

Refugee Housing and Homelessness:

Scoping Local Authority responses to newly granted refugees not in priority need

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Executive Summary

The way that people are accommodated during the asylum process has shifted in recent years, with an increasing proportion accommodated in London, primarily in contingency hotels. This presents a 'move-on' challenge: many of these residents have subsequently been recognised as refugees, but struggle to secure mainstream housing, undermining their ability to build a stable life in the UK. There was a rapid rise in homelessness among newly granted refugee adults not deemed 'priority need' in 2023 and going into winter 2025/26 this continues to be a serious issue.

In the context of wider homelessness pressures, local authorities are often 'fire-fighting' to provide statutory support, with limited opportunity for cross-locational learning. This report provides information on the refugee homelessness situation and how local authorities are responding, in order to foster the development of more effective approaches across London.

THE NEED FOR A MORE REALISTIC MOVE-ON TIMEFRAME - AS PART OF A ROBUST AND HOLISTIC SETTLEMENT STRATEGY FOR ASYLUM ROUTE REFUGEES

Currently, most single individuals living in asylum accommodation have around 28 days to leave their accommodation once they receive their eVisa details. This is too short for many to set up the basics of a new life, with housing a particular challenge. While it is understandable that the Home Office wants to reduce the hotel bill, the short move-on timeframe (which recently shifted *back* to 28 days - after piloting a much-welcome 56-day period) shifts costs elsewhere, exacerbating the financial and social challenge of homelessness.

Local authority homeless prevention work is further complicated by other Home Office policy and practice, specifically the sidelining of local government in decisions about asylum accommodation, volatility in asylum policy and decision processing and lack of consistency in the issuing of key documentation and data-sharing with local authorities.

Home Office support for refugees in this transitional period is generally limited to some basic telephone advice, although in some boroughs, Asylum Move-On Liaison Officers provide face-to-face advice, which has been well-received and appears to ease issues around data-sharing and referral to local authorities.

The restriction on working during the asylum process, combined with the five-week processing period for Universal Credit claims, means that many people fall into a destitution gap post-eviction. Refugees face specific barriers navigating the labour market and there is insufficient investment in training and employment support to address this, which has implications for their ability to navigate the housing market.

Recommendations to central government:

- More time is needed between a decision and the cessation of accommodation support, for refugees to secure housing and avoid homelessness - at least 56 days. The Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions need to coordinate the move-on timeframe in a realistic way to eliminate the destitution gap.
- There is a need for more serious and meaningful partnership between the Home Office and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and local authorities around asylum accommodation. To enable early intervention, councils need better collaboration and better data from the Home Office – given this is a long-standing issue, ensuring that the Home Office has a Duty to Refer may ensure greater consistency. There is also a need for evaluation, standardisation and expansion of the Asylum Move-On Liaison service, including working with people in dispersal accommodation, to ensure individuals are connected with homeless prevention support in a timely fashion.
- A robust and holistic settlement strategy for asylum route refugees is needed, with better ESOL, training and employment supports. Reducing restrictions on early ESOL provision and the right to work during the asylum process especially after six months would substantially ease the transition.

IMPROVING HOMELESS PREVENTION PRACTICE

Local authority housing departments and budgets are under immense pressure. Homeless prevention practices vary considerably between local authorities notably around entry route, timelines and the nature of the 'reasonable steps' taken by local authorities to prevent homelessness among people not deemed priority need. This creates something of a post-code lottery in terms of support.

There are examples of good practice, including: smarter working within councils (e.g. using staff capacity flexibly or adding staff capacity and establishing effective joined-up working between the housing departments and migrant/refugee teams); refining navigational support and providing financial support with upfront housing payments; and making assertive efforts to identify housing solutions (e.g. via partnerships with housing providers, or commissioning services to work with people not in priority need).

Many local authorities coordinate with or fund voluntary and community sector organisations, recognising their key role in providing trusted and engaged support. However the extent and nature of collaboration varies considerably across boroughs. There are also concerns about local authorities trying to 'offload' residents onto an over-stretched and under-funded sector.

Recommendation to central government:

- The under-resourcing of homeless prevention requires urgent action.

Recommendations to local government:

- Early intervention should be a priority, requiring effective collaboration with the Home Office and clear and responsive internal referral routes within councils. Designating specific housing officers to focus on asylum accommodation leavers, with appropriate training, is an important step in areas with very busy homeless prevention teams and a significant refugee move-on challenge.
- While recognising that local authorities face diverse and distinct institutional challenges and financial pressures, information-sharing and collaboration around creative approaches can offer opportunities to improve homeless prevention practices.
- Councils can benefit greatly from working with voluntary and community sector organisations already embedded in hotel and community settings, if this is informed by a clear-sighted understanding of the capacity of specific organisations and the need for financial backing.

ENSURING EFFECTIVE NAVIGATIONAL SUPPORT

Refugees face specific obstacles navigating the private rental sector and housing support systems, including lack of preparedness and language barriers. Some valuable information resources have been developed, mainly by voluntary and community sector organisations, but dissemination is patchy and rarely upstream; there are some issues around accessibility and translation and there is scope for more efficient resourcing. Some information resources have been co-designed with people with lived experience, helping ensure efficacy.

The move-on period is high pressure and disorienting, particularly for people with experience of trauma, and access to reliable, regular face-to-face advice can be critical. Some local authorities offer weekly or more frequent drop-in support at hotels or community hubs. Others operate more at arms-length. Fluid coordination between Home Office services, different local authority teams and local voluntary and community sector organisations is key to effective delivery.

Recommendation to central and local government:

- Information should be disseminated more actively, in translation, and much more upstream, so that people know what to expect if they get refugee status. Co-production with people with experience of the move-on period can make information provision more effective. To avoid duplication of effort, consider the benefits of more centralised information resource development, which can be updated easily with changes and adapted for use in specific local settings.

Recommendation to local government:

- Clear and accessible information needs to be buttressed during the move-on period with regular access to reliable face-to-face advice. Be mindful of the risk of confusion during this high stress period, working collaboratively (across local authorities, voluntary and community sector and Home Office services) to refine advice pathways. Trauma-informed approaches to delivery of navigational support would help make these interventions more effective.

CONFRONTING FINANCIAL BARRIERS

Many refugees have little to no money when they leave asylum accommodation and moving into private rented housing requires significant upfront costs. The Refugee Integration Loan is typically too little and too late to cover upfront housing payments. Local authorities sometimes offer financial support with these upfront payments, but eligibility and access vary and there are significant differences in what is offered across boroughs.

Recommendation to central and local government:

- Refugees need to be able to put down deposits to secure housing. Support with this needs to be more prompt, consistent and effective. This could come from local authorities expanding, standardising and streamlining access to financial support with first payments; a pan-London scheme; or adjustments to the amount and timeframe of the Refugee Integration Loan.

OPENING UP HOUSING SOLUTIONS

London is the least affordable place to rent privately in the UK and refugees face double economic and racial discrimination in the housing market. There are creative efforts to try to address some of these barriers, for example via the London Lettings Network, Refugee Lodgings Scheme, and supported use of Home Finder. Supported accommodation is a vital route but going through a critical period of regulatory change. A very small number of councils have sought to make one housing offer to every individual not in priority need by mobilising partnerships with housing providers outside London. Some local authorities have also commissioned specialist housing services with voluntary and community sector partners, mobilising their expertise, housing knowledge and networks with housing providers, helping to reduce single homelessness.

Recommendations to central government:

- More effective regulation of the housing market is needed, alongside an expansion of social housing.
- To give people on low incomes - including newly granted refugees - a more realistic chance of securing housing, the Local Housing Allowance rates, particularly for those under 35 years old, should be more closely aligned with market rents.

Recommendation to local government:

- Scale creative efforts to address the barriers facing refugees and other people falling into homelessness – consider (sub)regional cooperation as a route for this.

Recommendation to central and local government:

- Ensure that efforts to improve supported accommodation do not cut off this vital housing route by addressing resourcing alongside standards.

1. Introduction

The proportion of asylum-seekers accommodated in London has increased over recent years. Many have subsequently been recognised as refugees but have struggled to secure mainstream housing.¹ Many of the difficulties newly recognised refugees encounter are shared by UK citizens, but there are specific factors that create additional barriers. This is unfolding in the context of wider homelessness situation that is severe.² Local authorities (LAs) are often 'fire-fighting' to provide statutory support, with limited opportunity for cross-locational learning about ways of preventing and addressing rising homelessness and rough sleeping among refugee residents. While there is mounting evidence on refugees' housing struggles, there is much less work looking at responses from LAs and other actors. This report:¹

- (1) Scopes the move-on housing challenge from the perspective of London boroughs;
- (2) Maps LA responses and draws out examples of good practice, focusing on work with single adults.

The main purpose is to provide LAs with information on the refugee homelessness situation and response, to foster the development of borough-level approaches.³ It draws on research carried out between June and September 2025, including:

- Interviews with 20 people working in 14 LAs across London, focusing on those with more significant asylum-seeker populations;
- 13 interviews with other relevant parties, including voluntary and community sector organisations (VCS) and the Home Office's (HO) positive move-on telephone service provider;
- Qualitative research with asylum-seekers and refugees in the Hillingdon area in collaboration with REAP, including in-depth interviews with six refugees covering experiences prior to and after eviction;
- Visits and conversations at local services, co-ordination meetings and housing workshops;
- A survey carried out by GLA and London Councils in June 2025 of LAs and civil society organisations supporting people rough sleeping after leaving asylum accommodation.⁴

The sections of this report offer an overview of:

- The refugee homelessness situation in London, and the particular challenges confronting single adults;
- The institutional landscape that exists to combat homelessness and support refugees, and ways of working within LAs and with central government and civil society;
- Approaches to supporting newly recognised refugees with housing issues, considering: navigational support; financial support; and housing solutions;
- Suggestions of ways forward, to facilitate wider discussion of relevant policy and practice.

¹ The report is part of a SOAS project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council's COLIF scheme via the Impact Acceleration Account. With thanks to the Greater London Authority (GLA), No Accommodation Network (NACCOM) and Refugees in Effective and Active Partnership (REAP) for their advice and support.

