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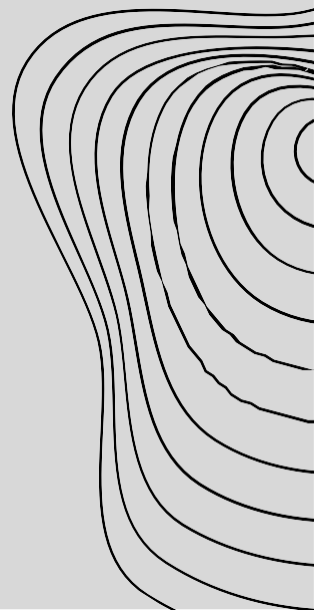
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# **'TREAT US LIKE HUMANS'**

## A report on the lived experience of the asylum system

DECEMBER 2024



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## Introduction

The Welcoming Mayors Project has been run by the Good Faith Partnership and NACCOM, with advice and support from the RAMP Project, since late 2023. Funded by the Lloyds Foundation, the project has been exploring the role of Mayors and Combined Authorities in asylum and refugee policy, with a particular focus on the asylum accommodation and support system.

As a key part of this work, three focus groups were conducted between July and October 2024 in Manchester, Newcastle and London. We're grateful to Boaz Trust, Action Foundation and Notre Dame Refugee centre for their support organising, recruiting participants, and hosting the focus groups. The focus groups were facilitated by NACCOM's Community Researchers, Kas, Ann Ahmed and Shamim, who are volunteer researchers with lived experience of destitution and immigration control.

In total, thirty people participated across the three focus groups. All participants had experience of seeking asylum in the UK and all but one had lived in asylum accommodation in the last ten years. Most participants were currently living in asylum accommodation. Monitoring data was not consistently collected because many participants did not give consent to this. However, participants ranged in age from their early 20s to their 60s, and came from a diverse range of countries including in the Middle East, South Asia, and North, East, South and West Africa. The most recent arrival to the UK came within the last year, while the longest-term resident of the UK had been here for nearly 20 years. People had claimed asylum in a variety of contexts: some had come to the UK across the Channel, others had arrived on student visas and later claimed asylum, and one had arrived on a resettlement scheme.

The purpose of the focus groups was to understand peoples' experiences of moving to an area, and attempting to settle and build their lives there, and learn what could make regions more welcoming for people in their situation. The questions discussed covered peoples' experience of their accommodation, local public services, their sense of community and belonging in their area, and opportunities available to them.

While the facilitators guided participants through topics which are relevant to the remit of Mayors and Combined Authorities, the priority was to listen and understand, and facilitators primarily took an approach of giving space to participants to express themselves and tell their stories freely, and raise the issues most important to them.

## **Accommodation**

For almost all participants, the accommodation they were placed in played a central and formative role in their experience of arriving and trying to settle in their region. All participants had recent experience of living in dispersed asylum accommodation, managed by private contractors such as Clearsprings, Serco and Mears. Many also had experience of staying in supposedly short-term accommodation in hotels, and some had also been placed in [quasi-detention settings](#) that have been used since 2020. Across all three focus groups, in three regions with three different accommodation providers, accounts of living in asylum accommodation were almost universally negative, with detrimental consequences for their sense of welcome in the UK, and their ability to settle, build their lives and become part of the local community.

Issues with dispersed accommodation commonly raised by participants included poor quality and badly maintained accommodation; unsuitability for specific needs; isolation and loneliness due to location, lack of transport provision and affordability, and language and cultural barriers between residents; difficulty trying to get issues addressed by the accommodation providers, and generally negative experiences with staff. Regarding hotel accommodation, participants highlighted the lack of privacy and independence; poor quality, unhealthy and culturally inappropriate food, and the length of time they were held in this type of supposedly short-term accommodation.

## **Quality and maintenance issues**

The primary issue raised by participants in relation to dispersed asylum accommodation was the poor standard of the housing, with stories of damp, mould, boiler problems, and pests common across all three groups. This participant's story in Newcastle was typical of many across the three focus groups:

*“The boiler sometimes goes off. Water runs in the house here and there. At one point there was a drain at the back of the house which was overflowing, and there was shit all over the place. This wasn't safe at all. It was horrible. Sometimes there is no light in the house. Sometimes we have spent three or four months with no heating in the house.”*

Such issues go well beyond mere discomfort and are a real hazard for residents, as another participant, in Manchester, explained:

*“In my house ... from the top floor, literally the water used to ... you have like a pool downstairs, you know, in the living room. And that too, it was so scary that it used to leak literally from the from the light circuit, you know? So that's extremely dangerous.”*

Such poor standards of accommodation are not acceptable for anyone, but are particularly distressing for those with children:

*“They have very unhygienic and poor conditions ... some of my friends also they have like very young children ... like there are some like mice ... so it's not safe enough for young children to be around and you know, like in terms of health and hygiene, it's not good.”*

## **Hotels**

Many participants who had lived in hotels emphasised the lack of privacy and independence they felt while they were staying there. One participant in Newcastle recounted how, on returning from an appointment where his solicitor had given him “*very bad news*”, he found another man in his room, who would now be sharing. He'd not been informed that someone else would be staying in his room, and shared how this felt disrespectful, and like a violation of his privacy:

*“I said [to a manager] at least you should call me. You have my number – at least you should call me, as a human. Out of respect, you should tell me we are having a person in your room ... [Another time] it happened again. There is no respect ... Maybe [he could be] a thief. Maybe I put my underwear outside, I don't want other people to see that. There is private things.”*

Participants also described how, when staff needed access to a room for maintenance or other reasons, “*they don't ring the door. They just open ... He's not waiting [for] you. Maybe I'm sleeping. Maybe I'm having a shower. Maybe I'm naked. There is no respect.*”

The most common complaint about living in hotels, though, was the food. Comments about the food included that it was *“disgusting, like really disgusting”*, *“you can’t eat it”*, and, by several participants, that it is *“for animals”*.

One participant commented that in the UK *“horses are treated better [than people seeking asylum] because at least they are given food they can eat”*.

Participants were also keen to push against the idea that decent food is a luxury. Multiple participants talked about the cultural importance of food, and their desire to be able to eat culturally appropriate food as a connection to their countries of origin in a context where they have been forced to leave behind their homes, families and communities.

Others described how being denied the ability to cook for themselves was damaging not only to their independence but also to their identity and sense of self, and consequently, their mental health and wellbeing. Several participants also commented on the health implications, with a number of people saying they had developed health conditions including diabetes while living in asylum hotels, while others had lost considerable weight.

### **(Un)suitability of accommodation for particular needs**

A number of participants in all three regions mentioned how their accommodation was unsuitable for specific, usually health-related needs, and how there is no flexibility in the system to respond to these needs by finding appropriate accommodation or making adaptations. Commonly this related to issues such as the bathroom being on a different floor to the bedroom and therefore inaccessible for residents with a physical disability; beds or mattresses that exacerbated back problems; and, as mentioned above, food that led to health issues. One participant relied on what he described as a *“breathing machine”* to manage his respiratory condition, but there was not a plug socket near enough to the bed to use it at night, and the accommodation provider refused to provide an extension cable.

The most striking example, however, came from a participant who cares for his severely disabled wife, as well as four children. They were moved between three different hotels in their first month in the UK, more than an hour away from each other, none of which were suitable for his wife.

In the first hotel, the door was too narrow for her wheelchair so she was not even able to leave the room for the two days they were there. The second hotel, where they were placed for a month, was an improvement but there was not an accessible bathroom.

They were finally placed in a hotel room with suitable facilities, but had to stay there for more than two years before they could move. Eventually, they were told to pack their bags as accommodation had been found for them:

*"We packed everything. It's ready to move. Before we move, by six hours only, [accommodation provider] people coming to us, knock on the door: 'Sorry, you will not move. This is a house not suitable for your wife.'"*

They were told not to unpack their bags because they could move any day: *"Six people. You want anything? You will open the bag and take it the cloth one by one. We stay around six months like this. We stay from March up to 29 September."*

When they eventually were moved, the house was not equipped, nor was there a care package in place for his wife:

*"Medical bed - it's not there. Hoist - not there. Toilet is not suitable for my wife. Same problems. And this sick nurse where is that one? Serco people, where is that one? Social care? Where is that one? Nobody. Nobody's there."*

The participant travelled around two hours each way between the hotel and the house for a week, trying to make arrangements so that his wife could live there. Eventually, some essential measures were put in place and the family moved in. However, several problems remain, primarily that there is not an accessible shower or bath.

