able to access public funds regardless of their immigration status.

¹The PM responds to Stuart McDonald MP stating that people seeking asylum, those whose asylum claims have been refused and all who have been prohibited from having access to public funds by Home Office rules "will certainly receive the Home Office funding that they need and deserve". (Hansard, PMQs, 25.03.20 URL:<https://bit.ly/3anhTBZ>)

Headline figures

Accommodation Figures

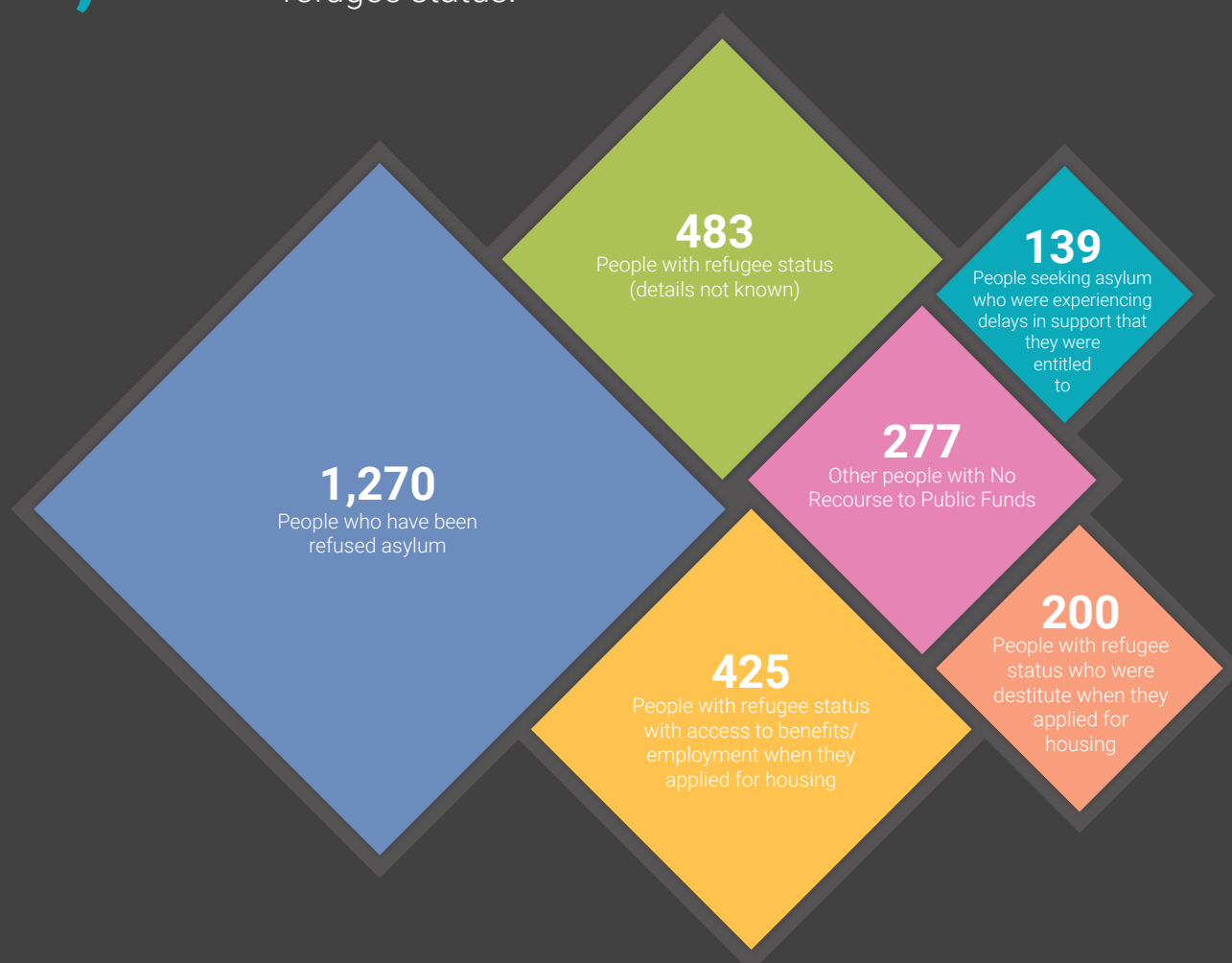


3,373

People accommodated across the network over the year

Of, the above
2,794

were people with No Recourse to Public Funds (including those who have claimed or been refused asylum) and those with refugee status.



1,849

people were turned away because of a lack of accommodation



82%

of people who were referred to or made enquiries to member organisations this year (600/735 people) were facing street homelessness



423,552

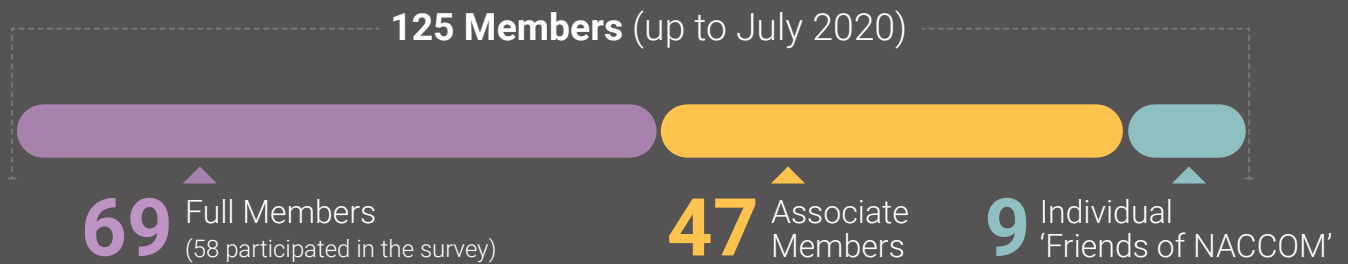
nights of accommodation provided across the year (estimated)



2,710

people were provided with financial support (but not accommodated)

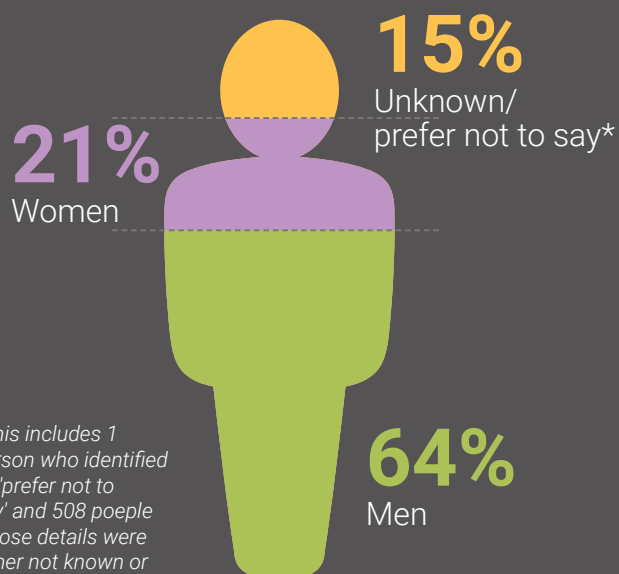
Membership Breakdown



Membership Accommodation Provision



Gender Breakdown



Volunteers



What the 2019-2020 survey tells us

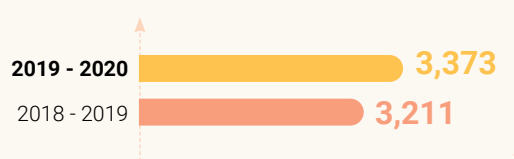
Who received support from the network this year and how many people were accommodated?

This year our membership survey revealed that:

Nights of accommodation provided by members (estimated)



Total number of people accommodated by members



The proportion of people accommodated who have No Recourse to Public Funds (including those who have claimed or been refused asylum) and those with refugee status has **increased by 10% to 2,794** (83% of all those accommodated).



People who have been refused asylum and are currently not eligible for asylum support remain the largest accommodated group, making up 38% (1,270) of the total.

In addition, 139 people were accommodated who were entitled to asylum support but were experiencing delays, for instance people who have been accepted for Section 4 support but have not yet been housed by the Home Office.



People with refugee status were the second largest identified group accommodated, comprising 33% (1,108) of the total.