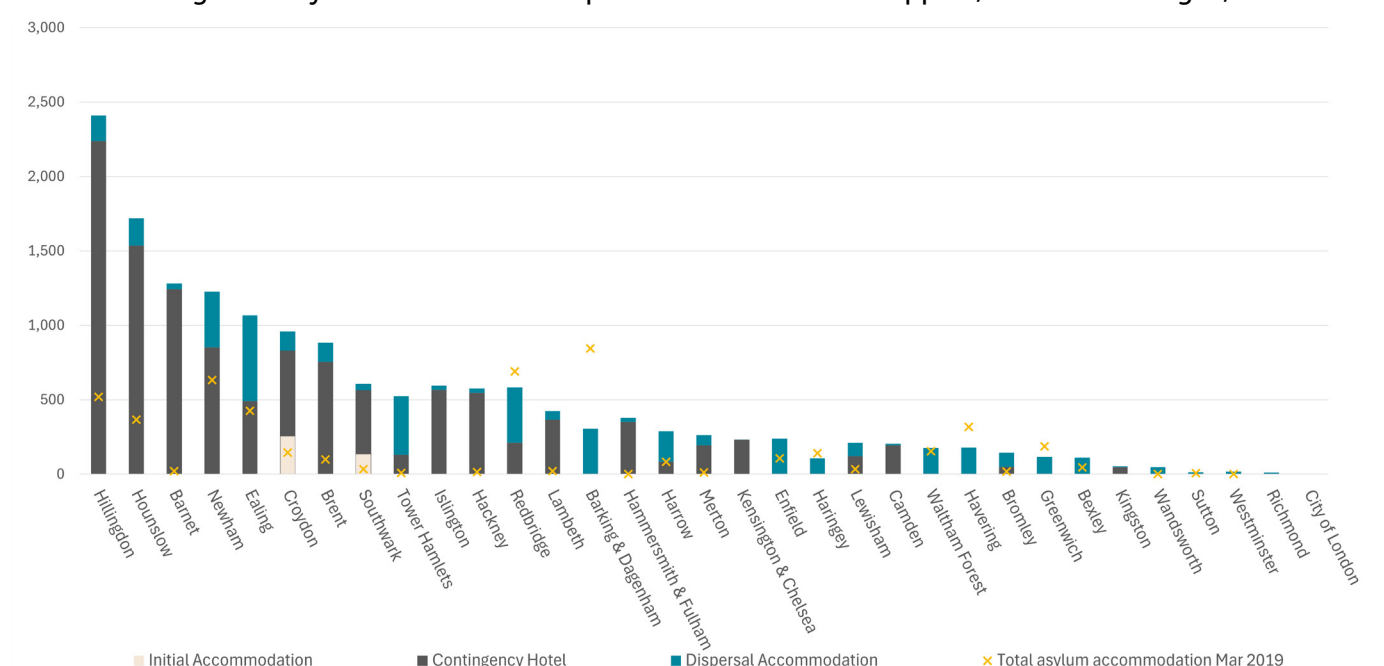
2. The London refugee move-on challenge

2.1 Asylum accommodation and the move-on period

There has been an increase in the number of people seeking asylum in the UK and a shift in the way people are accommodated during the asylum process. In the context of conflict and persecution in Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan, Eritrea, Iraq and other countries, UK asylum claims roughly doubled between 2020 and 2025, while remaining modest per capita and moderate by comparison with other European countries.⁵ The majority of asylum-seekers would otherwise be destitute so are placed in asylum accommodation (on a no-choice basis). Since 2012, the HO has contracted private companies to source dispersal accommodation, typically shared houses. From 2020, finding it increasingly difficult to secure sufficient dispersal accommodation, the HO mobilised 'contingency' accommodation, including in London (where 59% of asylum-seekers are accommodated in re-purposed hotels, rather than shared housing).⁶

There is very little coordination between the HO and LAs over the placement of asylum accommodation. Since 2024, the HO has used a multi-factor 'market availability tool' to inform where contractors source accommodation; asylum accommodation remains very unevenly distributed spatially (Figure 1). Particularly prominent is Hillingdon, with nearly 2,500 asylum-seekers in June 2025, due to the business choices of the owners of large hotels in the Heathrow area; followed by neighbouring Hounslow; with Barnet, Newham and Ealing also all having over 1,000 residents living in asylum accommodation in June 2025. Contractors are required to liaise with LAs in basic ways (e.g. around licensing)⁷ but LAs often have little warning before a hotel is opened. Yet LAs have statutory responsibilities in relation to residents, including asylum-seekers: for example for education, safeguarding, and health and social care.⁸ They also have health and safety powers and responsibilities (this resulted in the closure of one of the Islington hotels in early 2025).⁹ Moreover - key to this report - if a person housed in asylum accommodation is granted refugee status and has nowhere to live, the council has statutory homelessness duties to take steps to prevent or relieve their homelessness.

Figure 1 Asylum-seekers in receipt of accommodation support, London boroughs, Jun 2025



Source: Home Office [Immigration System Statistics, year ending Jun 2025](#), Asylum - Asylum-seekers in receipt of support by Local Authority, Asy_D11

This highlights the need for more serious partnership between the HO, Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and LAs around asylum accommodation.¹⁰

The Labour government's plan for the reform of asylum accommodation focuses on reducing the use of hotels via expansion of alternative mass accommodation sites and exploring closer partnership with LAs around asylum accommodation via pilot schemes.¹¹ For example, this might take the form of HO capital investment to increase local housing stock, some of which would be leased back to the HO for a period, for use as asylum accommodation, then revert to the LA for general use. A significant number of London LAs submitted interest in running some form of pilot scheme, reasoning that they offer opportunities to mobilise

additional local housing stock (instead of competing with HO contractors for properties) as well as to address housing standards and safeguarding issues in current forms of asylum accommodation. However, considering the massive pressures on local government budgets,¹² much will depend on what financial support the HO is prepared to put towards this process.

When an individual is granted refugee or humanitarian protection status,¹³ they enter a 'grace' period of 28 days before they have to leave their asylum accommodation (termed the 'move-on' period in this report). After the decision letter, once the individual has been issued with information required to create their eVisa,¹⁴ the HO should notify them via an asylum support discontinuation letter of the date when their accommodation ends. The accommodation provider should also then issue the individual with a 'notice to vacate' (NTV) or 'notice to quit' (NTQ), with the confirmed date to leave the accommodation, a minimum of seven days prior to the eviction date.

The details of the move-on period have varied considerably. Often key documents have not been issued to refugees on time, or in the correct sequence. For example, particularly in late 2023, it was widely reported that many individuals did not receive correct documentation, or received it as close to seven days before having to leave their accommodation – at the same time, some people were not being evicted for much longer periods.¹⁵ For people granted refugee status from December 2024 to August 2025, the grace period was formally extended to 56 days from the point of receiving refugee status, as a pilot, in the context of a period of increased decision-making and the transition from Biometric Residency Permit cards to eVisas.¹⁶ This aligned with the 56 day period that local authorities have to take action to help prevent homelessness. Despite positive feedback on this from LAs and VCS, and having announced in early July that it would continue with the 56-day move-on period to the end of 2025, in late August the HO announced that the move-on period would revert to 28 days from 1 September, except for families and specific vulnerable groups, leaving LAs and VCS scrambling to adjust.¹⁷

Refugees are a diverse group and their experience of the move-on period varies, but there is abundant evidence that 28 days is typically too short to set up the most basic essentials of independent life,¹⁸ with key challenges relating to preparedness, money and the housing market. Even people with advanced English and digital literacy struggle to secure private rented housing before eviction. Sections 3-6 unpack these challenges in more detail, in conjunction with LA and other actors' efforts to respond, via navigational support; financial support; and bricks-and-mortar solutions.

2.2 Local authority role in tackling homelessness

LAs have statutory duties around homelessness: if an individual is either threatened with homelessness (in the next 56 days) or homeless the council must take 'reasonable steps' to support them, to prevent or resolve their homelessness.¹⁹ While what is being assessed is the same, each London LA has its own system, and interviews with LAs and VCS illuminate variation in homelessness prevention and relief practice between LAs that have a significant impact on newly granted refugees:²⁰

- **When an individual may lodge a homeless prevention application and when it will be assessed varies between LAs.** For example, some councils have not been willing to start working on housing solutions until refugees presented an NTQ letter from their accommodation provider, which could be as late as 7 days prior to eviction. Shifts in HO practice in the move-on period (around the issuing of the letters outlined in Section 2.1), combined with housing department capacity pressures, have often resulted in late engagement, precluding meaningful prevention work.
- The LA will assess whether the individual is 'priority need' i.e. if they have children or there are any circumstances that may make them more at risk of harm if left to rough sleep (e.g. significant physical and mental health issues). **Some applicants have struggled to engage with over-stretched health services, resulting in issues obtaining medical evidence** (particularly if their asylum case has been processed relatively quickly).²¹ This also affects whether individuals can show the HO that they are eligible for a longer move-on period. Housing officers may refer to independent medical officers who have an advisory role, but these can only review established clinical evidence. Some housing officers spoke of cases where they have been diligent in making further enquiries when single individuals present with potential vulnerabilities, but these issues may not be obvious or may take time to verify. A history of modern slavery may have a bearing on

assessment and housing entitlements, but issues with the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) combined with lack of clear guidance and inconsistent recording during the homeless prevention application process, means that this may not be logged.²²

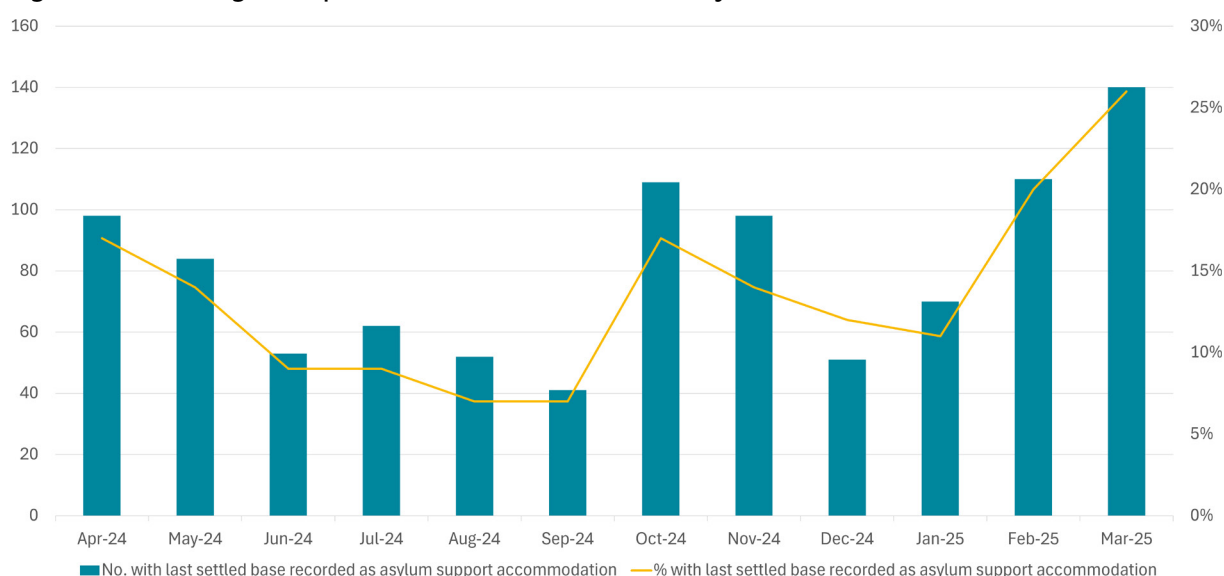
- **Finally, there are variations in the nature of the ‘reasonable steps’ taken by LAs in relation to people who are not identified as priority need.** The applicant is issued with a Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) outlining the steps that the LA and the applicant should take to secure accommodation. The council should place individuals identified as ‘priority need’ in temporary accommodation, and ensure that they are offered some form of long-term housing - typically this will be private rental housing.²³ For those not identified as priority need (the majority of single applicants) the ‘reasonable steps’ will include providing information and encouraging the individual to look for affordable housing and engage with employment support services, and may include providing financial or other forms of support, referrals to support services, and offering hostel or other accommodation (at the LA’s discretion). Section 5 highlights variations in the provision of financial support and Section 6 highlights variations in provision of direct support in getting accommodation.

2.3 Homelessness realities

Refugees are disproportionately at risk of homelessness. VCS organisations have long highlighted the difficulties refugees have had finding housing, but during 2023, when the government increased caseworker capacity to address the asylum backlog,²⁴ this became a more obvious issue. In 2019-2023 refugees accounted for 1-2% of people recognised as in need of homeless prevention or relief in London, but this increased to 10-11% in winter 2023-24 and has since stayed high, at around 8%.²⁵ This likely underestimates the issue because some do not approach LAs for support.

Rough sleeping figures paint an even starker picture: CHAIN figures for 2024/25 indicate that 18% of new rough sleepers who had information recorded about their last settled base prior to rough sleeping had previously been staying in asylum support accommodation. The vast majority were recorded as having left asylum support accommodation with a positive Home Office decision, i.e. newly granted refugees.²⁶ Figure 2 shows that Mar 2025 saw a surge in the number and proportion of London rough sleepers whose previous housing was recorded as asylum accommodation. This is likely to be an underrepresentation of the total number of newly granted refugees finding themselves street homeless as these figures only capture those seen bedded down by commissioned outreach teams and for whom specific information on their last settled based was reported on the CHAIN database.