The participant described the process of helping his wife to wash:

*"I have the toilet chair ... I put my wife in toilet chair and put it in the middle of bathroom. And she gets a shower. But there is a flood of the water after shower. I remove it by my hand to put in bathtub. Every time I do that."*

He said that he showed staff from the accommodation provider and social care this process and asked them to provide more suitable equipment. They said they would look for a solution, but they told him that this process was unsafe and advised him in the meantime to wash her in bed, which he felt strongly was a completely

inappropriate suggestion which would have health implications for his wife: *“How you can take a shower same like in the bed? You cannot stay one month. ... It is not shower, it's just washing ... Give it the water and the soap and the dry. You cannot stay one month like this. The more infections coming to my wife.”*

After some time living in that house, they were offered a move, but were not allowed to view the new house beforehand to assess its suitability, so declined.

They have sought help from community organisations and charities, statutory services and their MP, but as of the focus group in July 2024, this remains their situation.

## **Issues seeking support from staff**

Many participants reported that maintenance issues – including urgent matters around safety and sanitation – were left unaddressed for long periods after reporting them, despite following up repeatedly. As one participant in Newcastle explained about his dispersed accommodation:

*“It was awful to live there. You don't have heat or hot water to shower. I lived there a year and 3 months and never had a hot shower because there was no hot water. Just in cold water. I've called Migrant Help, told the housing manager, they said okay we'll report it, but nothing happened.”*

Such accounts were typical in relation to both dispersed accommodation and hotels, with several participants saying they were left without hot water for months.

In one hotel in which a number of participants stayed, the lift was broken for 40 days before it was repaired, despite residents raising it repeatedly with staff. This caused accessibility issues for several residents.

There was a strong feeling among all three groups that there are not clearly defined channels and processes for reporting maintenance or other issues. Some explained that they would call their housing manager from the company that managed the accommodation, who would tell them to call Migrant Help.

One participant described calling Migrant Help as a *“major headache. You can spend all day on the phone to Migrant Help”*, at the end of which they were often passed

back to the housing manager. In contrast, another participant described how *“some [housing provider] workers, they take it personally when you report something. For example, if the washing machine not working. You told them, and nothing happened. So you call Migrant Help. And then [the housing managers] came to me and they say, ‘Why did you call Migrant Help, you already reported it to [us].’”*

Another common theme was that the level of support and responsiveness to issues was very inconsistent and felt totally dependent on individual members of staff. One participant described how, *“the first housing manager we had was a horrible one. He didn’t take care of anything in the house. Thank God, they replaced him with a nice lady who is taking good care of us. So it depends on the staff.”* Unfortunately, it was just as common for participants to report good, responsive staff being replaced with people who were less competent or caring:

*“The old manager at the hotel, even when we’re not satisfied with our situation, she was a good communicator and helped where she could. She was clear about what she can and can’t do. She was nice and polite at least ... But the new manager, she was extremely strict person who doesn’t want to do her job, then another guy came and he was the same. They don’t want to do their job. He spent most of the time outside smoking. And when someone speaks to him, he doesn’t make notes, doesn’t look at his laptop, and after he just goes out to smoke, so I’m sure he doesn’t even remember what you’ve said.”*

More general complaints about accommodation staff included that they spoke to residents *“like we are stupid”*, and *“like they’re complete idiots, even though they have degrees and better understanding of life”*. Others recounted that staff would often mention the Home Office in interactions, in a way *“to frighten us”* by implying there could be consequences for their asylum case if they complained. Several participants emphasised that *“it’s not everyone”*, but that their needs to be a better system to ensure a higher and more consistent standard of treatment by staff.

Participants discussed how important these interactions and experiences were in their sense of welcome and in forming their impressions of the country and region they had arrived in.



As one explained:

*“I came from the war ... they should be more humanitarian in dealing with [us]. They don’t know how to treat people. And they are the first people that you meet in the UK.*

*They should be the best people we meet, to have a good idea of the country. How do I treat people good if I don’t have a good treatment in the first place? How to not be depressed if I’m just sitting in a hotel, I’m not allowed to travel because I don’t have any money. And I have people treating me like animal in the first period of being here. How to have a good idea of this country, how to involve in the society?”*

## **Experiences of “settling in”**

Much of the discussion in each focus group was centred around people’s experiences of trying to “settle in” in their local area: getting to know people, finding and using services, building a community around them and participating society. Across all three groups there was a strong shared feeling that people wanted to participate and contribute more, and participants had worked hard to achieve this, but that there were several barriers that stood in their way. These included being moved frequently while seeking asylum, language barriers, the location of their accommodation often leading to physical isolation, not being allowed to work, and poor or unaffordable transport services.