Of those, at least 200 (18%) were identified as people recently granted status, who are known to be at risk of destitution because of the short period of time (28 days) after getting a positive decision before being evicted from Home Office accommodation.



Other people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) who have not claimed asylum made up the third largest group of people accommodated this year, comprising 8% (277) of the total.

Of the 30 members that accommodated people with NRPF, 21 (70%) increased their provision for this group in the last year.

Gender breakdown – people accommodated across the network

On average, 64% (2,153) of people accommodated identified as male, 21% (711) identified as female and 15% (509) identified as 'prefer not to say' (1) or the data was unknown/not recorded (508). Night shelters

saw the highest number of male guests (86% of those accommodated), whilst hosting schemes saw the highest number of female guests (31% of those accommodated).

What types of accommodation were provided by the network this year?

This year saw a rise in the number of night shelters (14- up from 12 in 2018-19) and property schemes (32- up from 30 in 2018-19) but a fall in the number of hosting schemes (25- down from 27 in 2018-19).



Night shelters supported **739 people this year**, down from 1,033 people in 2018-19. Around half of the shelters were running at the time that Covid restrictions were introduced and this is expected to have contributed to this reduced figure.



Across property schemes, the number of properties available has increased from 225 to **306**, reflective of the developments in partnerships with Housing Associations and private landlords, as well as the continued generosity of people offering free properties for charitable purposes.



Hosting schemes saw an increase in the number of guests accommodated this year, with 986 people placed with volunteer households across the UK (up from 886 last year). There was also an increase in the number of active hosts (from 645 to 1,350) although some schemes have reported challenges with maintaining host placements especially in the context of Covid-19.

In-depth analysis

The statistics this year tell a mixed story in terms of accommodation provision. On the one hand, there has been an increase in some availability (as seen by the rise in housing stock and hosting volunteers) and a rise in the overall number of nights and people accommodated. These figures reflect the creativity and tenacity of our members, and demonstrate there is much to be celebrated in our collective response to destitution. They also, crucially, reflect the rise in membership, with 58 members completing the survey this year (up from 50 last year). Yet we know that they do not tell the whole story, because some members have struggled this year (even before Covid-19) to meet demand, whilst others have found it hard to help people progress with their immigration cases. The situation is complicated further because most members did not include the period after March 2020 in their figures (only 40% of survey participants

(23/58) did) so the data does not reflect the complexity of the situation facing organisations since Covid-19.* For instance, we know that many have seen a reduction in the number of people requiring support (linked to temporary government directives to prevent homelessness) since March, whilst there has been growth in partnership work and in some cases funding as projects adapt to the changing landscape. Yet we are also aware of those who have had to stop or pause their provision because of lack of capacity or risks to guests and volunteers and know many are struggling to respond due to huge uncertainties, and possibly rising need, in the months ahead. It is therefore vital that we continue to support members to meet need where they can whilst calling for lasting change so no one faces homelessness because of their immigration status.

*We ask members to report on a recent twelve month period, this is usually April-March but due to different reporting systems/year ends there is some flexibility.

Where were people before they were accommodated by the network?

The practical needs facing people who are destitute this year are seen starkly in this year's statistics:



'Street homeless' was the situation facing 82% of people who were referred to or made enquiries to member organisations this year (600/735 people), including people who were sofa surfing or rough sleeping. The second largest cohort (104/735) came directly from Home Office asylum accommodation.

A related cause for concern is the number of people that members could not accommodate this year, with an **estimated 1,849 people being turned away**.

This year we asked for the first time how many people were provided with financial support by members but not accommodated and the answer was **2,710 people**.

These figures highlight both the enormous risks and hardships facing people who have nowhere else to turn and demonstrate the need for and value in our collective voice calling for change.

What support was available to help people out of destitution?



427 people who had been refused asylum were known to leave NACCOM network accommodation this year, of whom **227 (53%) went on to access statutory support, asylum accommodation or some form of leave to remain**. This is the same proportion as in 2018-19 (though the actual figures are lower, 227/427 rather than 339/632) and shows that with the **right kind of support there are routes forward to help people move on with their lives**.

There has been an increase in legal advice provision within the network this year, with 22 organisations providing some kind of in-house advice (OISC Level 1 and upwards) and/or working in partnership with legal providers. Within this:

13 organisations provided at least OISC Level 1 advice or above (last year this was 12), of whom 8 provided either OISC Level 3 advice or an in-house solicitor (last year this was 6). 12 members worked with registered legal providers (last year this was 6).

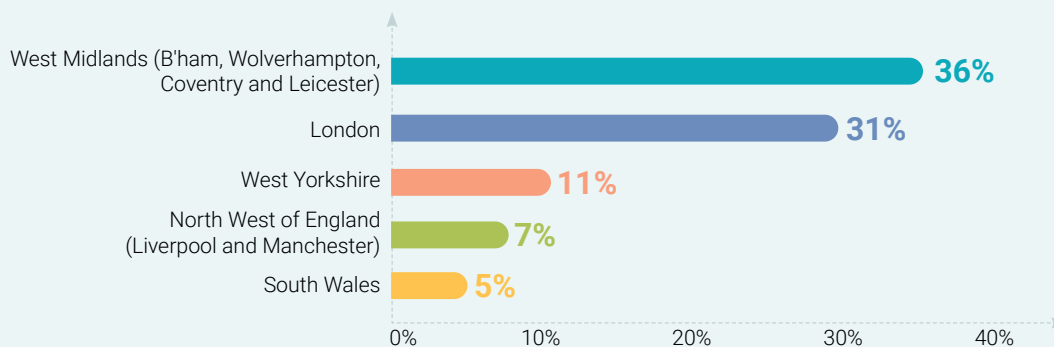
These figures give us great hope in the work being done to both provide a roof over people's heads and to also help people move on with their lives, spurring us on to find new ways to support and encourage such partnerships in the year ahead.

Move-on during Covid-19

As discussed elsewhere in the report, the experiences of NACCOM member services and the people they support in accessing emergency, temporary accommodation during the pandemic has varied considerably depending on where they are in the UK.

We asked a question to gauge Local Authority support for people with NRPF and found that at the time of asking (June 2020) at **least 276 people had been granted Local Authority accommodation on Covid-19 related grounds.**

Successful referrals reported by members, reflected by region:



We also know that at least **20 members** received Local Authority funding for their work in the last year, though the specifics of who this funding would be for will vary from locality to locality.

Overall these figures are a good indication of the support that some members have seen from their Local Authorities, especially in recent months, towards people with NRPF.



Voices of lived experience

At the heart of our collective work are the experiences of the people who live – day-to-day – with the devastating impact of destitution.

Working in partnership with people who have lived experience of the asylum process, and wherever possible enabling them to inform and influence our plans and policy, is crucial if we are to understand the truly devastating impact of destitution and to effect meaningful, lasting policy change.

This year we have continued to work with the **NACCOM Community Reporting Group** – a network of people located throughout the UK, all of whom have endured destitution because of their immigration status. Members of the group have been trained in storytelling for impact, using digital

techniques to capture their own and their community's experiences of destitution. Their insights form a valuable part of our policy, campaigns and communications work.

The stories they gather offer a vital, moving and damning insight into the human impact of the asylum process, the incredible emotional toll it takes on the lives of so many, whilst at the same time showing that, even in the midst of great hardship, strength, resilience and hope can still shine through. You can view and listen to our Community Reporting Group's stories on our Youtube channel, social media channels, and at www.communityreporter.net.



International Women's Day

For International Women's Day we asked female members of NACCOM's Community Reporting Group if they could share their unique perspectives as women with experience of the asylum system, so that their voices could be heard as part of this major international awareness day.

"My name is Leah. I'm a destitute asylum seeker. I live in Nottingham. I would like to share with everyone my thoughts about International Women's Day. The theme of International Women's day 2020 campaign is #EachforEqual. An equal world for me is an enabled world. How can I celebrate this important day when I'm trying to navigate a complicated UK asylum process.

Because I'm a destitute woman, asylum seeker, my dreams are shattered. I'm not even allowed to work, to have a roof over my head. I don't belong to an equal world, where other women are exercising their rights. I feel worthless and isolated. The indignity brought by being a

destitute is of a bitter grief and humiliation for a lone woman to bear. I admire what other women are doing from a distance, and more and more I feel I don't belong to the real world.