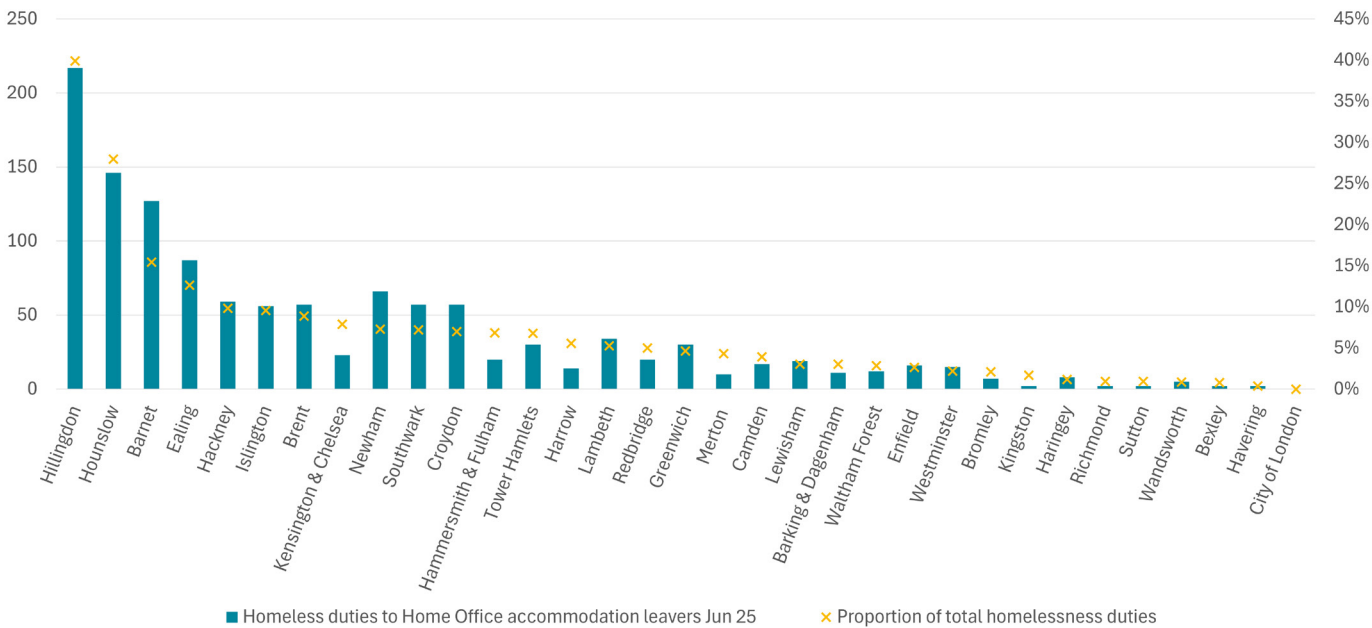
Figure 2 New rough sleepers in London identified as asylum accommodation leavers



Source: GLA [CHAIN Data Annual Report April 2024-March 2025](#), p.37

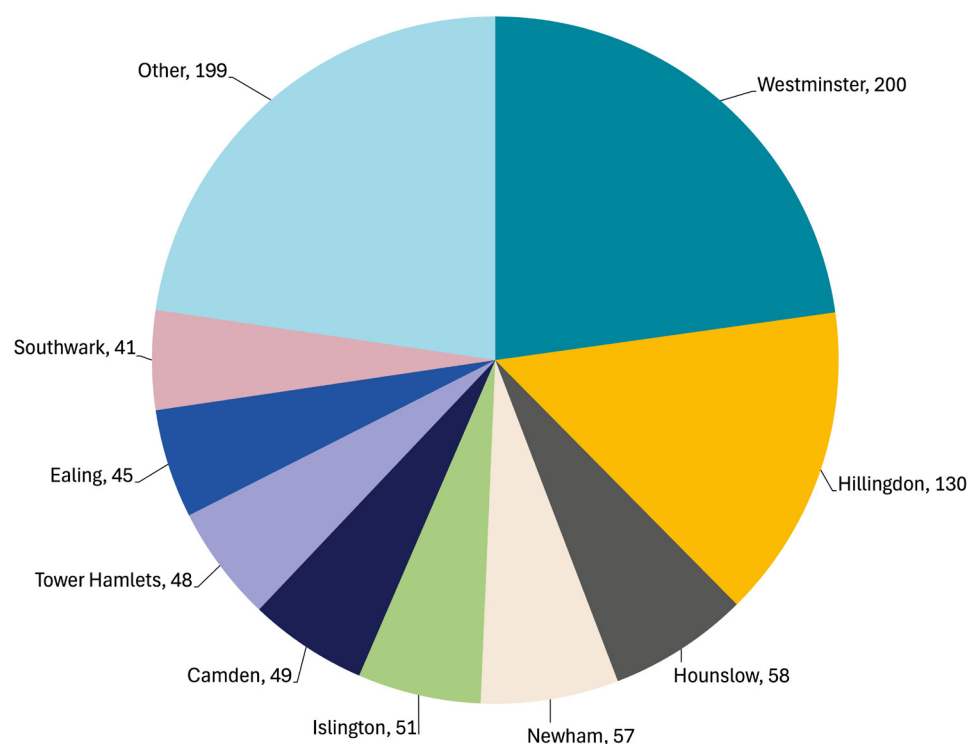
Given the uneven distribution of asylum accommodation, some LAs encounter more refugee residents threatened with homelessness or homeless than others. Figure 3 shows that as of June 2025, Hillingdon and Hounslow had the highest numbers of homeless duties owed to newly granted refugees, representing 40% of the total homeless duties in Hillingdon, and 28% of total duties in Hounslow. Barnet and Ealing also stand out, as having both high overall homeless duties (in top 5 in London) *and* a substantial proportion being newly granted refugees (15% and 13% respectively). Figure 4 shows that these boroughs with high homeless duties often see higher incidence of rough sleeping among newly granted refugees – Hillingdon, Hounslow, Ealing and Newham are in the top five for both, for this population. However, there have also been high levels of rough sleeping in central London boroughs, even ones with much less asylum accommodation, as people move around the city, with some gravitating towards ‘hotspot’ areas like Westminster, where they may be more likely to be seen by street outreach teams. Some new rough sleepers relocate to London on getting status because of community links, looking for work, or to return to a London area where they previously lived in asylum accommodation – however, they have a ‘local connection’ to the area in which they resided in asylum accommodation at the time they received refugee status, making it hard to access support in London.²⁷

Figure 3 Homeless duties by borough, general and asylum accommodation leavers, Jun 25



Source: MHCLG [Statutory Homeless Statistics](#), Apr-Jun 2025

Figure 4 New rough sleepers in London identified as asylum accommodation leavers in 2024/25 (after a positive decision)



Source: GLA [CHAIN Annual Data Tables](#), Jun 2025

The human impact of homelessness after the move-on period is significant. Our research, aligning with previous studies,²⁸ highlights how lack of access to facilities to prepare food and maintain personal hygiene as well as the lack of privacy, safety and security are dehumanising and adversely affect people's health. There is the risk of weather damage and theft of the few personal effects individuals may have, including sleeping bags, tents, vital documentation and mobile phones. Charging mobile phones, which are essential for housing search and accessing support, becomes a major challenge. Refugees often initially sleep close to hotels from which they have been evicted, trying to remain in a familiar area to retain some sense of security. However, they are at high risk of verbal and physical violence on the street, particularly in the context of recent anti-migrant protests (which also impedes access to / provision of VCS services in some locations).²⁹ Conditions on the street, particularly cold weather, are likely to aggravate existing health conditions. The psychological impact can also be devastating. Many people report anxiety, insomnia and symptoms of depression, beginning in the pre-eviction period, diminishing trust in the system and having lasting consequences, even when housing is eventually attained. Living on the streets also affects access to education and social connection and the ability to find work. Getting refugee status is a huge relief but the subsequent experience of abandonment 'can really break people', as one participant at a participant at a NACCOM event put it - sabotaging the process of building a life in the UK.

Some LA perspectives on the refugee housing transition

Typically 'people are on their way down when they're coming to our homelessness services... experiencing unusually bad times... But with newly granted refugees what we've got is people very much on their way up. They've made a huge journey, they're very hopeful. They've had the positive decision. They want to find their house, their home. Sadly, sometimes what we're having to do is make them realise actually what you're trying to do is not become homeless.'

'It's too much... people that have gone through the process of getting here, the process of being here, then you know on what it's supposed to be a happy occasion... Hey, you've got your status... Now get lost...'

3. Institutional landscape

3.1 The coordination challenge around the move-on period

In moving from asylum accommodation into mainstream housing, newly granted refugees are moving between different frameworks – from highly controlled accommodation allocated on a no-choice basis by the HO, to navigating the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and over-stretched LA or VCS support. Governing these transitions in a way that avoids or minimises homelessness, also involves co-ordination between key actors – between HO, MHCLG, LAs, VCS and the private sector. It also invites, within LAs, coordination between migrant teams and housing departments.

Effective co-ordination is often lacking, although there are growing efforts to build it, outlined in this section. The Appendix provides case studies to illustrate how some specific LAs (Brent, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth and Newham) are organising work with newly granted refugees, outlining pathways and possible support for people not in priority need, and the roles of different internal and external actors. The Asylum Move-On Working Group convened by the GLA plays an important role in bringing together on a monthly basis people working for housing departments, migrant teams, HO and its contractors, and VCS to share knowledge and approaches. However, the wider lack of an assertive and effective national settlement strategy for asylum route refugees makes this work very challenging. As found to be the case with wider asylum work, in approaching the refugee move-on challenge, depending on capacity, resources and leadership *'Some councils are leading the way with more holistic and strategic responses while others remain stuck in a reactive mode. This leads to a 'postcode lottery', in which peoples' experiences in the asylum system differ widely based on which council they happen to be accommodated in.'*³⁰

3.2 Local authorities

London councils have large and busy housing departments. With the private rental market increasingly unaffordable, social housing registers are rammed, with 336,366 households on LA waiting lists.³¹ Homelessness duties in London have increased, and for people in priority need, councils are required to find a longer-term housing solutions - typically private rental offers, placing people in temporary accommodation if they would be homeless in the meanwhile. London accounts for 57% of English households in temporary accommodation, with 1 in 50 people in the capital living in temporary accommodation.³²

Homeless work draws on a complex web of government funding. The Housing Benefit Subsidy allows councils to claim back costs for temporary accommodation – but the amount is frozen at 90% of 2011 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. In addition, LAs receive Homelessness Prevention Grant funding, 60% of which was used for temporary accommodation in 2024/25 (use of this grant for temporary accommodation is now capped at 50%).³³ The MHCLG announced rough sleeping funding in the form of the Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant in Dec 2024 - for accommodation, outreach staff, support for prison leavers, specialist services, immigration advice.³⁴ There are also a lot of upcoming changes to the funding landscape – to be confirmed in the 26 November budget.³⁵

Change is urgently needed. Funding has not kept pace with worsening homelessness and the rising costs of temporary accommodation, leading to ballooning shortfalls, seriously jeopardising the financial position of many London LAs. For some, this is *'putting them at risk of issuing Section 114 notices (akin to declaring bankruptcy) or needing to seek Exceptional Financial Support (i.e., the use of borrowing / asset sales to fund ongoing operations).'*³⁶

Most London councils now also have some migrant/refugee-specific staffing, often initially developed in response to government refugee resettlement schemes and the Homes for Ukraine schemes. As HO contractors mobilised contingency hotels in specific boroughs, often after an initial scramble to coordinate via a multi-agency group, most councils introduced/redirected some staff capacity to focus on engaging with people in the asylum route. Where this capacity is located within organisational structures is quite specific to individual councils (e.g. under social care, public health, communities, housing departments).

