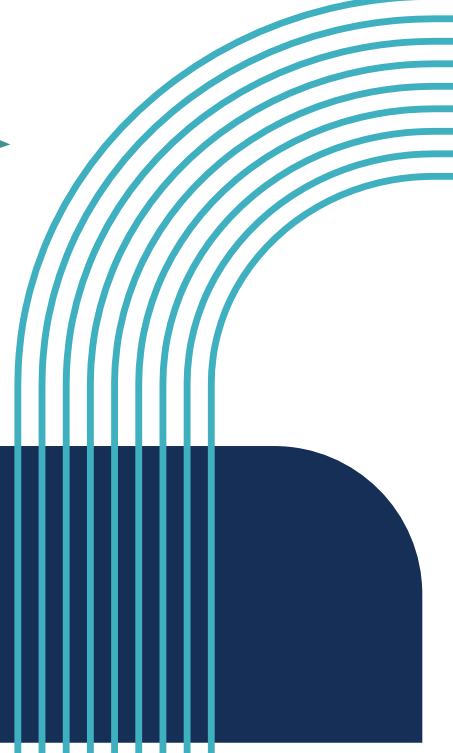
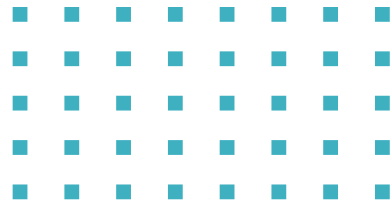


NACCOM
THE NO ACCOMMODATION NETWORK



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Understanding destitution and homelessness
in the asylum and immigration system.

A data briefing from the NACCOM network 2023 / 2024

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INTRODUCTION

Destitution and homelessness in migrant and refugee communities are on the rise in the UK, with thousands of people in the asylum and wider immigration system routinely experiencing trauma and hardship.

NACCOM's annual data briefing paints a comprehensive – and shocking – picture of the extent, impact and root causes of migrant destitution and homelessness in 2023/2024, and shines a spotlight on the increasing complexity of service provision in the sector, as voluntary organisations adapt to a turbulent policy landscape.

A hostile and failing asylum and immigration system, coupled with a chronic lack of social and affordable housing, and a general increase in demand for emergency homelessness assistance, are driving up levels of destitution and homelessness in migrant communities. NACCOM's inspiring and dedicated frontline members continue to provide a vital safety net, but local capacity often can't meet soaring demand, and unsustainable pressure is being placed on the voluntary sector – a bold programme of action is needed. Being denied a home strips people of their humanity. Everyone deserves to live with dignity and agency as part of their community.

1

MIGRANT DESTITUTION AND HOMELESSNESS ARE RISING AT AN ALARMING RATE

4,146 REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

were accommodated by the network in 2023/24 – the highest number ever recorded by NACCOM.

NACCOM's UK-wide network of over 140 frontline organisations and charities provided safe, temporary accommodation, through hosting and lodging placements, housing schemes and emergency accommodation, for 11% more people than last year, and 82% more than in 2021/22. For the second year running, the network accommodated more people than in any previous year, supporting a total of 4,146 people.

2

THERE IS A REFUGEE HOMELESSNESS EMERGENCY

Our data reveals that more refugees are being forced to turn to the voluntary sector for accommodation and vital support when they have been granted protection by the state and are legally entitled to statutory support. In 2023/24, NACCOM members accommodated 1,941 refugee adults experiencing homelessness, a 99% increase on the previous year and the largest number ever accommodated by the network. People with refugee status now constitute nearly half of all those accommodated, compared to just over a quarter last year.

**99% MORE
REFUGEE
ADULTS**
experiencing
homelessness needed
support this year.

Because of the previous Government's aim to clear the asylum backlog before the end of 2023, as well as short-term changes to the asylum move-on process, there has been a major increase in refugees being evicted into homelessness. There was a 129% rise in the number of people who entered members' support directly after leaving Home Office accommodation.

Just under half (48%) of refugees who moved on from member accommodation were unable to access either private rented or social housing. Many NACCOM members described major adaptations to their services in response to the refugee homelessness emergency. Some accommodated refugees for the first time, whilst others explored new accommodation models, such as lodging, to meet demand. This is a significant shift for the NACCOM network, the core aim of which has always primarily been to support people refused asylum.

3

MEMBERS ARE ACCOMMODATING MORE PEOPLE WHO ARE ROUGH SLEEPING

125%
more people were
rough sleeping in
2023/24.

Members report a sharp increase of 125% in rough sleeping, particularly amongst new refugees, forcing many to re-think their emergency accommodation provision, ranging from the opening of new night shelters, to booking hotel rooms. Local demand was often greater than capacity. Several NACCOM members describe having to distribute rough sleeping packs, including tents and sleeping bags, for the first time for refugee rough sleepers.

4

THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR INCREASINGLY PLUGS THE GAPS IN STATUTORY SUPPORT

OVER HALF A MILLION

nights of accommodation were provided by NACCOM members.

For the first time, NACCOM members collectively provided over half a million nights of accommodation (501,371 nights in total). This shows the growing extent to which the voluntary sector provides a safety net for people who fall through the gaps in the asylum and immigration system, stepping in when statutory support fails or is withdrawn. 4,212 people were given financial support by members. This is 10% more than in 2022/23. At least 1,214 people received both financial support and accommodation. Meanwhile, accommodation providers within the network provided asylum and immigration legal advice to 2,224 people. This is at a time when many charities are still feeling the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, as well as a challenging funding landscape.

5

MEMBERS CONTINUED TO ASSIST PEOPLE WITH NRPF

This year, 1,257 people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) were accommodated by the network. Just over half had been refused asylum and were Appeal Rights Exhausted (ARE). The number of people who were granted some form of leave to remain whilst accommodated by members more than doubled to 151. 236 people were supported to lodge a 'fresh' asylum claim after an initial refusal, while many others were supported to move on from homelessness by accessing support provided by the Home Office or Local Authorities.

1,257
PEOPLE
with NRPF were accommodated.

This data highlights the vital role that stable, temporary accommodation and holistic support, including legal advice, plays in empowering people to resolve their asylum claim and move forward. It also shows that hostile environment policies such as NRPF not only push people into hardship, but keep them there.

6

THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR IS AT CAPACITY

4,151
PEOPLE
could not be accommodated.

This year, our members had to turn away more people than ever before. Despite incredible efforts, they were unable to accommodate 4,151 people – an increase of 83% from last year. This figure is likely to be a severe underestimation of the true scale of unmet need.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

The data gives us a valuable insight into the failings and gaps in wider, statutory support systems and infrastructure, and highlights the need for urgent reform to asylum and immigration policies. Our recommendations include;

- Extend the 28-day move-on period from asylum accommodation to at least 56 days
- Introduce a duty to refer to the Home Office
- Ensure access to justice by improving the legal aid system
- Introduce a statutory process to help people understand the asylum system
- Lift the ban on the right to work for people seeking asylum
- End hostile environment policies including NRPF
- Repeal the Illegal Migration Act
- End homelessness for all

ABOUT NACCOM

NACCOM is a national network of 140 frontline organisations and charities across the UK, working together to end destitution amongst people seeking asylum, refugees and other migrants who aren't able to access public funds because of their immigration status.

Our annual survey 'Understanding destitution and homelessness in the asylum and immigration system' explores the scale and impact of destitution and homelessness across our network. This year, 96 NACCOM members responded to the Annual Survey, including 56 members who delivered accommodation (84% of all accommodation providers), across a reporting period of April 2023 to March 2024.



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NACCOM is a registered charity in England and Wales Registration No.1162434