The real world is for those people who are able to do what they can do, whenever they want to. But my world is only around me, and I can't do anything to change it. So, I don't think, to other women like myself, who are asylum seekers and destitute, it is fair to belong to this world. And to think of it, UK, is a place where human rights are practiced. But in this country, my human rights are being controlled."

Fuad*, a destitute refused asylum seeker, was sofa surfing when the UK entered lockdown at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. After the couple he had previously stayed with prevented him from returning, Fuad became street

homeless, but was offered accommodation as part of the Government's Everybody In policy. We worked with Fuad to amplify his message via a national newspaper.

"I was homeless, moving between different places. Sometimes I sleep outside and sometimes at my friend's house. It's a very small house, the problem is, the wife of my friend was very terrible. She didn't want me there, she tells me I make noise and I should go outside. She follows me into the toilet, she demanded to know who speak with me, she embarrassed me a lot. She wants me to clean [the house] every day and tells me I can only go to the house at certain times. I have no freedom when I stay there. It's like abuse, I don't refuse, but I try to go out to local charities to get space.

When Corona started my friend said I couldn't stay anymore and the charities closed the centres. Luckily, a charity helped me contact the Council. The homelessness worker was kind, he asked me some questions about immigration status, but he said "Don't worry, we will help everyone regardless this time, but in future you will need to have status to get help"

I'm worried about contacting the Home Office, maybe it is a trap? But I have started an application for Section 4 because I want to try and use this quiet time to try and ask for help.

Now, though, everything happened so quickly and my worry is that all my things are scattered. My tent is in one place. I left my bag with all my important documents in a shop. Now the shop has closed and the man has disappeared. I don't know where he lives. I can't proceed with my applications to the Home Office.

Why is it that it takes until Coronavirus for people like me are remembered and to be given a place to stay? Why should we wait for corona? Now, it's almost like we are we are praying for corona to continue, because at least now I have a safe place to stay."

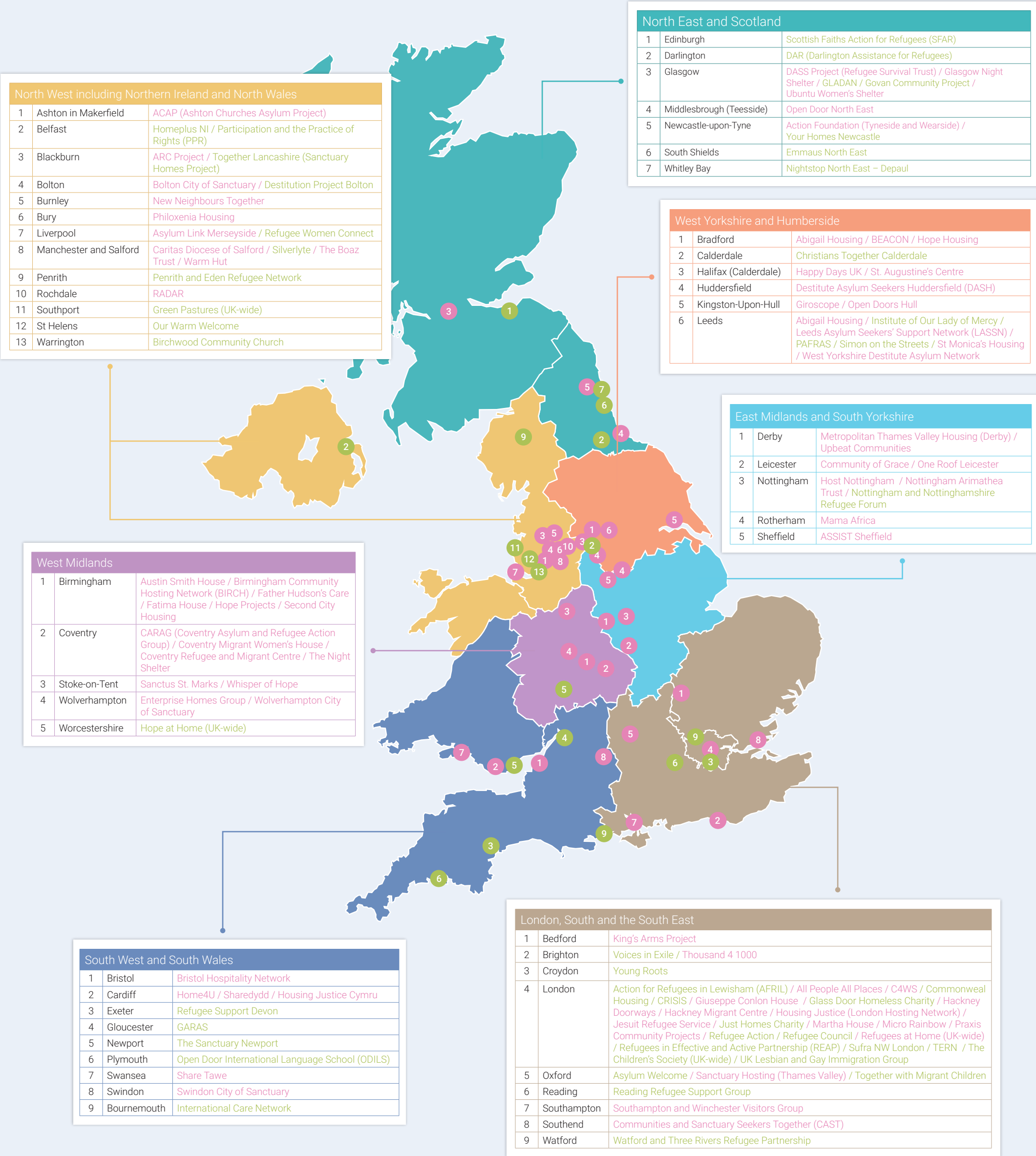
Fuad was given a Local Authority funded hotel room at the beginning of April 2020. He now has a self-contained room with a toilet and a meal delivered by a charity partner in the evening. He does not receive any subsistence funding from the Local Authority and cannot access mainstream

benefits. He feels safe in his new room and can use the WIFI to access support services, but there is no breakfast or lunch provided. He is being given £40 per month by a local charity, which he must use to pay for these expenses.

**Name changed to protect identity*

The No Accommodation Network

(up to July 2020)



Total number of:

Members: **125**
Full members: **69**
Associate members: **47**
Friends of NACCOM: **9**
New members July 2019 - July 2020: **25**

NACCOM member regions:

- North East and Scotland
- North West including Northern Ireland and North Wales
- West Yorkshire and Humberside
- East Midlands and South Yorkshire
- West Midlands
- South West and South Wales
- London, South and South East

Member status:

- Full Members
- Associate Members

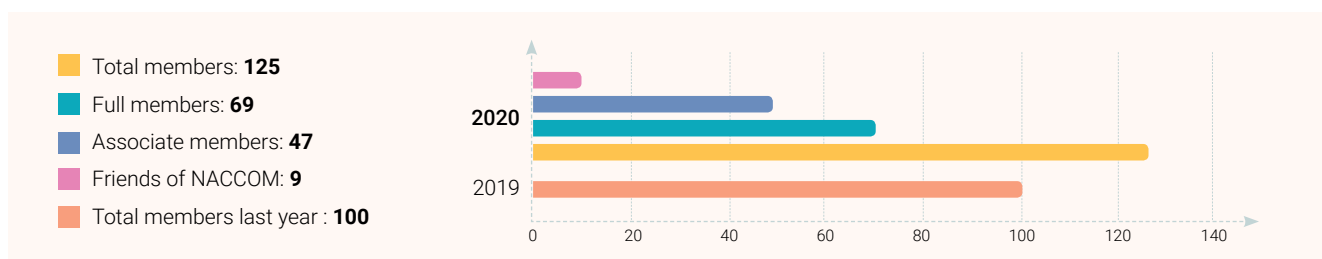
Network development report

Growth of the network

With the retirement of Dave Smith in December, we were pleased to welcome Katie Fawcett to the NACCOM team as our new Network Development Worker. Katie is a co-founder and former leader of two established NACCOM member projects, **St Augustine's Centre** and **Happy Days**, both based in Halifax, West Yorkshire, and brings over 10 years' experience within the sector in the provision of

housing, hosting and wider support services. Katie oversees our network development in the West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Humberside, the North West, North Wales and Northern Ireland. Paul Catterall continues to lead our network development in Scotland, North East England, South Wales, the East Midlands, the South East and Greater London.

