



Bridget Young
Director of NACCOM

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23 May 2023

Dear Ms Young and co-signatories,

Thank you for your letter of 26 March to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities copied to the Home Secretary regarding the Illegal Migration Bill. Your letter has been passed to the Home Office and I am replying as the Minister of State for Immigration.

If individuals come to the UK illegally and have not come from a country where their life and liberty were at risk, their asylum and human rights claims against their country of origin will be declared inadmissible. They may be detained and will be removed either to their home country (if it is safe to do so) or relocated to a safe third country such as Rwanda, where they will receive support to rebuild their lives. They will not be able to make a life here in the UK.

Clause 9 of the Illegal Migration Bill provides that individuals whose asylum claims are declared inadmissible under clause 4 of the Bill will be eligible for support under section 4(2) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Such support is usually provided in the form of free, furnished accommodation (with no utility bills or Council Tax to pay) and a weekly subsistence allowance to cover other essential living needs.

The Government is clear that no one should be without a roof over their head. That is why it is fully committed to end rough sleeping and to fully embed the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA).

The HRA was introduced to transform the culture of homelessness service delivery. Local authorities and other public bodies must work together to actively relieve people of their homelessness or prevent homelessness for people at risk, irrespective of whether they are a family or single person, the reason they are at risk, or if they have a local connection to the area. The Government is committed to fully enforcing the HRA. Between 2023 and 2025 the Government will be providing over £650 million to councils in England through the Homelessness Prevention Grant. Councils can use this funding flexibly to meet homelessness and rough sleeping needs, for example to offer financial support for people to find a new home, to work with landlords to prevent evictions or to provide temporary accommodation.

We recognise that supporting non-UK nationals, particularly individuals with restricted eligibility for certain services and public funds due to their immigration status, can present very specific challenges. We have asked all local authorities to exhaust all options within the law to provide a route off the streets for this group. Exhausting all options includes considering what discretionary powers can be used to support individuals; exploring partnership work with the voluntary and community sector to support people into employment and accommodation; and engaging with the Home Office on complex cases to support regularisation of status and where appropriate to facilitate voluntary returns. We want to ensure that local areas have the tools they need to support non-UK nationals off the street.

Through the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) 2022 – 2025., we are providing up to £500 million investment which will provide local authorities with the resources to offer bespoke interventions. We remain clear that any funding we provide, including RSI, can be used to help anyone, including those with restricted eligibility, as long as local authorities are acting within the law in doing so.

I would be grateful if you could share my reply with your co-signatories.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Jenrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP
Minister of State for Immigration