On the other hand, people spoke positively about the role of community organisations and charities in both offering support and a sense of community and purpose through volunteering opportunities, as well feeling welcomed by local people in their region.

## **Moving from place to place**

Participants highlighted that being moved around between regions of the UK while seeking asylum was one of the biggest barriers to feeling settled and part of the community. As one participant explained:

*“There a problem with the radiator and the water was going under the carpet, it was very wet. I reported it to Migrant Help. They said they would fix it, so I’ll have to move out ... while they are fixing my room. To my great surprise they took me to Sheffield, unannounced.*

*They did not tell me they were going take me to another city, And they came at night and they pick me up ... I asked the driver, 'where are you people taking me to?' And he said we're going to another city, 2.5 hours drive from here. And I said why? I'm going to college here, and I struggle to find myself in this life here, and you are taking me to a place without even telling me. It was so shocking and depressing."*

Fortunately this participant was able to return to the city they'd been living in thanks to an intervention by a local charity worker, but their case illustrates the damage that being uprooted all over again can do to someone's sense of belonging.

Another participant captured this powerfully when describing their own experience of being moved from Glasgow to Newcastle:

*"And again, after 6 months of building this community around me [in Glasgow], they say okay you have to go, move, to Newcastle. And me I was okay with it, but everything goes back to zero, so six months of my life, went away because it is no use anymore. Those people, you met them, you are friends with them, but it's done now. You have to go back to another city where you don't know anyone..."*

*When I came here, when you already left Syria, and you've already lost your friends there, then you find more friends, and other friends, and then you lose them again, you just feel like I'm not gonna do it again. You feel isolated again. You cannot choose where to go."*

Someone else explained how the consequent isolation impacted his mental health:

*"I accepted the moving to Sunderland because it's kind of near to Newcastle so I can complete my volunteering and I didn't want to put a stone in my process. But when I moved I don't have anyone around me. I didn't know anyone ... You feel depressed. And you need to go out and discover other places, but you can't. Going around from place to place you will be depressed."*

## Location and isolation

The location of participants' accommodation could also make a big difference to their ability to "settle in". Generally, participants expressed a strong preference for living in cities, where there are more things to do, more facilities and services to help people settle, and more people around, including people with a shared culture or language.

As one participant explained:

*"I lived 1.5 years in Newcastle. I lived in Parish Court. Then I was moved to [a small town]. Newcastle was better because [this town] is just families. Nothing there except supermarkets. In the city it's better – can see friends, go to the museum, library, do lots of things. I'm studying at Newcastle college. It's an hour and a half to get to Newcastle on the bus so I can't go to the city and see my friends as much."*

The same participant also explained that it's much harder to meet his cultural and religious needs where he is living now: for example, he now has to travel into either Newcastle or Blyth, which are each an hour or more on the bus, to access a halal shop.

Another participant's experience highlights the impact that living in an isolated area can have on the wellbeing of people in the asylum system:

*"If you're sitting in the house, how many times can you go to with your friends out ... when you don't have money, when you don't have enough support, you know? So it just comes to very restricted amount of outside, you know like world or outside, you know? So I think that also triggers a lot of anxiety, mental health issues"*

Participants also described how it was difficult and isolating to live with people who do not share a culture or language:

*"When they moved me to Sunderland, they moved me to a shared house with three people from [another country], who all spoke [a different language]."*

*I have no disrespect for those people, but they didn't speak Arabic like me, and they didn't speak English either, so we can't communicate at all. It would be better to put me with other Arabic speakers so I am not totally alone. I don't know how to speak to them, how to live with them, how to understand them. Not a single other person who speaks Arabic or English. Why not? There was another house, 200 metres down the road, full of Arabs, with two spare rooms. Why didn't they put me there? I asked them to move me there, they refused. Why? It's so isolating."*

## **Transport**

Several participants also emphasised the importance of public transport in enabling them to get around, access other services, and participate in the community, especially when they did not live centrally. However many participants stated that they found public transport prohibitively expensive given the financial situation that most people seeking asylum are in:

*“Transportation is so important. Without it, we have to stay at home all day, you become depressed. We want to get to know our city, go out and do things. But transport is too expensive when you only have £49 per week to live on, including food and everything.”*

Others explained that the transport infrastructure isn't adequate, leading to greater isolation:

*“[From where I live] It's an hour and twenty to get to either Blyth or Newcastle on the bus, even though Blyth is very close on the map”.*