New members 2020



We are delighted to welcome 25 new members this year. It is so exciting to see the range of innovative ideas and practical solutions to homelessness and destitution that are emerging around the UK.

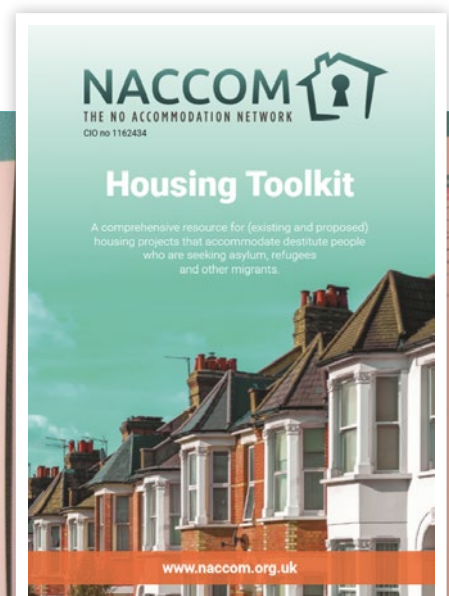
We are really pleased to welcome into membership several key national partners; the mainstream homelessness charity **Crisis**, and our sector partners **Refugee Action** and the **Refugee Council**.

Other national charities that have joined the network include **Micro Rainbow**, which provides accommodation for LGBT+ and the **UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group**. We have seen four new members in London including **Glass Door Homeless Charity**, **Hackney Migrant Centre** and two night shelter projects **Hackney Doorways** and **All People All Places**.

All regions saw new members with the exception of the South West, central South England, the South East, North East and Scotland. Here we have seen some exciting new developments including the **Glasgow Night Shelter** for destitute asylum seekers creating a new 24/7 building with self-contained rooms providing accommodation and move-on support for over 20 people at a time.

Finally, it is encouraging to see new projects arising out of faith communities, such as **Whispers of Hope**, who are setting up a house in Stoke-on-Trent for women escaping domestic violence and trafficking.

For a full breakdown of members by region, please visit [pages 16 and 17](#).



Events and resources

Housing Toolkit



One of the highlights of the year was the launch of our **Housing Toolkit** at October 2019's Annual Conference, a free resource for members and colleagues in the sector. The toolkit was written by Paul Catterall, who has brought his expertise and insight as former CEO of NACCOM member charity Open Door North East, and their portfolio of over 30 houses providing both accommodation for people newly granted refugee status while cross-subsidising provision of accommodation for people seeking asylum who are left with NRPF.

The Housing Toolkit, like our **Hosting Toolkit**, aims to equip existing and prospective housing projects with the key information needed to set up and run a shared property scheme that is both safe, meets all appropriate legislation and aims for the highest standards possible for those who are accommodated.

The Housing Toolkit also includes four very different examples of NACCOM projects who have developed successful housing schemes that cross-subsidise provision for those left destitute with NRPF.

To download a copy of the Housing Toolkit, please visit www.naccom.org.uk/resources, or email office@naccom.org.uk to request a hard copy.

Ending Migrant Destitution Conference



In February we partnered with national homelessness charity Crisis and the Homes for Cathy group of Housing Associations to deliver a successful conference bringing together Housing Associations, NACCOM members and people with lived experience of the asylum process, to develop ideas and share expertise on accommodating people with refugee

status and migrants with NRPF experiencing destitution. Our future work in this area will include working with Crisis and other partners to create a position paper outlining how partnerships with NACCOM members and Housing Associations can prevent destitution, as well as connecting members and Housing Associations to make these support pathways a reality.

For our full list of events and activities across the year see our year timeline on [pages 4 - 5](#).

Regional Hubs



Our regional hub meetings are now an established and successful means of allowing members and prospective members to meet within regions to share ideas and challenges, as we improve our membership offer and ways of working. The hubs also provide an opportunity for members to meet the NACCOM team and hear more about the support we can offer as well as our campaigns, advocacy and communications work.

We currently have seven regional hubs that meet roughly twice a year. For the second part of the year the hubs took place online via Zoom. Approximately 43% of member organisations and over 100 participants took part in these online meetings, with the feedback

indicating that members appreciated how accessible they were, and how connected they felt with other members.

When needed, we also run more focused sub-regional meetings to look at specific local challenges or to explore the development of more collaborative working. Based on feedback from members, this year we've also launched four 'thematic' hubs to pool ideas and respond to challenges and key issues the pandemic has posed to specific accommodation types and services – housing, night shelters, hosting and also drop-ins. These meetings have proved particularly popular, with 62% of member organisations taking part, and with over 100 participants.



Regional Partnerships

Facilitating partnership working is one of our key aims. Last year we reported on the partnership developing in South Wales, between Sharedydd, Home4U (Cardiff), Share Tawe (Swansea) and The Sanctuary (Newport). We have also seen two new members join in Wales over the past year; Cardiff-based Oasis are an established sector organisation who are currently exploring the provision of housing for newly recognised refugees with a future vision of cross-subsidising provision for those with NRPF. Tai Pawb like NACCOM is a membership organisation that promotes equality and social justice in housing across Wales. Tai Pawb is currently supporting The Sanctuary in dialogue with local Housing Associations that we hope will see the release of housing stock within Newport.

There has been ongoing engagement with the Welsh Government who commissioned our sector colleagues Heather Petch and Tamsin Stirling to produce a report into providing accommodation for refused asylum seekers in Wales. This report was released at the end of August with nine key recommendations and a statement from the Welsh Government regarding an initial release of finances to support the development of hosting across Wales. Other recommendations include the development of shared housing and improved capacity in the provision of legal advice. [Please see the resources section of our website for more details.](#)



Network mapping and development into new areas

An important focus of our work this year has been to explore those areas with high numbers of people seeking asylum housed in Home Office asylum dispersal accommodation with no established destitution accommodation project – an essential feature in all local refugee integration systems. We have made key contacts in cities such as Peterborough, Luton, Plymouth and Norwich, and exploratory visits to Plymouth and Norwich to meet with organisations delivering services to people seeking asylum, refugees and other migrants. We are particularly hoping to see progress made in Plymouth (a city with over 300 people seeking asylum having been dispersed there last year) as Caritas are currently exploring accommodation options in the city.

An on-going challenge affecting organisations' willingness to set up local accommodation projects, or the ability to refer to our national hosting project Refugees At Home, is the lack of appropriate legal advice provision to ensure effective move on pathways for people seeking asylum with NRPF. The North West remains a priority area for us as it has seen significant increases in people seeking asylum dispersed into smaller towns in Lancashire and Merseyside where historically there have been no people seeking asylum, and where destitution accommodation provision has been unable to keep up with demand.



Finding Sustainable Solutions

Helping to set up and advise new accommodation schemes is crucial to ensure that people do not fall through the net when their claims are turned down. However, one way of tackling the issue is to work with NACCOM member Refugees at Home, a nationwide hosting scheme, rather than try to set up a separate accommodation project from scratch. This is happening

in South Wales, where both Share Tawe and Sharedydd are the partner organisations supporting those who are hosted. The key to effective partnership with Refugees at Home is having a clear move-on plan and a dedicated key contact case/support worker within the referring organisation.

Responding to members' needs in the changing landscape of Covid-19

The four-month period from March to June 2020 has been unprecedented, starting with the country going into "lockdown", which resulted in a suspension or reduction of many member services including hosting projects, night shelters and most frontline services.

Whilst there was some Government provision for those experiencing homelessness (*for our full policy report see page 6 and 7*), some members faced the additional challenge of getting Local Authorities to accommodate people with NRPF as part of the Everyone In directive in England and Wales. Thankfully many people were accommodated and positive move-on was achieved for some people, due to the support work provided by members to those in temporary

accommodation, though the lack of funding and duty to accommodate people with NRPF going forward means such provision is by no means guaranteed.

One of the few positives of Covid-19 is that the network has been more connected through the vehicle of Zoom. This connectivity has enabled us as a team to engage with a wider audience and deliver network development support in a way that we have not been able to do previously. None of this would have been possible without the buy-in, support and willingness to share resources amongst the NACCOM member organisations. The generosity and culture of openness and sharing is one of the things that makes the NACCOM network so special.