These teams have received funding through a range of sources, most prominently the Homes for Ukraine scheme, resettlement schemes, and the Asylum Dispersal Grant. The Asylum Dispersal grant aims to ease service pressures (e.g. education, social care, public health and housing) and to fund interpretation, advice and relevant community initiatives.³⁷

A single annual payment is calculated per occupied bedspace in asylum accommodation on 30 March (£1,200 in 2025), and this may be followed by additional quarterly payments if there has been a growth in occupancy.³⁸ In addition, in early 2025 a move-on grant was allocated to specific LAs across the UK with high decision rates and homelessness pressures, to provide advice and support to newly granted refugees leaving asylum accommodation, but it is unclear whether this will be a regular feature of the funding landscape.³⁹

Many participants found the funding available to meet the needs of asylum-seekers and newly granted refugees for statutory and non-statutory services inadequate, despite recent increases. The Asylum Dispersal Grant is allocated centrally then distributed around relevant departments and services. Due to the stretching of those budgets in the context of rising statutory needs, the Asylum Dispersal Grant often covers elements of homeless prevention work when it relates to newly granted refugees, meaning that less is available for working with people during the asylum process and ensuring preparedness for the transition. As one participant put it, *'I think that the more pressure that is placed on housing, the more money that is going to be sucked out of the Asylum Dispersal Grant.'*

In response to the rise in refugee homelessness, and noticing that many people were struggling to navigate through the homeless prevention system, some councils have adjusted their ways of working internally, for example:

- **Using staffing flexibly and pragmatically to respond to need**, borrowing people in roles established via the Homes for Ukraine and refugee resettlement schemes to help out with some work with asylum route refugees, or opening advice sessions initially set up to assist those cohorts to asylum route refugees.
- **Establishing/refining internal referral routes**, for example: positioning the migrants team as first contact, referring refugees to the housing department; the housing department allowing the migrants team to access its casework management system to track progress of particular clients; housing officers attending hotels to take Homeless Prevention Applications directly; the rough sleeping team liaising with the migrants team.
- **Designating/appointing housing officers to focus on asylum accommodation leavers** - for example, in Brent, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Lambeth and Newham (see Appendix case studies) - often including staff with competency in common languages of people seeking asylum and specific training.

Several obstacles to developing smarter working within Councils were highlighted by participants:

- **Lack of resources to sufficiently prepare people in the asylum route for life in the UK**, alongside widespread frustration at the ring-fencing of funding for other - better-funded - displaced cohorts (e.g. resettled refugees, Ukrainian humanitarian visa-holders).⁴⁰
- **Persistent under-resourcing and under-staffing in housing departments** affects capacity to engage with newly granted refugees at risk of homelessness, with people facing additional barriers at risk of getting lost in the system.
- **The volatility of asylum and refugee policy** can make it hard to plan effective responses, with unpredictable surges of decision-making leading to peaks of need in particular locations, and frequent switches in policy and practice in relation to the move-on period.
- **Some concern about more structural barriers to effective co-operation**, for example casework systems and sitting in different directorates, and limited willingness to forge more fluid ways of working across teams: *'how do we really embed these things in the Council rather than having a [refugees] team that is like a small terrier, yapping away for things to be different? What would make that difference? I think it is that sort of buy in. Very, very senior buy in and like ownership of the problems.'*

3.3 Working with the Home Office

The HO shares some information about people entering the move-on period with LAs. Typically, the accommodation contractor shares a rolling dashboard with the LA with information about people entering the move-on period, although the quality and extent of information shared varies.⁴¹ Some councils use the dashboard to ensure early contact with refugees post-decision. For example, Tower Hamlets' migrants team have been using positive case outcomes data to call new grantees within a few days of decision and meet

them in hotel accommodation, to start working through a move-on support checklist, including Homeless Prevention Applications and signposting to relevant VCS support.⁴² However, other councils do not use this data, citing quality issues (such as incorrect contact details) or capacity issues. There was also general concern among LAs interviewed about insufficient data on residents in dispersal accommodation. The London experience reflects a wider problem: the vast majority of local and regional government submissions to the Asylum Accommodation Inquiry noted problems with receiving data in an accurate and timely manner.⁴³ This has led to calls for the HO and/or accommodation providers to have a Duty to Refer (i.e. to be required to directly inform LAs when someone is threatened with homelessness within 56 days and consents to referral).⁴⁴ This needs to be considered in conjunction with other changes, as experience from the NHS highlights, 'a referral mechanism can only be as good as the systems into which someone is referred.'⁴⁵

The HO also funds, via Migrant Help, a nation-wide Positive Move-on Service, delivered by Reed in Partnership. When a 28-day asylum support discontinuation notice is issued by the HO, Migrant Help notifies Reed, which makes a call to the newly granted refugee. This is the first of three calls which provide basic advice and signposting on nine key points, including housing.⁴⁶ To respond to LA concerns to ensure accurate messaging and because housing advice needs to be more localised (as LHA rates and housing markets differs around the country, and council homeless prevention pathways vary even within London), Reed has been formulating local housing info packs in collaboration with councils, to be utilised by its telephone advisors in these calls.

Finally, the HO has introduced Asylum Move-On Liaison Officers (AMLOs) in several London boroughs with significant hotel-based asylum populations, to provide initial support to newly recognised refugees. According to LA interviewees, AMLOs receive lists of people who have got decisions direct from the HO. Their work responds to the flow of decisions, so if there is an increase at a particular hotel, they will focus their activities there. In those locations, they will contact newly granted refugees and invite them to a hotel-based engagement session, where they assist with accessing their eVisa and provide some initial orientation on next steps. In some boroughs, subject to capacity, they may additionally advise on opening bank accounts, and assist with applying for Universal Credit (UC) and Refugee Integration Loans. They also play a vital role in early signposting or referral to the LA for housing/homelessness advice. In some contexts, this is very immediate: for example, in Hounslow, dedicated housing officers attend the hotels on the same day as the AMLO for immediate signposting. In other contexts, the AMLO will make a referral to the LA housing team which then contacts the individual for an appointment. AMLOs are well-established in Barnet, Brent, Hillingdon and Hounslow. They have more recently been assigned to some other boroughs, including Ealing, Islington, Lambeth, Newham and Tower Hamlets.

In the context of otherwise limited engagement between the HO and newly granted refugees, the intervention of the AMLOs has generally been welcomed in the boroughs where they are assigned. The fact that they receive data on decisions directly enables early engagement with newly granted refugees; they are able to deal promptly with eVisa errors and re-instatement requests; for many individuals, having a face-to-face appointment is invaluable for initial navigation of the various systems that they have to engage with. This can save LAs and VCS organisations precious time otherwise spent chasing up eVisa errors or on initial orientation. Given the limited data that LAs receive from the HO on people in dispersal accommodation (see above), several participants commented that they would really like to see AMLOs engage with this group also.

However, these positive views of having some targeted, basic, in-person HO support via the AMLOs throw into sharp relief the lack of a wider settlement strategy for asylum route refugees. For instance, coordination between the HO and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) appears to be minimal. During the asylum process, people are largely prevented from working.⁴⁷ On being granted refugee status, most face substantial barriers to starting work within the 28-day move-on period, meaning that even people with intermediate or advanced English and relevant skills often have to apply for UC - and it usually takes some time before they get a Job Centre appointment which offers meaningful advice and support on getting into work.⁴⁸ Critically, UC claims take at least five weeks to be processed, often resulting in a destitution gap.⁴⁹ Owing to lack of understanding, many people miss the relatively short window to apply for a UC advance, after their claim has been authorised and before their first payment. NACCOM and Homeless Link have

described this situation as 'destitution by design'.⁵⁰ Examples identified of local co-ordination with the DWP (e.g. DWP attending partnership meetings in Croydon) were very limited.⁵¹ Employability supports for refugees are thin: a Refugee Employability Programme existed in 2023-2024 but was phased this out, the government stating that it would consolidate lessons from the programme, and citing various mainstream employability initiatives.⁵²

3.4 Working with VCS

Organisations working with refugees are under massive pressure. Neoliberal and austerity policies have eroded the state's engagement with welfare provision, leading to a long-term reduction in government funding opportunities over the last 15 years, in a context of rising need.⁵³ These predominantly small and medium-sized organisations rely substantially on charitable donations in cash and kind and volunteer work.⁵⁴

Councils recognise that people who are new to the UK may require an added level of support to navigate UK systems, build social support networks, and develop skills and confidence needed for independent living – and that VCS are often providing vital holistic support. A frequent perception was that VCS organisations are able to provide more '*culturally appropriate*' support and create better spaces for building trust and engaging with others, and there is recognition of the value of VCS-run community spaces, compared with more bureaucratic council spaces or contingency hotels.

The extent of engagement between LAs and VCS varies. All 14 of the LAs interviewed have collaborated with VCS in some way in their work with people seeking asylum or during the move-on period, but the nature and extent of collaboration varies significantly from borough to borough:

- **VCS may be offering information and advice to asylum route refugees without any direct financial relationship with the council**, although typically there is a regular meeting in place which includes key local VCS organisations and VCS and councils may run shared drop-in sessions for asylum-seekers and refugees. This helps build effective communication and cooperation. Some LAs have developed escalation routes for VCS partners to follow up on any specific cases, and ensure councils are fulfilling their statutory duties.
- **Several councils fund a VCS organisation to deliver an outreach service to asylum-seekers and refugees.** Quite often, VCS are funded to engage with people during the asylum process, with the council focusing more on newly granted refugees. Sometimes VCS are funded to work in more targeted ways on move-on housing issues, e.g. to provide casework advice and support, deliver training or housing workshops, or to run a specific service working on housing issues with people not in priority need (see section 6).
- **Some boroughs have established community grants to help fund VCS organisations to deliver activities, that could include move-on related activities.**

Councils that do have arrangements in place with VCS in general saw these as very productive – as one put it, the VCS organisation in the borough is '*really delivering a lot beyond what we grant fund them to do and what my expectations of them would be.*' However, some VCS organisations felt at times LAs are offloading responsibility to a stretched and burnt-out sector. One participant noted that councils were regularly signposting people to their organisation and others – including in PHPs outlining 'reasonable steps' to relieve or prevent homelessness – without a clear understanding of what the respective organisations can and cannot do. This can raise unrealistic expectations that they can provide housing; lead to individuals wasting valuable time grappling with multiple self-referral processes to organisations that may be unlikely to be able to assist; and create duplication of effort between organisations. VCS organisations working across borough boundaries also have to grapple with a range of LA homelessness support systems in trying to support clients.

4. Improving navigational support

4.1 The preparedness and orientation challenge

Many of the difficulties that refugees have finding housing are shared by UK citizens, but specific factors – including their relatively short time living in the country, lack of familiarity with UK bureaucratic processes, relative lack of social networks, sometimes combined with impacts of trauma, language barriers or limited educational and digital literacy – tend to create additional barriers.

Refugees often struggle to access key information and advice about housing options. They may liaise with a number of organisations – including the Positive Move-On telephone service, an AMLO (where present), the LA housing department, the Job Centre, and local refugee and homeless organisations – and it can be hard to grasp the parameters of roles and responsibilities across organisations. Moreover, homeless support entitlements and processes are themselves complex. All this results in disorientation and disempowerment, which may be amplified, for some, by language barriers, due to restrictions on access to language training⁵⁵, and/or the impact of trauma, which has been recognised as affecting the brain's ability to process and retain information.⁵⁶ A lot of time can be spent in this period trying to understand the system and liaise with different organisations, a process that can raise expectations of support, only to realise that if you are not priority need, generally to get housing you basically need to crack on alone with the very difficult task of finding a private landlord willing to rent you a room.⁵⁷ Refugees consulted in Hillingdon echoed wider calls for clear, comprehensive, accessible and reliable information and guidance to finding housing, in translation and widely disseminated.