Limitations of public transport, or being unable to afford it, had a knock-on effect for accessing other services. As this participant explained about their experience of trying to use a food bank:

*“We do have food banks and things, but where I am the food bank is like ages away. So it's like it's no point even having a food bank you know because I have to have like a fiver or you know, travel money.”*

## **Work and training opportunities**

Many participants in all three groups highlighted work as one of the most important ways in which they would be able to feel more at home in the UK. When asked towards the end of the sessions what would make them feel more welcome in the UK, the right to work was the most common response. However, even when people did have the right to work after receiving their status, many barriers to employment remained. Commonly, participants highlighted language as a key barrier, emphasising the importance of good ESOL provision for new arrivals. One

participant in Newcastle who, unlike others, arrived on a resettlement scheme and was allowed to work immediately, spoke positively about her experience of coming to the UK, and of learning English and preparing to work.

*“Here I’m working for study, I volunteer, but I’m happy inside. I have a plan for work. I am allowed to work, but the big problem is language. For conversation, I’m not good.”*

For several other participants, ESOL classes were not only a way of learning vital English skills to help them settle in the UK, but also offered a space to meet people, socialise and build a support network, as this participant in London explained:

*“ESOL is very important for me. Helps me to feel more confident engaging with the community and making friends who can support me. Also helps to get more information. Especially if you come with mental health issues, it is helpful.”*

Even participants who have good English skills, and the right to work, found there are many challenges in the way of accessing employment. This participant described how he finds it hard to “navigate the system”, working out what he needs to do and what qualification he needs. He felt the support from the Job Centre is inadequate:

*“I’m struggling to find a job even though I think I speak very good English. I’m qualified in everything from a handyman to a caseworker, to book editing, I do basically everything, I cannot find a job, because someone in the Job Centre doesn’t want to do their job. I cannot navigate the system, that’s it.*

*[My work coach] doesn’t want to spend any energy on me – he just wants me to stop talking and asking about things. It’s actually ridiculous – do you want me to stay on benefits? ... I really want to work”*

Interestingly, the same participant reported a much better experience getting support from the Local Authority employment team, perhaps highlighting the valuable role local government can play:

*“The employment team in the council is way better. I went to the council and asked them for help and they at least can follow up what they are doing with me – I need this qualification, there is this scheme, you can do this, ask the job centre for this. They are helping me navigate.”*

There are many other barriers which prevent people achieving their employment goals. The participant who arrived on a resettlement scheme described the challenges preventing her from opening a business:

*“I have a dream about opening my own salon, because in my home country I had my own salon. I have experience for 20 years. I think impossible because very expensive to rent shop, for council tax, for anything. We cannot.”*

Accepting that she couldn't open her own business, she looked for work in other salons, but found she couldn't get work as she doesn't have qualifications from the UK, despite the fact she has twenty years of experience and qualifications from her home country:

*“I have problem when I go any salon for working ... I did interview, I have job. But you cannot because I don't have certificate here. I did course now, and now I take certificate, but I take interview, your certificate level, low. You want high level. This big problem for me.”*

## **Charities and community organisations**

Almost universally, participants' most positive comments were reserved for the support and sense of community they had received from local charities and community organisations. Many participants spoke of their experience with charities as a model of what a more welcoming system could look like, if a similarly supportive approach was taken by accommodation providers and other statutory services.

In London, participants spoke about the multiple services offered by the charity which was hosting the focus group, and how collectively they provided a holistic service which transformed their experience of trying to settle in the UK:

*“[The charity] support with education – ESOL; money for transport to come to [the charity] ... cooking ... touristic activities, visits to museums, gardens and things, prayer; dispenser helps with food, medication ... support to apply to Home Office for documents ... list of numbers for solicitors; referrals to other organisations, for example to help with destitution issues ... every Wednesday someone comes to support with writing English”*

Similar accounts were given at all three focus groups, and participants described how such comprehensive support helped people to cope with, and even overcome, the many challenges and barriers to settling in their local area. One participant in Newcastle captured the power of this kind of support in enabling someone to build a home for themselves in a context where they have had to leave their homes and communities behind:

*“The bright side of my story is that is that this organisation I’m volunteering for is like a family to me. I say it every day: I’m so grateful to them. Because I’m on my own in this country, I have no family ... but this organisation is like a family to me. They’ve been supporting me and helping me with everything that I need.”*

Another participant elaborated further on how the complexity of “navigating the system” is a significant barrier to feeling welcome, and the power of support from organisations to overcome that:

*“The navigation of the new system here I think is what every refugee and asylum seeker needs. You know how we say that [this charity] is our family – it’s just because they help us to navigate the system. They give us the information – to navigate the city, navigate the system of employment ... apply for college. If we can navigate the system, we can progress much faster.”*

## **A more welcoming system**

All participants were asked at towards the end of the focus group what would help them to feel more at home in the UK, and the area that they live. The most common response was to *“treat us like humans”*. Participants were emphatic that there is no substitute for systemic change to the asylum system, to make the process less hostile through measures such as giving people the right to work while they are seeking asylum. However, participants did offer some suggestions for what more “human-centred” and welcoming services for people seeking asylum might look like, including greater local government involvement in asylum accommodation, and making local services more accessible and affordable.

## A “humanitarian approach” to accommodation

As explored above, participants overwhelmingly felt that their experiences of asylum accommodation made it difficult to settle in their area and contributed to them feeling unwelcome in the UK. More than once participant called for a “*humanitarian approach*” to asylum accommodation.

Many participants highlighted the disruption caused to their lives by being moved from place to place, often just as they were beginning to feel settled, and identified this as a major barrier to feeling welcome and at home. Participants across all three groups called for more **stable and consistent accommodation**:

*“Please, when they send us to a place ... where we [have] struggled to cope, and we are starting to make little, little roots, don’t ... unroot us again, to put us in a new place where we have to re-root everything again. Because building life is not easy.”*

Several participants said they would find it easier to settle if they were placed in an **area with other people from a similar background**, to combat isolation and enable them to build a community and support network:

*“They have to consider small things which are indeed important for our mental health and our safety. Putting us in a community where we can find people from where we come from ... so you don’t feel too isolated, too stressed and too depressed.”*

A number of participants suggested that the involvement of for-profit companies in providing asylum accommodation was a major contributor to the issues they faced, calling instead for a “**humanitarian approach**”:

*“I think [the accommodation companies] are making a lot of money from this job. They have a lot of money for the hotels. There are lots of empty rooms in the houses. Why are you not moving people into the houses? Because they are earning a lot of money – that’s business. There are no emotions. They should be more humanitarian.”*

Some participants suggested that **greater involvement of local government in providing asylum accommodation** would be a better way of achieving this:

*“If there could be a system, or law, where local authorities are directly involved in accommodation, housing, if you give money to the local authorities and then it goes to the [accommodation], I think it will be way, way better”*



It was also suggested that this would help to address the widespread issue of people becoming homeless after receiving their status due to the 28-day move on period:

*“If [asylum accommodation] was run by the local authority, they don’t need to do anything, just keep us in the [accommodation] and when you get the status, just move them to the house ... If it’s run by the local authority, you can keep them there [until there is alternative accommodation]”.*

## **More welcoming local services**

There were some positive experiences of local services reported, such as the participant quoted previously who spoke positively about getting help from the council employment team. Nonetheless, most participants felt a lot more could be done on a local government level to help people feel more welcome, and as mentioned above, several highlighted their experiences with local charities and community organisation as a model for how this could be done well.

Key areas highlighted included:

- **Employment and training opportunities**
- **English language learning**
- **Better support to find and apply for college**
- **Financial support**, as asylum support is too little to live on
- **Transport**

Better access to transport was discussed as one of the most important changes to be made, as it affects peoples’ ability to access many other things, such as college, volunteering, training, and social opportunities:

*“Transport is very expensive for asylum seeker. If I stay at home all of the day I will be depressed. I should go, I should know the city ... you need transportation ... they should give us monthly or weekly cards.”*

Many participants believed transport should be free for people in the asylum system – some who had previously lived in Scotland explained that this had been the case there, and had a transformative impact on them – as it is often unaffordable for people on asylum support:

*“Transport should be free for asylum seekers I think, completely free ... provided by the local authority to welcome asylum seekers”*

## **Next Steps**

The Welcoming Mayors project is joining other calls on the Home Office to make use of the 2026 break clause in the asylum accommodation and support contracts in order to pilot a devolved model. We believe that this represents a unique and vital opportunity to address the many serious issues identified in this report and create a system that is more humane and effective for all.

As this report demonstrates, the engagement and contribution of those with living and lived experience of the current system will be crucial in the design and delivery of a devolved model. The partner organisations involved in the Welcoming Mayors project stand ready to work with Government and other key stakeholders to support and facilitate this.



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