How we have delivered support to members during the pandemic:

Events

- We launched a weekly (March and April) and then fortnightly (May and June) national members' Covid call to share updates, foster solidarity and highlight responses to the Covid-19 from across the network.
- We moved our regional hubs online and held a focussed virtual meeting on Leeds.
- We launched four thematic hubs in June for members delivering hosting, housing and night shelter projects and for members who usually run drop-ins or other front-facing services.
- We partnered with a registered psychotherapist and provided four free "Looking After Yourself" webinars and three follow-up sessions for staff members and volunteers within member organisations, which were attended by 26.
- In partnership with Wellspring Therapy and Training we provided a free online Mental Health First Aid course, one of the first to be delivered this way nationally.
- We have contributed to webinars organised by **Homeless Link** and our member **Housing Justice** to help mainstream homelessness charities and in particular night shelters have a greater understanding of alternative forms of accommodation provision across the NACCOM network.
- We have provided free, one-on-one HR guidance, coaching and advice for members, delivered by trusted HR professionals.

Resources

We have pulled together specific resources and guidance on topics including:

- Delivering housing and hosting projects during lockdown.
- Digital inclusion.
- Translation of guidance for housing and hosting into key languages (*we particularly value the involvement of Govan Community Project, Asylum Link Merseyside and individuals within the refugee community on Teesside in translating key documents*).
- Guidance on risk assessment, safeguarding and insurance issues.
- Observing Ramadan during lockdown.
- Negotiated deals with Payment Card companies so that money can be easily and safely distributed by members to vulnerable people.
- Revised guidance and risk-management on the reopening of hosting services and drop-in centres (*we are particularly grateful to Refugees at Home, Sanctuary Hosting, St Augustine's Centre and Hope at Home for their willingness to share their resources*).

Strategic Support

- We have worked closely with partners **Refugee Action** on identifying specific needs and gaps in resources during the pandemic.
- We have facilitated introductions and discussions between members and prospective members on possible collaborations as they look to plan for future accommodation provision.
- We have provided strategic input and diligence support to the **Migration Exchange Respond and Adapt** funding programme and are now facilitating the payment of grants in partnership with **Refugee Action**.
- We have endeavoured to respond to members' requests for specific advice and support within a 24-hour period.

Member spotlight:

Sanctuary Hosting



Sanctuary Hosting joined the NACCOM network in 2015 to learn from other hosting charities and to develop good policy and practice, as well as feed into wider advocacy and campaigning work. They are now using what they have learnt to begin to give back to hosting charities starting up themselves.

Key services

Sanctuary Hosting finds homes for people who are refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants by placing them as guests with volunteer hosts for short periods of time. Since 2015, the organisation has provided shelter thanks to 80 households in Oxford, Milton Keynes, Marlow and Reading, who have offered a room for free for a defined period. When a placement ends, Sanctuary Hosting arranges a transfer to a new host, providing a series of stepping stones until the guest can live independently. Each guest and host is connected to a volunteer support worker who oversees the hosting placement, helping it to run safely and smoothly.

Guests range from 19 to 68 years of age, approximately half are men and half women. People who need support from Sanctuary Hosting can present with complex immigration/asylum issues, health concerns, and some have been trafficked or survived domestic abuse. Providing safe shelter allows people to engage with legal representatives, medical professionals and caseworkers to tackle the root causes of homelessness. Often, hosting is the first time someone has stayed in a British home, leading to much shared cultural learning, and in some cases lasting friendships.

Responding to Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges to hosting. The primary focus was to keep everyone within the Sanctuary Hosting community safe. When the pandemic began, Sanctuary Hosting had 17 guests, the average being 15 guests at any one time. Their guest numbers dropped as a number of hosts fell into the Covid-19 vulnerable categories, resulting in rapid end to placements for safety reasons. Also, some guests opted to leave hosting rather than follow social distancing requirements. In spite of these challenges, Sanctuary Hosting remained open to new referrals and managed to successfully advocate for people who were homeless to enter the 'Everyone In' effort by Local Authorities. When the Local Authorities in the Thames Valley reached capacity

for shelter, the charity was able, thanks to the remarkable resilience and generosity of hosts, to find hosting placements.

Since April 2020, they have taken in nine new guests, and are currently hosting 12 guests, as well as providing weekly financial support and advice to five former guests who are destitute and staying with friends.

The team has struggled to maintain the charity's usual capacity to provide hosting as many hosts and support workers were unable to continue due to the Covid-19 risks, or had family members staying in their spare room. They also saw a drop in people applying to volunteer as hosts and support workers. Fortunately, in recent weeks there are signs that hosts' availability is picking up again.

Adapting services

Staff already worked from home and were ready to work remotely. The charity invested in Zoom software for all meetings, specifically guest interviews and introductions, to avoid unnecessary face-to-face contact. They also increased guest subsistence to £30 weekly, an increase from £20, to cover rising costs. With support from NACCOM, Sanctuary Hosting sourced pre-payment cards for guests so they no longer had to distribute cash for weekly living expenses or bus passes. Guests are much happier with the financial independence of a bank card.

Sanctuary Hosting has drawn up a Staying Safe While Hosting plan, which draws from Government guidance around Covid-19. This has been shared widely among other NACCOM members. They now ask that guests self-isolate for the initial 14 days of hosting, and that everyone follows health advice around hand hygiene and social distancing.

Sanctuary Hosting is hopeful that as society learns more about COVID 19, more people feel safe enough to host or support people who are homeless and seeking safety in the UK.



For more information on Sanctuary Hosting, please visit their website www.sanctuaryhosting.org

Member spotlight: C4WS



C4WS first joined NACCOM when they were thinking about setting up a hosting scheme. The C4WS team felt nervous approaching the project and during the research and development phase, wanted support from others who were already running hosting schemes to see it was feasible. Accessing the NACCOM network was invaluable and when C4WS launched their own hosting project (Home From Home) it continued to provide support, reassurance and a forum to ask questions on things from insurance to risk assessments.

Key services

C4WS supports people who are homeless to access accommodation, employment, healthcare, and rebuild their lives. They offer a five-month winter night shelter providing emergency accommodation for up to 100 people, and a hosting scheme offering short-term accommodation with hosts as bridging support for people leaving the shelter and moving into their own home.

C4WS also provides wide-ranging support services via its Welfare Service. They provide 1-2-1 intensive support to help guests develop and see through a move-on plan, and access holistic support for their welfare needs. Over the last three years, 95% of people working with the Welfare Team have successfully gained a move-on from the night shelter. Other services include English Classes, weekly drop-in services currently supporting 50+ people and other activities such as mentoring and befriending, Jobs Club and more.

Responding to Covid-19

At the start of the pandemic, C4WS lost shelter venues and volunteers and had to adapt their rolling shelter model to a static shelter split between two venues until the Local Authority hotel provision became available. The C4WS shelter is only open between 7.30pm and 9am. Outside of these hours there was no facility for guests to remain compliant with lockdown regulations, so the team converted their office into a temporary space where guests could remain safe.

Guests rely heavily on the face-to-face contact and access to services. Whilst the charity has moved to offering support remotely - and supported guests with access to equipment to be able to communicate remotely - the loss of this personal contact continues to be a challenge.

Adapting services

Once guests had been transferred to hotel provision through the **Everyone In** initiative, the next challenge was being able to provide continuity of support remotely. They secured a laptop or tablet for all the people that they support to be able to communicate from the hotels. They also successfully migrated their Jobs Club and Mentoring and Befriending Scheme online within a couple of weeks, ensuring vital contact for guests using these services. Their Welfare Support service now operates on a phone/video-conferencing system, which works well and enables things like delivery of supermarket vouchers to those struggling financially to help alleviate pressures. The Home From Home hosting scheme has also been adapted to accommodate the risk and safeguarding requirements of COVID-19 so that hosting is still offered.

The challenge for night shelters

Looking ahead the biggest challenges now are what kind of shelter provision can be offered over the winter. The rolling model has been deemed unsafe by Public Health England and so C4WS is now looking for new spaces and ways of providing emergency accommodation.

The charity is also starting to see the impacts of the lockdown manifesting in other ways. For example people who are refugees and people seeking asylum are being issued with eviction notices now that the three-month suspension has been lifted, and the threat of evictions being issued in September when the private rental sector suspension is also due to be lifted.