There was a widespread feeling among interviewees from LAs and VCS that a major challenge of supporting refugees is managing expectations and explaining the tough realities of finding housing in the UK: particularly the council's remit of support, lack of social housing, the high market rents of PRS accommodation, the relatively low prospects of getting appropriate accommodation in a familiar local area and the high risk of homelessness. This creates a mental roller-coaster, with the relief of getting refugee status rapidly giving way to the fear or reality of homelessness.

Refugees' perspectives on navigating the move-on period

'I've got a lot of emails from Migrant Help, I think, maybe Home Office, I don't know... I've got a lot of emails from different places... I'm going to have a meeting [at the] Job Centre tomorrow... but I am sure they can't help me. If we speak our [housing] problem they [tell] us "This is not our job. This is not our business"'

'Yeah, I can't remember exactly who I was talking to. They left me their name, but I can't remember their name now. They sent me an email with different sites to look for accommodation, but all of them required a guarantor' (Interviewee is describing an interaction with Reed in Partnership)

'All the time [on] different days, different person, different people called me...they call me and check me, but they didn't do anything for me. Never ever. I said, "Please you call me a lot but none of you don't want to do anything." You know what I mean?'

'I searched for accommodation everywhere, but I was unable to find accommodation. [Landlords] won't accept benefits. The government worker told me to [prepare] myself to start working but he didn't provide any information of what job exactly, what exactly I will do, will it be full-time, part-time. They didn't provide any details. They didn't clarify whether they provided it or not. I would love to go to work, love to... I mean, earn money to do everything by [my]self. You know what I mean, but here, we are new... We need help.'

'One month before I had to leave, I went to the council and there they told me that they can't do anything to me until I leave the hotel and I'm homeless... So even during this 56 days, there is nothing that they can do or anything that can be done. I have to go out first before I could do anything... It's the systems there. If you aren't on the street, they won't be able to help you. So [it seems] you have to be homeless first before they could provide any form of help.'

4.2 Information provision: guides, videos, workshops

Some LAs and VCS have created information resources: some examples that are specifically relevant to newly granted refugees looking to housing in London are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Examples of information resources relevant to refugee move-on period and housing

Organisation	Title	Coverage / translation
Move-on guides		
Home Office	'Housing and services' in Welcome: a guide for new refugees , p. 43-54. 2024.	UK-wide. 12 languages
Care4Calais	New Refugee Status Advice Sheet . 01/2025.	UK-wide. English, translations of earlier version identified in 7 languages.
Islington	Moving on from asylum accommodation – an Islington guide for people with refugee status 10/2025	LA specific. English. To be translated (earlier 2023 version in Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish Sorani, Pashto, Tigrinya and Amharic)
Lambeth	Next Steps: A Housing Guide for Asylum-seekers and Refugees Living in Home Office Accommodation in Lambeth. 07/2025. Sent with initial contact by housing officer.	LA specific. English and in common asylum languages.
Migration Justice Project & Belfast City Council	Refugee "Move-on" Guide . 09/2025.	Some parts specific to Northern Ireland. 100 languages.
Rainbow Migration	A guide for when you have been granted refugee status . 2024.	UK-wide. English.
REAP	Get Ready for Housing Booklet. 09/2025. Available via email on REAP website and distributed in paper copies at events.	London-wide. English.
Refugee Council	Housing Information Sheet for Newly Recognised Refugees . 2024.	UK-wide. Current version English. 2023 version available in 6 additional languages.
Right to Remain	What happens when you get Refugee Status? 09/2025.	UK-wide. Over 100 languages.
Praxis, coproduced with refugees	'Moving on: A guide for after you have secured immigration status' in A Migrant's Guide , pp.36-59. 2025	UK-wide. English, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Pashto, Spanish.
Videos		
Refugee Council, funded by Bridges Outcomes Partnerships	Video on moving on from asylum accommodation. To be launched online Nov 2025.	UK-wide. English Amharic Arabic Farsi Kurdish Sorani Pashto Tigrinya Urdu
Housing Justice, funded by GLA	Lived experience videos – journeys into housing. Under development, 2025	London-wide
Newham	How to rent in the private rented sector . 02/2023.	LA specific. Ukrainian translation
Workshops		
Islington	Housing education workshop. Monthly.	LA-specific, Hotel residents. Some translation (1 language each month)
Newham	Finding Accommodation Workshop . Fortnightly at Stratford Library, following one-stop shop.	LA specific. English only
Crisis Brent	PRS Workshop. Fortnightly.	Specifically for people supported by Crisis. English only
REAP in collaboration with Trinity Housing	Housing workshop, after ESOL class. Intermittent.	London-wide. English
REAP funded by Hounslow	2-hour housing workshop, at hotels Intermittent.	LA-specific. Hotel residents. English
Crisis, funded by Tower Hamlets	Housing information session. Monthly.	LA-specific. English

Source: desk research and interviews

While some valuable and comprehensive information resources have been made available, various issues arising are discussed here:

- **Timing:** upstream engagement and dissemination is limited, with LAs (and VCS) citing capacity issues, and mostly focusing on sharing information once people have got status. Given the shortness of the move-on period (combined with the accelerated processing recently observed among some high-grant nationalities), information and guidance would be ideally widely disseminated *prior* to people getting status, so people to know what to expect.
- **Technical accessibility:** most written information resources are PDFs or paper packs, which are simple to produce. However, the rapidly changing context makes keeping guides up to date a challenge. With most refugees looking for accessible help on smart phones, a London-wide website, digital guidebook or app is worth exploring to improve accessibility and updateability. Videos (such as those under development with Refugee Council and Housing Justice) can also help with sharing information in a clear and manageable way.
- **Language accessibility:** if guides are not available in translation, people who most need help will struggle to understand the information - there is some use of Google translation plug-ins to get around this and it would be valuable to check their effectiveness.
- **Messaging:** these guides often include long lists of organisations who may be able to support people after getting refugee status: but given constrained capacity, this can lead to individuals being passed around services, wasting their already limited time before eviction. Ensuring services signposted are appropriate and able to provide support is essential to avoid this kind of responsibility shifting and time wasting.
- **Local face-to-face housing workshops:** can help people absorb important information, but are not widespread, and the localised offers that exist are typically patchy and intermittent (with some notable exceptions). LAs demonstrated hesitancy around capacity and how to organise workshops effectively. Workshops may be most effective when embedded in broader forms of engagement with asylum-seekers and refugees. This is illustrated by the Newham fortnightly workshop which takes place after its one-stop shop, and the REAP workshops in Hillingdon, which take place after ESOL classes. Indeed, ESOL classes, many of which have a high proportion of students with asylum backgrounds, may provide an under-exploited avenue, particularly among intermediate ESOL students – to share information, practice researching housing options, as well as practical role play around communicating with landlords.
- **Resourcing:** the HO guide is rather minimal, and great effort has gone into creating the guides identified in Table 1 (mostly created by VCS organisations). Most are shared online, or within the London-wide Asylum Move-on Working Group, potentially creating economies of effort. However, there would be benefits to more centralised information resource development to avoid duplication of effort across boroughs, alongside the videos already mentioned, e.g. a London digital guide and workshop training kit, which could be adapted or supplemented in specific contexts by councils, VCS or ESOL teachers.

4.3 Face-to-face individual move-on advice

While information resources can be very helpful for some, there is a lot of information to absorb and act during the move-on period, thus **reliable, accessible face-to-face advice provision is very important**, saving precious time during the move-on process that could otherwise be wasted navigating unfamiliar council websites. Some LAs offer face-to-face advice sessions – Table 2 brings together some examples identified. 11 of the 14 LAs interviewed provided directly or funded some form of advice session relevant to newly granted refugees. An additional LA was in the process of planning a session. The councils not involved reasoned that they did not have sufficient funding/capacity or that their numbers of asylum-seekers were not sufficiently high.

Table 2. Examples of LA involvement in face-to-face advice provision relevant to move-on period and housing

Borough / delivery	Location & Regularity	Focus
Croydon refugee wellbeing team	Weekly at contingency hotels	Arrival orientation; Signposting; Homelessness applications
Hackney – Welcome Hackney drop-in hub + Migrant Organise surgeries funded by council	Welcome Hackney weekly drop-ins; Migrants Organise weekly surgeries at contingency hotels	Wrap-around support; Form filling; Document gathering; Advocacy; Homelessness applications
Hillingdon migrant team housing officers alongside AMLOs	AMLO presence three times a week, council co-locates at least once a week, to see people by appointment	eVisa checks; UC applications where needed; Signposting; Homelessness applications
Hounslow housing officers alongside AMLOs	Regularly at contingency hotels	Homelessness applications
Islington - Union Chapel, funded by the Council	Weekly at VCS community centre + hotel. Both includes LA refugee officers.	Advice; Signposting
Kensington & Chelsea refugee outreach team, including housing officer occasionally	Daily presence at contingency hotels of council refugee team	Arrival orientation; Homelessness applications; Document gathering
Lambeth Sanctuary Service in conjunction with Care4Calais & AMLOs	Weekly at VCS community centre (co-location with C4C, non-funded), weekly at 2 asylum hotels (co-location with AMLOs, separate C4C drop-ins)	Care4Calais: Pre-status support; Arrival orientation; Negative decision support; miscellaneous support/signposting Lambeth: Post-status orientation; Homelessness prevention; Document gathering; UC applications where needed
Lewisham – AFRIL, funded by the Council	Monthly at contingency hotel; monthly at community drop-in	Pre-status support; UC applications where needed; eVisa checks; Form-filling; Document gathering; Advocacy; Homelessness applications
Newham – Welcome Newham Team including Homeless Prevention Advisory Service officers, VCS attendance	Weekly at local library	Wrap-around support; Form filling; Signposting; Homelessness applications
Tower Hamlets refugees team	Weekly at council building + regular hotel attendance	Wrap-around support; Form filling; Signposting; Homelessness applications
Wandsworth – Wandsworth Citizen's Advice Sanctuary Project, funded by the Council	Ad hoc outreach sessions with Katherine Low Settlement. Referrals to Sanctuary Project via webform or general daily CAB drop-ins.	Form-filling; Signposting; Benefits support; Employment support

Source: desk research and interviews

Based on these examples, visits, and interviews, several key points emerge:

- **Location matters:** established and accessible community hubs (whether council or VCS-run) may be preferable to hotel-based sessions (which offer convenience but typically exclude people living in dispersal - likely to be an increasingly important consideration as the government moves away from hotel accommodation). For example, Welcome Newham's weekly drop-in one-stop-shop in a local library allows people to seek support and advice for various issues including move-on, and to address multiple issues in one visit, working on a 'done in one' principle; additional to this, resettlement officers make contact with newly recognised refugees in hotels to provide targeted move-on advice and support (see Appendix case study Newham).
- **Given the move-on timeframe, frequency matters:** advice sessions should ideally be at least weekly (a week is a very long time when you have a month to find accommodation) and accessible on a drop-in rather than appointment-only basis.
- **Working closely with partners around advice provision is important.** There is a risk of duplication of effort and confusion of messages during the move-on period, for example between AMLOs, Reed, LAs and VCS. There are benefits to councils holding advice sessions at the same time as AMLOs (where assigned), to allow for early and fluid contact (see Appendix case studies Hounslow, Lambeth). Some LAs collaborate fruitfully with VCS organisations offering face-to-face advice. For example, Lambeth Council's Sanctuary Service attends a Care4Calais weekly drop-in site, focusing on newly granted refugees (see Appendix case study Lambeth).
- **Effective cross-council working is also key.** Often frontline advice work is delivered by asylum/refugee welfare officers within LAs: this works effectively where there is fluid communication with the housing team, but where there are barriers or the housing team is overloaded, it can lead to frustration. In some places housing officers are now attending hotel, council, or VCS drop-in advice sessions, which has been found to be beneficial: interviewees felt this ensures specialist advice is more readily available and the system is more responsive to residents.