Their hope is to continue to adapt and provide all their services so that all guests can access support.



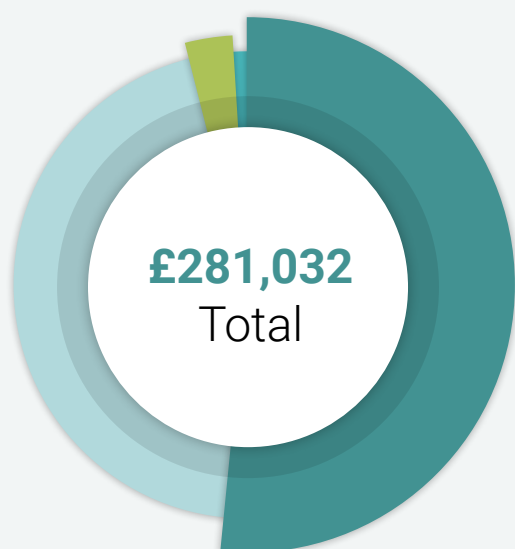
For more information on C4WS please visit their website www.c4wshomelessproject.org

Financial report

The income this year from grants is significantly higher than last year. This is due to additional funding in relation to Covid-19 and from Esme Fairbairn Foundation, and new funding from Lloyds Bank Foundation and Allen Lane Foundation. Expenditure is slightly up from last year, primarily due to an increase in staffing costs as a result of additional staff roles.

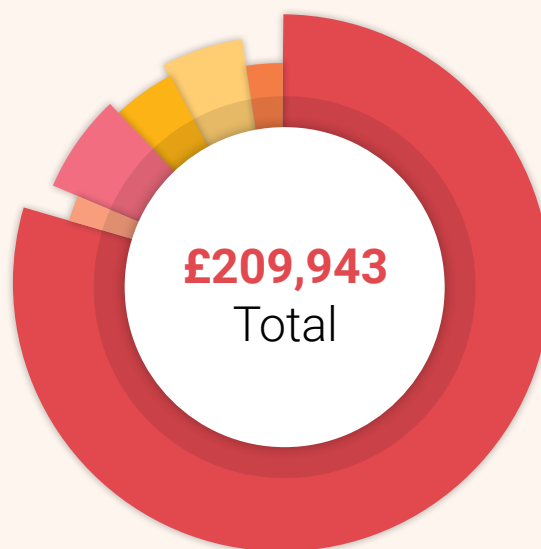
This year we were successful in applying for continuation funding from the Tudor Trust and Esme Fairbairn Foundation. We were also successful in funding applications to Lloyds Bank Foundation, Allen Lane Foundation and AB Charitable Trust. As a result of Covid-19 we were fortunate to receive additional funds from Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Metropolitan Migration Foundation and the Tudor Trust to support members in responding to the pandemic.

Income



	2019/20	2018/19
● Restricted funds.....	£145,272	£117,650
● Unrestricted.....	£125,263	£65,530
● Membership fees.....	£7,418	£6,970
● Conference and events income.....	£3,079	£3,266
Total:	£281,032	£193,416

Expenditure



	2019/20	2018/19
● Staffing costs.....	£166,846	£146,599
● Cost of fundraising.....	£3,451	£3,762
● Other activities.....	£13,843	£21,605
● Annual Conference and events.....	£9,271	£3,478
● Support costs.....	£11,444	£11,721
● Marketing and communications.....	£5,088	£3,992
Total:	£209,943	£191,157

Total funds carried forward: **£293,852 (£127,545 restricted)**

What our members say

On recent Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) facilitated by NACCOM:



We saw this training as a really good opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and confidence in how to best assist our clients who may develop a mental health issue, or experience a mental health crisis.

Completing the MHFA course with other NACCOM members, who are doing similar work to Boaz, was very helpful. We all shared an understanding of the impact the asylum system and destitution has on people, and an awareness of some of the cultural sensitivities when approaching conversations about mental health. The sessions provided opportunity for group discussions, where we could share personal experiences and learn from one another.

We're really thankful to have had the opportunity to join the MHFA training, and feel like it will help build on the support we offer.

- The Boaz Trust (NACCOM member)



On a recent Vicarious Trauma workshop:



The vicarious trauma workshop was excellent. The content was interesting and helpful and it was useful to hear other NACCOM organisations' experiences and learn tools of how to recognise and deal with vicarious trauma.

- NACCOM member



On our Annual Conference:



Inspirational speakers and positive ideas for the future, and good clear presentations. It was good to have a bigger picture of who is involved, what has been achieved and what needs to be done, and how it can be done. So encouraging to see so many young people; as a senior it gave me hope for our country. Hearing people speak who have experienced destitution was also very powerful.

- NACCOM member



On our Guardian and Observer grant funding:



We feel we are well connected through NACCOM with other members and look to engage fully with the workshops and training opportunities that they provide. The funding has been invaluable in developing this new post and we are appreciative of the flexibility that NACCOM gave to us in amending the initial focus of the grant. Thank you NACCOM for pulling together organisations working to prevent destitution and homelessness in the UK.

- NACCOM member



On membership of NACCOM:



NACCOM is great for peer support, sharing experiences and ideas. It's also a great way to keep up to speed with policy developments and initiatives at UK level. We have also benefited from funding opportunities provided via NACCOM or highlighted by NACCOM. Being a member of a larger organisation means that our organisation can be involved in national campaigns.

NACCOM offers an enormous amount of expertise in many areas from hosting to campaigning, which is invaluable to us as a small organisation. NACCOM is also very good at sharing resources and knowledge from other members. The recent weekly Zoom meetings have been really helpful, particularly the one that was dedicated to hosting.



Celebrating five years of the No Accommodation Network

July

Dave Smith organises a meeting in Manchester of organisations interested in providing accommodation for people refused asylum. 11 people from seven groups attend, including representatives from ASSIST Sheffield, the Boaz Trust in Manchester, Open Door North East in Middlesbrough and LASSN in Leeds, who are providing accommodation. Organisations in Birmingham and Nottingham also plan to join the network.

October

The first NACCOM conference in Manchester is held and attended by 35 people.

March

The first funding for the network is secured from the Homeless Transition Fund, for a staff member (Dave Smith) for one day per week, a mapping exercise, and our first membership survey (sent to 32 organisations).

July

Research from our membership survey is published; *Tackling Homelessness and destitution amongst Migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds* and distributed widely. 374 people are now accommodated by the network, mostly people whose asylum claim has been refused.

More funding is secured to improve capacity for network development, media and communications work, with remaining unrestricted funding re-granted to members for capacity building.

June

NACCOM is registered as a charity (CIO) with appointed Board of Trustees. The third membership survey reveals that the network is accommodating 587 people.. Network growth is slower due to projects struggling with funding and capacity, but still over 12% up on the previous year.