4.4. Approaches: co-production and trauma-informed support

In designing and delivering effective navigational support, co-production and trauma-informed approaches are needed.

Refugees are already reaching out for support within national/language and religious communities via informal networking, small refugee-led organisations, places of worship and WhatsApp groups. Interviews noted that while that sometimes out-of-date information circulates and people in vulnerable positions can be exploited, overall language and religious communities are vital sources of advice and practical support during the move-on process. **Greater co-production of information and advice approaches with people who have gone through the move-on process may help LAs and VCS ensure that information is provided in accessible formats and address language, cultural and trust barriers.** For instance, Housing Justice, which supports people leaving asylum accommodation through hosting and lodging schemes, is working with partners to create video resources for upstream information provision. The videos will explore how people got housing after being granted refugee status and will be recorded in key target languages. People who have been through the move-on process have been involved from the outset, to ensure the outputs are effective. In the realm of advice provision, some councils have recruited staff with refugee backgrounds which can assist with provision of advice across language and cultural barriers. Others are looking at funding community worker roles or housing champions, with a view to recruiting to these roles people with lived experience.

The move-on period is very stressful, particularly for people who have experienced prior trauma. More can be done to help improve information retention and avoid confusion, for example by summarising discussions/advice in follow-up notes after appointments or phone calls. More attention needs to be paid to the way physical space is used for advice conversations and homeless prevention appointments during this period: the lack of availability of private space (particularly in hotel-based advice which often take place in a hectic hotel lobby) can make it difficult for staff to have sensitive conversations with clients in a trauma-informed way. Utilising community advice hubs may also help people develop confidence in engaging with organisations outside the constrained world of the hotel.

5. Addressing financial barriers to housing

5.1 The financial challenge

As outlined in Section 3.3, for reasons relating to HO and DWP policy and practice, **many refugees have little to no money at the critical point when they need to leave the asylum accommodation, find housing and start paying rent.**

As residents, refugees are eligible to claim a means-tested LHA to help pay their rent. However, **the proportion of rental properties in London available below or at LHA rates is very small** – a mere 5% of the market in 2024, falling significantly short of the intended 30%.⁵⁸ The especially low LHA rates for people under 35 years old present particular challenges. Moreover, there is a timing issue: even in an ideal-case, this housing element of UC can only be claimed on the day that the tenancy is taken up – and the payment is made on the next UC payment date, typically arriving more than one month after moving in.

Moving into PRS requires significant upfront costs, as mainstream landlords and agents systematically require from prospective tenants deposits, rent in advance and/or guarantors.⁵⁹ With rooms in shared houses in London averaging at £837 a month⁶⁰, an individual hoping to move into PRS accommodation could realistically be expected to provide upfront costs of £1,800.⁶¹

The Refugee Integration Loan is the only universally available option for additional financial support in the transition between asylum accommodation and mainstream housing. This is maximum £500 for a single refugee, which can be spent on moving costs or education and training.⁶² Government guidance says decisions are issued four weeks after application, with payment after acceptance of the loan agreement. It is paid back at the rate of £25 per week by people on UC, or more if people are working. However, even assuming refugees are made aware of this possibility, the amount provided is typically insufficient for a deposit on a room in a shared house, and the loan payment will typically come through after eviction. Our FOI request for the average processing time of integration loan applications in 2024 did not yield results, however one VCS organisation noted that they had come across examples where the Refugee Integration Loan was applied for but did not arrive for 12 weeks or longer.

5.2 LA support with first payments

LAs may offer financial support to people threatened with or experiencing homelessness to help them secure PRS accommodation. Eligibility varies: some LAs only provide financial support for those in 'priority need'; some also have some form of support for people *not* in priority need. Many have forms of support under the purview of housing officers for people on low incomes generally; some have some limited refugee-specific move-on support. Asylum accommodation-leaver specific offers were available in 4/14 LAs interviewed.

What is offered also varies considerably. The most common offer is of deposits and/or rent in advance. However, this varies significantly in amount and process. Most LAs pay this directly to landlords, however some transfer funds to the individual. For example Tower Hamlets, after approving the tenancy, have a set £1,500 per person for rent in advance/deposit paid directly to the individual to spend as appropriate. In a small number of boroughs interviewed, housing officers could access funds for short-term emergency accommodation bookings (hostel, hotel or B&B bookings for a few nights), cited as useful to prevent rough sleeping and de-risk situations. For example Lambeth, where it has not been possible to source an offer of accommodation, may try to arrange hostels or B&B accommodation for up to seven nights to prevent rough sleeping (see Appendix Case Study Lambeth). In addition, there is some use of move-on grants to incentivise moves out of London. For example, Newham offers a one-off grant payment of between £500-£1,400 paid directly to the individual (upper end being for families) after securing PRS outside of London.

Funding for financial support is usually from general homelessness prevention or Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) budgets and is the same offer as the general population. Eligibility guidelines for DHP funding seem to be interpreted differently across LAs, affecting whether refugees can access deposit support through this route. A few refugee-specific offerings are funded via Asylum Dispersal Grants, but this generally involves much smaller one-off move-on grant payments or vouchers. For example, Islington has a one-off £200 New Refugee Grant available for newly recognised refugees to assist with move-on costs (see Appendix case study Islington), and Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea offer a

refugee-specific move-on voucher paid for by the Asylum Dispersal Grant (see Appendix case study Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea). Funding available via the Homes for Ukraine and Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) schemes provide greater scope for financial support, but cannot be used for the general refugee population.

Access to financial support is usually through the main housing and homelessness teams, but there are issues with this. Housing officer pressure, leave and turnover can impact an individuals' ability to access financial support. As one LA noted: *'because housing is so overwhelmed, getting to this scheme isn't easy.'* Councils have to check that the tenancy meets documentation requirements, which takes time, and can lead to people losing hard-won housing offers. The variation in LA practice and lack of information available makes it difficult for individuals to know what support is on offer, and for VCS to respond to gaps. As section 6 explores further, commissioned or partner organisations may have access to specific resources to fund first payments, but do not have capacity to support all those leaving asylum accommodation. This can lead to arbitrary access, dependent on the luck of referral.

There are several possible courses of action that may give all refugees a more realistic opportunity to secure PRS tenancies: sharing practice of among LAs around the use of DHP and other funding for financial support at LA level; providing more centralised access to financial support with first payments via a pan-London Mayoral scheme, as suggested by the Refugee Council; or reviewing the Refugee Integration Loan package to ensure that it offers more timely support, of sufficient amount to help with housing.⁶³

There is very limited financial support from VCS organisations for move-on, usually in the form of occasional emergency one-off grants or destitution payments that may provide short-term relief or fill a temporary gap but do not lead to long-term accommodation. There are a very small number of charities that offer financial support with first payments, but the scope and scale of this is very limited. Often referrals from professionals are required, or money is paid to supporting organisations for distribution, rather than directly to the individual themselves. VCS also manifested unease about stepping into this space – feeling that this should either sit with LAs, or struggling to connect constructively with LAs around these issues.

Refugee perspectives on the first payments challenge:

'I don't understand it really, I don't know how the system works... They say in order for us to help you, you need to get the tenancy agreement. And getting the tenancy agreement without the payment is impossible. So, this is not fair, really.'

'When I talked to him [the landlord], he said deposit is £700, and I had nothing in my pocket. I went to council and I told them I have nothing. They said, "I'm sorry, we cannot help you unless you give us the tenancy agreement."'

'They provide an email and a phone number for my housing officer. When I try to contact the email, there is no response at all and the phone number, I think it's a fake phone number. When I dial it, there's no response or anything. So I don't know what will my fate be or will I remain in this limbo of trying to apply and not having any house.'

'The Job Centre told me, "Go back to council and say you want to apply for Discretionary Housing Payment", DHP, if I'm not wrong. So, I went back to council, and after one week I got a response and they said, "Oh, unfortunately because you aren't getting Universal Credit at the moment, we cannot help you. Still in process, this is what your letter says.'

'There are many places in the UK that offer housing, there are many... real estate agents, but while they look at your background and they see you have no income, you have no one to support you, you have no job, you are unemployed... it is so rare that they will give you house, so rare.'

'Until this day, I really don't know. I borrowed a lot of money to pay deposit, and pay the initial payment for the housing. I haven't received any benefit yet, so I'm waiting for the benefit, to receive it, and know how much would I receive, and will it cover the entire rental or not. I'm still waiting. All I know is that all areas have its own allowance, but I don't know how it's calculated.'

6. Finding housing solutions

6.1 The bricks-and-mortar challenge

The cost of rent in the private rental sector (PRS) in England has been consistently higher than deemed affordable, with the average rent in England accounting for 36% of renter household income, and **London is the least affordable place to rent privately in the UK**, with average rents 42% of renter household income.⁶⁴ Social housing stock, designed to offer a more affordable alternative to people on low incomes, is eroded and vastly over-subscribed. Demand for PRS accommodation in London is increasing, while stock is falling, particularly in traditionally more affordable areas.⁶⁵ Councils are working hard to procure lower-cost PRS housing to meet statutory homeless prevention duties, and having to navigate landlord requests for high incentive payments. Several participants also noted that HO efforts to increase the stock of dispersal accommodation was having an impact in their borough on the availability of HMOs (house in multiple occupation).⁶⁶

It is common for people struggling with housing to be advised to move out of London. Often people assessed as priority need will be offered accommodation in cheaper locations. While expecting resistance to moving from people who have been born and grown up in London, some interviewees exhibit surprise and frustration at how much newly recognised refugees want to remain in the city, and in the borough they were placed in, given what is often assumed to be a relatively short and tenuous connection, and the risk of street homelessness. Several factors help explain this. London is often an individual's first and only experience of the UK, and after a long period of distress and repeated displacement, most people crave stability. Quite often, people have developed some social networks with friends, community centres and places of worship, or wider language communities in London. Some are concerned about disrupting often hard-won, long-awaited access to ESOL or other education and training opportunities. People are often still processing how the UK housing market, labour market and welfare support works and are not ready to give up hope of a local solution. Finally, on a very practical front, people still on asylum support only receive only £9.95 per week subsistence allowance⁶⁷ which impedes travel to search effectively for housing in new and cheaper areas in order to avoid homelessness.

Refugees face double discrimination in the housing market. The 2014 Immigration Act introduced the 'right to rent', requiring landlords to carry out ID checks to verify that prospective tenants have the right to live in the UK, and making failure to carry out these checks a criminal offence.⁶⁸ There is abundant evidence that this has made landlords less willing to rent to people who do not have a British passport and concerns that this has contributed to **wider racial discrimination within the housing market**.⁶⁹ In addition, **private landlords are also reluctant to rent to people on UC**, which is the situation of many newly granted refugees. Discriminating against people on benefits is unlawful – but still routinely practiced by landlords.⁷⁰ To a large extent, the 'No DSS' criteria in shop window adverts of the past has been replaced with the 'professionals only' criteria on online platforms.⁷¹ Some VCS organisations highlighted that it is in fact increasingly difficult to find landlords accepting people on UC, as this is less obvious now from adverts, which can lead to wasted time and effort for individuals searching and attending viewings, only to be refused.

6.2 Routes to private rented housing

Refugees consulted who did successfully source housing underscored their 'luck' in finding a landlord, organisation, or other contact (for example via a place of worship) that had shown sensitivity to their situation, or their **extensive search work** finally identifying a landlord offering a room at an affordable rate.