2006

2007 - 2012

2013

2014

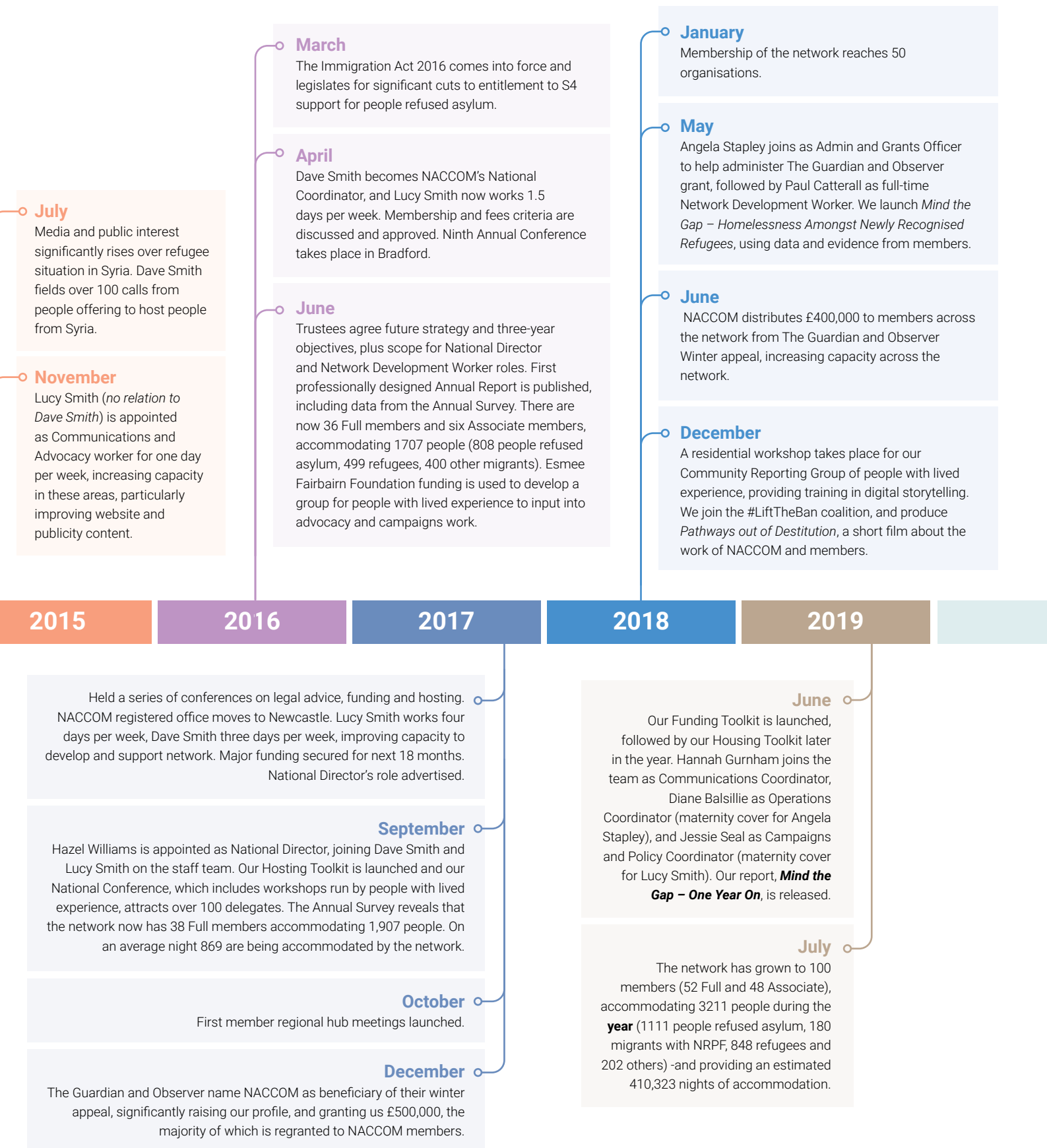
Over the next five years, regular regional meetings are held, and the network continues to attract organisations from across the UK, including a first meeting in London in 2008. By 2009, 150 people are being accommodated by the network. Whilst presence in London is growing, the network is predominantly made up of Northern charities. In 2012, leaders from the network's larger members are invited to become part of a steering group, to look into funding, constitution and charitable status.

Network capacity continues to grow, with regular steering group and regional member meetings held throughout the year. NACCOM is becoming more widely known, with improved links to the mainstream homelessness sector. Our second membership survey reveals 36 members are accommodating 522 people. There are 14 housing schemes, 12 hosting schemes and six night shelters in the network.

May

Our 7th annual conference takes place. 70+ people attend, including representatives from the homelessness sector, local councils and academia.

On June 26th 2015 the NACCOM network formally became a charity, meaning that this year we turned five! Although the network began long before that. Here, we look back at some of the key milestones in our 14-year journey.



Reflections on the network

by Dave Smith, Founder of NACCOM

It was Monday July 17th 2006. Eleven people from eight organisations, most of whom had never met, sat round in a circle in a draughty church hall in Manchester. They all had two things in common – a passion for helping refugees, and a desire to accommodate those whose asylum claims had been refused and were homeless. Six of the groups were already active – maybe a house or two or a small hosting scheme – and the other two were keen to start. We shared what we were doing, promised to keep in touch, and started to plan a national conference. NACCOM was born in that room – or rather NAG, the National (Destitution) Accommodation Group. Thankfully we soon changed the name!

NACCOM has come a long way since then: charitable status, funding, staff, advocacy, impact...but the driving passion and underlying principles have never changed. We want to end asylum destitution. That would ideally be statutory provision of housing for all asylum seekers, whatever their status, but in the meantime NACCOM will continue to develop innovative schemes to accommodate as many refused asylum seekers as we can. Every person housed is a precious life rescued from destitution, not just a number.

NACCOM is all about doing a lot with a little – sometimes with nothing. It's about sharing ideas, helping each other, and turning dreams into reality. It's about inclusion, affordability, offering and being the best we can: that hasn't changed. What has changed is the way we are perceived. When we started we were small and easily ignored. We weren't even a constituted organisation, much less a charity, and few even in the refugee sector had heard of us.

It takes time to forge a reputation, but NACCOM has done that by hard work and commitment to excellence. It's been a privilege to work with so many dedicated and wonderful people who always go the extra mile. Our members probably deliver more social capital than any other voluntary sector groups in the UK – and that has not escaped the notice of funders and other major refugee, housing and homeless organisations.

No one in that draughty room would have quite imagined NACCOM as it is today, 14 years later, but the vision is still incomplete. Many dispersal areas have no accommodation for destitute asylum seekers, and our members' waiting lists are as long as ever. I look forward to the day when those waiting lists are empty!



Anti-racism statement

NACCOM is committed to being an anti-racist organisation. Our anti-racism statement is below:

June 2020

The Black Lives Matter protests of the last few weeks have been a rallying cry for us all to pause, reflect on, and take action against, the structural, political and institutional racism that is endemic in the UK.

As an organisation that exists to end destitution amongst those seeking asylum and migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds, and to challenge Government policies that make destitution an inevitable and intended consequence of immigration policy for certain groups, NACCOM stands in solidarity with those who fight against racism in all its forms. We hope this statement goes some way in setting out our values and commitments in relation to tackling racism.

We understand that the UK's immigration system is born of racist and colonial legacies that continue to oppress people of colour today. We recognise that the basis for the government's ongoing hostile environment policy which includes enforced destitution is firmly rooted in our colonial past and the structural racism which permeates throughout our politics, economy, legislation, society and even the organisations which are set up to prevent injustices. It is this structural racism which re-affirms and legitimises the unequal treatment of people of colour.

The real world impact of this is all too apparent today in the racial inequality that the current Covid-19 pandemic has exposed, evidenced by the disproportionate number of deaths from Black and ethnic minority communities, and the recent Windrush scandal that subjected Black people to wrongful detention and deportation at the hands of the Hostile Environment.

We also recognise that as an organisation we have much to learn, develop and improve upon, and that this is an open-ended process. At times as an organisation we have lacked the courage to tackle this issue head on. As a charity working in the refugee and migration sector, neither should we be complacent that the nature of our work makes us exempt from actively looking at ways in which we can do better at tackling racism.

Over recent years we have been working to ensure that people who have experienced destitution have their voices elevated, can be part of our advocacy work and ultimately there is a shift in power to people who have lived experience of destitution. Doing this work meaningfully has been challenging, we have made mistakes and we know we have much to improve upon.

The actions we are currently taking and planning to take include:

- Providing anti-racist training to our members
- Providing training to our members on ways in which they can improve the way they involve people with lived experience to shape their services.
- Facilitate the sharing of learning between members on how to support their own staff and volunteers and create inclusive and diverse workplaces
- Fairly, and appropriately positively reimbursing people with lived experience for their time inputting into consultations and campaigning
- Listening to and joining with campaigns led by people with lived experience of destitution
- Ensuring that when we meet with policy makers and politicians, people with lived experience of destitution are represented at those meetings as much as possible.
- Facilitating better public understanding of the issues experienced by people seeking asylum, refugees and people with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- Ensuring that our board comprises of at least 20% of people who have experience of immigration control and/or homelessness and they are properly supported and trained to enable them to carry out their role.
- Reviewing our recruitment policy and procedures to increase applications from and appointments of people with lived experience of the immigration system.

NACCOM Staff and Trustees

Communications and media

Member communications

As a dispersed network of organisations across the UK, NACCOM has always aimed to connect members through our events, meetings and digital activities. The move to online meetings and webinars, in response to the Government's lockdown measures, has created opportunities and challenges; many of our events and training opportunities are now even more accessible to members, and have further increased engagement with, and between, our diverse UK membership.