There are some platforms which help people to navigate the challenge of discrimination and save time trawling through generic search sites. The London Lettings Network, created by Housing Justice, and funded by the GLA, uses AI to upload some 150 private rented rooms a day that are open to benefit claimants.⁷² Individuals (who must be clients of a night shelter or other homeless organisation) and caseworkers can register to search, message landlords and book viewings. For those successful in being approved for properties through this portal, and who are a client of an eligible project, Housing Justice can support with paying costs to secure the accommodation, such as deposit, rent in advance or an incentive, removing the financial barrier to securing PRS and the delays people often experience trying to access financial support via the council.⁷³ The London Lettings Network also recently incorporated the Boost-up scheme,

providing rent 'top-up' to single adults between 18 - 34 years old who are not in priority need, to address the gap between their 'shared accommodation' LHA rate and PRS rents.⁷⁴

Importantly, some LAs now aim to make one PRS offer, typically outside London, to all refugees, including people not in priority need. For example, Lambeth and at times Islington have forged partnerships with a range of housing providers and added procurement staffing at the intersection of housing and migrant teams to make this possible.

There are also other routes to accommodation outside London. Most prominently, the Home Finder platform helps people who are insecurely housed (e.g. homeless, threatened with homelessness, in temporary or overcrowded accommodation) find secure housing outside their local area. Properties on Home Finder are either at or below LHA rates and typically outside London. Some LAs have worked with refugees not in priority need to support them using this platform (See Appendix case studies Newham, Hounslow).

Another avenue to private renting is via projects opening up affordable lodging opportunities, which is the focus of the Refugee Lodgings scheme, launched in 2024 by Housing Justice (see below).⁷⁵ Lodgings projects can help people build skills and confidence to continue on into longer-term PRS tenancies.⁷⁶ However, the length and scope of support matters: longer placements with good casework support are more likely to secure a successful transition. For some individuals, getting social security payments set up, then building skills for and actually securing employment may take several months. While the cost of living is encouraging more people to rent out spare rooms, recruiting landlords is still a challenge - LAs can substantially support the search for landlords e.g. via advertisements in local resident magazines and events. Approving an exemption from the shared LHA rate for people who have been through lodging schemes could also help such schemes fulfil the purpose of acting as a springboard into longer-term tenancies.

Example: Refugee Lodgings Project

Launched by Housing Justice in March 2024, the Refugee Lodgings project is a direct response to the move-on challenge and rise in refugee homelessness in London. This pan-London service is funded by the GLA, providing 6-month lodging placements and subsequent move-on support to recently recognised refugees threatened with homelessness. LAs such as Tower Hamlets and Lambeth have developed partnerships with Housing Justice (see Appendix case study Lambeth), referring those recently granted refugee status, have low support needs and who are at risk of rough sleeping. The project then matches them with local residents who have spare rooms to rent at the shared LHA rate. Housing Justice provides landlord training and support, alongside wraparound casework for the lodger, including employment, education and training advice and guidance. Since its launch in March 2024, the Refugee Lodgings Project has had 26 lodgings placements with 11 people supported to positively move-on from lodgings after 6 months.

6.3 Supported accommodation

Unlike PRS, supported accommodation offers an element of support alongside housing, to those who may encounter barriers to beginning to live independently. Rent is paid by the Council through Housing Benefit, rather than through the usual UC housing element, with LAs claiming back Housing Benefit spending from the DWP. There is often a shortfall between (even Enhanced) Housing Benefit and the true costs of delivering support, which the provider will seek to cover via commissioned funding (increasingly restricted), charitable funding, or higher service charges to residents themselves.⁷⁷

Intended to support vulnerable groups, **supported accommodation can be an important stepping stone for refugees.**⁷⁸ A period in supported accommodation gives some people much-needed time in a safe space to orient themselves, access employment support, and search for somewhere more long-term and independent. Moreover, after three months in supported accommodation, some individuals under 35 may be eligible for an LHA exemption, enabling them to access the higher one-bedroom rate, making the PRS market more accessible.⁷⁹

Thus, supported accommodation has been a vital tool for preventing or resolving refugee homelessness. LAs, charities and commissioned services working with refugees make extensive use of referral routes to supported accommodation (see all Appendix case studies). For example, a housing officer in Brent which has commissioned a large supported accommodation site noted that this has been a 'life saver' including for people who were not 'priority need' but needed low-medium support - and

that many clients were not rough sleeping because Brent had this option.

However, supported accommodation faces two major problems:

- **Poor quality of many properties**, with some *'bad faith providers looking to make easy profits'*, without providing decent accommodation and support.⁸⁰
- **Financial costs** – rents are not capped and LAs are often not able to claim back the full spend from the DWP – and residents become quickly responsible for relatively high rents when they start working and are no longer entitled to Housing Benefit.⁸¹

To address these issues, the **Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023** introduced **new national supported housing standards and licensing powers**. While fully supporting the goal of ensuring standards, key stakeholders warned that it was vital that the government balances enhancing regulation with adequate resourcing of supported accommodation, as otherwise even good quality providers may be forced to close due to the extra costs and administrative burden that proposed regulations could introduce.⁸² The Minister for Homelessness acknowledged in July the need for further work to refine the proposed standards and licensing regime.⁸³ This work is now urgent, and must proceed in close conjunction with addressing the financial issues facing councils and supported accommodation providers.

Meanwhile, some VCS interviewees have noticed some LAs **cracking down very vigorously on supported accommodation** providers and claimants, suspending Housing Benefit payments until they have reviewed and are satisfied that the provider meets the local standard or additional evidence is provided of the claimant's need for support.⁸⁴ Reviews take considerable time to process and as a result, reportedly some providers have evicted residents whose housing benefit was suspended; some have empty rooms because they cannot take on more supported tenants until the issue is resolved; some providers have closed down their services.

Some VCS perspectives on supported accommodation, July 2025

'The problem is that the way [some] local authorities make their checks... is by stopping housing benefits at one point and just asking the provider to send more evidence... it takes time to get the claim reviewed... we are talking about the provider potentially taking a loss for 1-4 months of rent. So, a lot of providers just resolve the issue by evicting the client because it's just too expensive.'

'The Supported Housing Regulatory Oversight Act has absolutely imploded that [the supported accommodation] sector. Whilst the reasoning behind the law is sound, the way that it's being implemented is really, really chaotic, really, really negative. And what it has done is essentially, is actually just force [many] very good providers out of business, very quickly.'

6.4 Bridging the gap: commissioned housing services

Several LAs have commissioned, locally or collectively, specific services to work with non-priority refugees during the move-on period and reduce pressure on LA housing teams. For example, the London Integration and Housing Pathways Service at the Refugee Council was set up to provide more targeted support.⁸⁵ Commissioned services generally provide wider and more flexible support than LA housing teams, including wider integration and ongoing tenancy sustainment support.

Three specialist housing services have been commissioned by LAs to support newly recognised refugees at risk of homelessness who do not meet the priority need threshold, delivered by specialist VCS partners and managed by a social impact organisation, Bridges Outcomes Partnership (BOP). BOP has been managing several general Single Homeless Prevention Services (SHPS) in the same London LAs on this basis for several years. Backed by ethical investors and philanthropists, BOP takes on the responsibility for managing the service and is paid by the LA when certain Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are met. The services operate on a payment-by-results, outcomes-based model. Contractual details vary but include coaching and support with sourcing secure housing solutions (largely in PRS) and generally also some form of integration support/signposting, as well as tenancy sustainment check-ins.

Those involved have outlined several benefits:

- **First, there are benefits in terms of reducing single homelessness:** by September 2025, the services reported significantly exceeding targets in terms of securing housing,⁸⁶ with an overall success rate from referral to sustained housing of 75%.⁸⁷
- **Second, these services facilitate early intervention** – e.g. Crisis Brent receives referrals

directly from AMLOs, rather than LA housing teams (see Appendix case study Brent). This means individuals can start receiving active support and have more time to prevent homelessness than if they wait for a homeless assessment to conclude that they are not priority need (although where Crisis suspects priority need they may refer to the LA).

- **Third, the services mobilise VCS expertise** in approaches to coaching and casework, as well as housing knowledge and positive relationships with housing providers built up via existing SHPS services.
- **Fourth, cost benefits:** with budgets pre-agreed and capped by LAs, commissioning VCS may appear cheaper and less risky than adjusting in-house capacity, particularly in a volatile policy and funding context.

When discussing these services with interview participants, **some reflections were shared around:**

- **Arbitrary referral limits** – Although modelled to try and account for the total single non-priority need population leaving local hotels, the volatile asylum context means that the commissioned services may experience variations in referral rates. At busy times, this means either the service accepting additional referrals and working over-capacity, or some individuals losing out on support.
- **Risk of deskilling of council teams and erosion of in-house expertise,** some interviewees reflecting on the risk of 'organisational knowledge-loss' that may come from relying on VCS to deliver this kind of support.
- **Value of how some of these projects link support to find housing with wider settlement support** - helping people connect with ESOL, training and health services in their new area and providing tenancy sustainment support. This points to the wider need for asylum route refugees to have better access to floating caseworker support or well-resourced VCS hubs that can assist with building a life in the UK.

Table 4. Overview of Bridges Outcomes Partnerships services commissioned by London LAs to support refugees into housing

Delivery	Referrals	Support
Brent Refugee Service		
Delivered by Crisis Brent since August 2023 (an extension of the Single Homeless Prevention Service) launched in 2018.	18 referrals per month directly from AMLOs visiting hotels in Wembley (of people unlikely to meet priority need threshold – some will not submit a Homeless Prevention Application; families and people with higher needs referred to LA). Strong emphasis on early intervention.	Wraparound casework support from receiving refugee status, including face-to-face in hotels, including support with personal ‘integration’ goals (e.g. GP registration, ESOL registration, and social access); sourcing housing solutions to prevent homelessness (e.g. PRS housing and supported accommodation); and 8-month tenancy sustainment check-ins. They also have budget allocated for support towards deposit or rent in advance, returnable to client where possible at the end of the tenancy.
Hackney Refugee Support Service		
Delivered by Single Homeless Project (SHP) in Hackney since October 2023 (an extension of the existing SHPS service). ⁸⁶	17 referrals a month. Attends drop-ins at Dalston library alongside LA and receives most referrals directly from housing officers (focusing on people unlikely to be priority need). SHP do a PHP on behalf of the council, all clients are issued with a homeless duty.	Casework support to find housing solutions to prevent homelessness for non-priority refugees leaving the 4 hotels in Hackney. They also provide 8-month tenancy sustainment support. Not currently commissioned to provide additional integration support.
West London Refugee Service		
Commissioned by 7 West London LAs in 2024, delivered by Hestia. An expansion of the existing SHPS already being delivered by Hestia in Ealing.	Referral target of 35 individuals per month, with commissioning LAs having a specific number of referrals. Housing officer refers individuals who have active cases, including rough sleepers.	Was set up to specifically be an out-of-borough and out-of-London service. Casework support to source housing and prevent homelessness, alongside support with personal integration goals and ongoing 8-month tenancy sustainment. Pay financial support such as deposit or rent in advance, but require confirmation from the relevant LA before releasing each payment.

Source: desk research and interviews

7. Conclusions & ways forward

Moving on from asylum accommodation presents a significant challenge to newly granted refugees who struggle to secure mainstream housing, and frequently experience homelessness. This challenge has grown along with shifts in asylum accommodation which have seen a greater proportion of asylum-seekers being accommodated in London, primarily in 'contingency hotels', as well as in the context of a broader homelessness crisis. LAs are left 'fire-fighting' with little opportunity for cross-locational learning.

Drawing on qualitative research with LAs, VCS, and refugees navigating the move-on period, this report explored move-on challenges and responses among LAs, drawing out examples of good practice. The report has focused on the particular challenges confronting single adult refugees assessed as not priority need.