As part of our pandemic response we also replaced our Members' Forum on the website with a new digital space (**Google group**) to enable members to quickly and easily share information with each other and with us, which has helped transform internal member communications. (If you are a member and would like to join our Google group, please get in touch using the contact email on the back page.)

Over the coming year we will consult with members on how best to integrate digital communications with a return to face-to-face opportunities (when and where possible) to ensure our events and meetings remain accessible to all.

Speaking with one voice

We continue to work with the team at sector communications group **IMIX**, who are an invaluable source of expertise and advice on media relations issues, and who have been instrumental in mobilising the sector to unite against toxic media narratives about asylum and immigration. This year we have facilitated opportunities for members to hear from IMIX representatives at our regional member hubs and, more recently, at our national online Covid-response meetings, particularly on how to combat hate speech in the media and also around crisis communications, following tragic events in Glasgow and Reading involving people seeking asylum.



Media work

The increased engagement and information sharing between members and NACCOM during the Covid-19 crisis has strengthened our influence. It has enabled us to effectively contribute to national campaigns work on key issues affecting people in the asylum system. It has also positioned us as a leading organisation able to comment on, and provide evidence and stories about, experiences of destitution, and the impact of Covid-19 on people who are destitute.

Working with key journalists and news outlets, we have contributed to the national media coverage around homelessness, destitution and Government policy in relation to people seeking asylum. We have provided vital data, case studies and connected journalists with guests, charity leaders and frontline staff in the network. Working in partnership with our **Community Reporting Group** and others in the network with lived experience, we have been able to contribute to reporting by **The Guardian, The Independent, the BBC, The Huffington Post, Inside Housing**, and the **Bureau of Investigative Journalism**. (You can view all our media coverage on our website.)

Amplifying voices of lived experience through the media

In May, we worked with LM to highlight his experience of being street homeless with NRPF during the pandemic, and his struggle to access emergency accommodation, through media work with national publications The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) and the Huffington Post. With support from NACCOM, LM was interviewed by TBIJ, who kept in touch with him over a six-week period in order to fully understand his situation and communicate his experience accurately. LM's story was featured in an in-depth investigative piece on the Government's 'Everyone In' policy and its impact on those with NRPF, which ran in June.

I was homeless before the pandemic. I lived in the UK for 20 years and I had ILTR, this was revoked because I went to prison and in 2017 I was released from prison and immigration put a restriction on me, saying I wasn't allowed to work, paid or unpaid and wasn't allowed to claim any benefits.

When I was released my mother arranged for a box room for me. After a year, she said it was too much. She's 70 years old and she needed to work to look after me. She said I can't do it anymore. I started staying at my friend's house, or on the bus or at Heathrow Airport. And then Coronavirus was announced.

Just before the lockdown, everyone was scared to have me in their house, because I have an underlying condition and I am vulnerable. It's almost like I had the virus because I am vulnerable. I thought I was going to die, it was very worrying, very dangerous, my depression, I got depressed so bad.

LM ended up sleeping rough in London between March 20th until mid-April, at the height of lockdown, when he was eventually housed in emergency, self-contained accommodation, after NACCOM and the Public Interest Law Centre got involved in his case.

No Recourse to Public Funds. First of all, it's impossible to comply. How can you sit on the street? Not having money to eat, to clothe yourself? Not allowed to work or claim benefits. Just waiting to die? That's what it means.

It's violating human rights; it's denying your basic needs. Yes, I committed a crime, but I did my time, and not just me. I met a lot of people migrants, asylum seekers and they denied their rights to work or claim benefits.

What I experienced is what this restriction makes people do. Because they have been restricted not to work or claim things, people must do something to feed themselves, to clean themselves to put a roof over their head. So this restriction is a danger to public health. People are forced to commit crime.

Member spotlight:

Govan Community Project



Govan Community Project (GCP), based in Glasgow, Scotland, joined the network in 2017 to share good practice and to network with colleagues in the wider UK sector, as well as get more involved in campaigning work.

GCP supports asylum seekers in the Glasgow area by offering key services including advice and advocacy, food distribution, ESOL classes, and community groups. The charity's main challenges during the pandemic have been the impact of digital poverty and ensuring the asylum community can engage and connect with others, food insecurity and the impact of lockdown and isolation on mental health. There has also been a major challenge experienced through the sudden move to using hotels for accommodation, withdrawal of financial support and the lack of risk assessments undertaken, resulting in separate incidents where people within the Glasgow asylum community have died in very tragic circumstances. A lack of engagement from asylum accommodation contract provider Mears is also an ongoing frustration for the charity.

Adapting and innovating

GCP's services were based on a drop-in, face-to-face system, with an open door and a welcoming environment.

All service delivery was therefore disrupted and had to move to remote delivery online and over the telephone. The charity is now delivering casework via telephone and email referrals to other agencies, however this is only viable for community members who have access to phones and credit/data. ESOL classes are also now online via Zoom, as are community groups.

Food distribution was initially via delivery services. After securing emergency funding the charity moved to providing supermarket vouchers, for a 3-month period. GCP introduced a digital device lending library to address some of the digital poverty barriers and also offered a short-term counselling support service to address the significant impact on mental health.

Planning for the future

The charity hopes that in the coming year face-to-face services can resume, and that funding and resources are secured to develop and maintain trauma support for community members, along with sustaining current support at the level that is being provided. Most importantly, that the joint work of all the agencies GCP works in partnership with, and the voices of those with lived experience, can influence the changes needed in our current broken, inhumane immigration system.



Member spotlight: **Abigail Housing** (Leeds and Bradford)



Abigail Housing is a charity based in Yorkshire providing support and homes to refugees in Leeds and people seeking asylum in Bradford who find themselves destitute and homeless. They joined NACCOM in 2016 to access support, share information and good practice, develop partnership working and create a stronger voice for asylum seekers and refugees.

In Bradford, Abigail Housing's destitution project has five shared houses accommodating 19 people with NRPF seeking asylum. The charity's services include casework and strong partnership working with the British Red Cross, Refugee Action and other agencies with the aim of achieving effective move-on for residents and re-engagement with the asylum legal process.

Responding to Covid-19

The lack of face-to-face contact with residents during lockdown made communicating information a significant challenge. Helping residents understand the guidance around Covid-19, and the impact of the guidance on their activities, was vitally important, so information was communicated through a variety of mediums in a way that people could understand. A big part of this involved myth-busting and challenging conspiracy theories and incorrect information.

The deterioration of residents' emotional and mental wellbeing and supporting those who have been left in limbo has also been a big factor. Many residents have had to deal with a lack of case progression, for example because of solicitors being on furlough, or they have been unable to receive evidence from abroad. The lack of move-on options for residents in the refugee project has also been an issue.

The charity also had to respond and adapt to a change in the referral pathway, as Leeds Refugee Project stopped referrals throughout lockdown, whilst Bradford Destitution Project continued with referrals, however these were on a case-by-case basis and extra measures were needed to facilitate them safely.

The charity's volunteer capacity was also impacted, as student volunteers returned to their family homes during

lockdown, whilst other, particularly older volunteers, had to shield, which significantly reduced the volunteer support on offer.

How has the pandemic changed your service delivery?

Abigail Housing's staff now work predominantly from home and sustain service delivery remotely, and meetings take place online or over the phone.

The closing of the Bradford drop-in, which is a lifeline to the charity's residents, has made a huge difference to the way that support is delivered. Volunteers make welfare checks on residents by phone and have met with some residents within house bubbles for socially distanced walks. The charity is hoping to reinstate a drop-in with residents over a two-day period each week, again noting house bubbles, with funding received to rent a large space to provide this service, whilst continuing to support residents in accessing online services.

The charity continues to develop creative approaches to communicating important information to residents, for example using video translations of information that residents can access. Going forward, the team is hoping to resume face-to-face service delivery as soon as it is safe and practical to do so. In the meantime, they will continue to support residents remotely, and are working on digital inclusion to ensure everyone has equal access to their services.





Thank you for reading this report

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If you would like to become a Member of NACCOM, you can find full details and access the online application form at www.naccomm.org.uk/get-involved/membership.

If you would like to help resource our members more in the next year, donate at www.naccomm.org.uk.

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