The 28-day **timeframe** for securing mainstream housing prior to eviction from asylum accommodation does not provide adequate time for newly recognised refugees to secure housing. The pressured timeframe makes it hard for LAs to work effectively on homeless prevention, increasing the need for temporary accommodation for those in priority need and the risk of rough sleeping for those not. This leads to short and long-term effects on refugees' health and wellbeing, sabotaging the process of settlement.

These issues have been exacerbated by **other elements of Home Office policy and practice**, including the sidelining of local government in asylum accommodation provision, a volatile asylum policy context and inconsistencies and changes in the issuing of key documentation to refugees during the move-on period, which complicating the transition from the perspectives of refugees, LAs and VCS. While the HO shares data with LAs, the quality of data and the way it is delivered, particularly regarding people due to leave dispersal accommodation, stymies effective early intervention.

HO support for refugees in this transitional period comes in the form of telephone calls delivered by Reed in Partnership to all newly recognised refugees. In some boroughs, this is supplemented by face-to-face support from AMLOs: this has been well-received and appears to ease issues around data-sharing and referral to LAs, but is limited to locations of high need. Meanwhile, the restriction on working during the asylum process combines with the five-week processing period for UC claims means that too often refugees find themselves destitute post-eviction. There is insufficient investment in **training and education** support to address the specific barriers refugees facing in navigating the labour market and, relatedly, the housing market.

LA housing departments are overloaded and underfunded, scrambling to meet statutory duties to residents without going effectively bankrupt. **Homeless prevention practices** vary between LAs in terms of how refugees access prevention support, how long it takes to get appointments and assessment decisions, and how much action is taken to prevent homelessness. For people not in priority need, prevention support is often too little or too late to avoid homelessness.

However, there are examples of **good practice**. This includes adjusting ways of working internally to respond to the need for advice and support among newly granted refugees, for instance using staffing flexibly and pragmatically to respond to need; increasing staffing focusing on this issue; establishing effective mechanisms for joined-up working across institutional silos. Some councils have been proactive in improving navigational support and extending financial support with initial housing payments. Some have embraced the task of identifying more housing solutions for people not in priority need (via partnerships with housing providers, commissioning services to work with people not in priority need, or initiating small scale sub/regional projects).

VCS organisations have seen a marked increase in approaches from homeless refugees and are scrambling to fill gaps, drawing heavily on charitable donations and volunteer work effort. Some councils are funding VCS organisations to engage with asylum-seekers and refugees or collaborating constructively in other ways. Others are holding civil society at arms-length, often citing capacity and funding issues. Some VCS organisations criticise the extent of signposting by councils as indicating lack of a clear understanding of what their organisation can and cannot do, and raising unrealistic expectations of support and risks of duplication of effort between organisations.

LAs recognise the importance of helping refugees to understand the housing market, housing support and manage their expectations of the UK housing market. To address this, some

valuable **information resources** have been developed, mainly by VCS, including guides, videos and workshops. However, efforts to disseminate these resources is patchy and rarely upstream of status decisions. People that most need these resources often also need them to be available in translation, which is not always the case. There is scope to improve digital accessibility and videos show promise. Many LAs indicated that they would like to expand information provision but hesitate around capacity and funding, pointing to the potential value of more centralised development and updating of resources that can be easily adapted to or complimented with localised information. Language communities can act as a major support and much can be gained from working with refugee-led organisations to co-design information resources in ways that are accessible and meet people's needs. Collaboration with VCS partners can help build connections and trust during this critical period.

Too often liaising with several agencies offering **advice** in the hectic move-on period results in confusion. Those who have endured traumatic experiences previously may experience particularly acute disorientation in this period. Some LAs offer regular face-to-face advice via drop-in support for people in the move-on period, at asylum hotels, council and community hubs, which is beneficial, with fluid signposting and referral between AMLOs, relevant council terms and VCS. In other places the council is more removed which can lead to confusion and delays. Advice sessions and appointments often take place in busy hotel lobbies and more attention needs to be paid to trauma-informed ways of working.

Financial barriers are immense for newly recognised refugees trying to access the housing market. As noted above, refugees generally have very little money at the critical point when they need to leave asylum accommodation. Moving into private rented housing requires significant **upfront costs** in the form of deposits and rent-in-advance, with guarantors often also required. The housing element of UC is only payable after obtaining a tenancy. The Refugee Integration Loan is the only universally available avenue for financial support, but is typically insufficient for a deposit on a room in a shared house, and arrives too late to put to this use. Recognising this, some LAs are being proactive in offering assistance with first housing payments to people not in priority need, and in streamlining processes for accessing this on tenancy offer. In other boroughs it is hard or simply not possible for people to access financial support with first housing payments.

The **bricks-and-mortar challenge** in London is significant. Social housing stock is depleted and over-subscribed. Only 5% of London PRS housing matches LHA rates. Access to PRS is also restricted by racialised prejudice among landlords against non-UK passport holders and discrimination against people on benefits. Some platforms exist to support their searches, including the London Lettings Network for rooms open to benefit claimants and Home Finder for sourcing accommodation elsewhere in the UK. There is real promise in lodgings projects, particularly when longer placements are coupled with the casework support necessary for refugees to build skills and confidence. Supported accommodation has also been a vital tool in preventing refugee homelessness, but there is uncertainty over how the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 will change this space. A very small number of councils are making efforts to facilitate a PRS offer to all refugees not in priority need, by developing partnerships with housing providers outside London. Several LAs have commissioned specific services to work with non-priority refugees during the move-on period, reducing pressure on their housing teams, helping address single homelessness via early intervention and mobilisation of VCS expertise, and helping the LA to navigate a volatile policy and funding context. However, access to these solutions is constrained by funding and referral limits.

Drawing from the insights as outlined above, this report presents the following key recommendations:

Recommendations to central government:

- More time is needed between a decision and the cessation of accommodation support, for refugees to secure housing and avoid homelessness at least 56 days. The HO and DWP need to coordinate the move-on timeframe in a realistic way to eliminate the destitution gap.
- There is a need for more serious and meaningful partnership between the HO and MHCLG and local authorities around asylum accommodation. To enable early intervention, councils need better collaboration and better data from the HO – given this is a long-standing issue, ensuring that the HO has a Duty to Refer may ensure greater consistency. There is also a need for evaluation, standardisation and expansion of the

AMLO service, including working with people in dispersal accommodation, to ensure individuals are connected with homeless prevention support in a timely fashion.

- A robust and holistic settlement strategy for asylum route refugees is needed, with better ESOL, training and employment supports. Reducing restrictions on early ESOL provision and the right to work during the asylum process especially after six months would substantially ease the transition.
- The under-resourcing of homeless prevention requires urgent action.
- More effective regulation of the housing market is needed, alongside an expansion of social housing.
- To give people on low incomes - including newly granted refugees - a more realistic chance of securing housing, the LHA rates, particularly for those under 35 years old, should be more closely aligned with market rents.

Recommendations to local government:

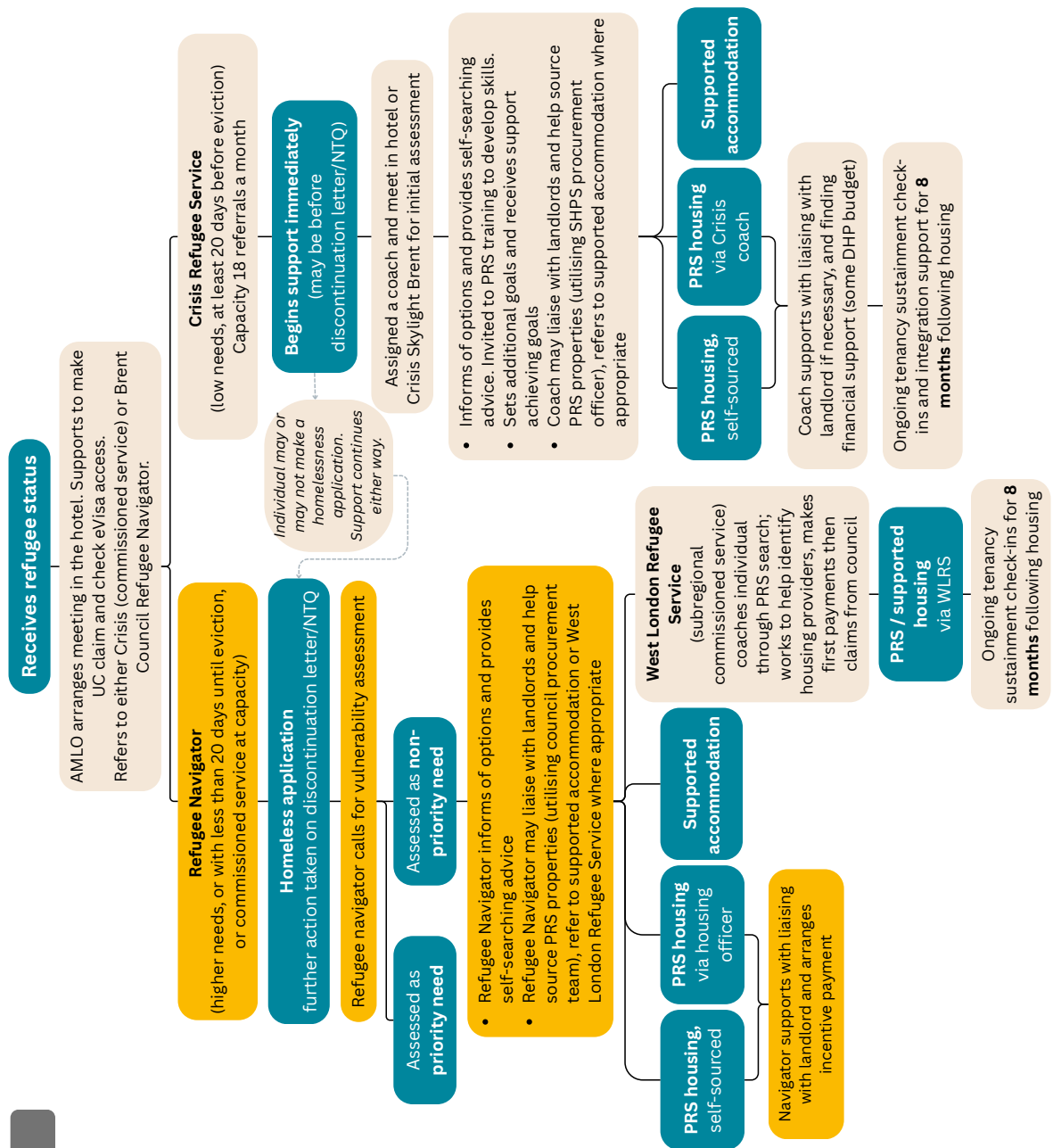
- Early intervention should be a priority, requiring effective collaboration with the HO and clear and responsive internal referral routes within councils. Designating specific housing officers to focus on asylum accommodation leavers, with appropriate training, is an important step in areas with very busy homeless prevention teams and a significant refugee move-on challenge.
- While recognising that LAs face diverse and distinct institutional challenges and financial pressures, information-sharing and collaboration around creative approaches can offer opportunities to improve homeless prevention practices.
- Councils can benefit greatly from working with VCS organisations already embedded in hotel and community settings, if this is informed by a clear-sighted understanding of the capacity of specific organisations and the need for financial backing.
- Clear and accessible information needs to be buttressed during the move-on period with regular access to reliable face-to-face advice. Be mindful of the risk of confusion during this high stress period, working collaboratively (across local authorities, voluntary and community sector and HO services) to refine advice pathways. Trauma-informed approaches to delivery of navigational support would help make these interventions more effective.
- Scale creative efforts to address the barriers facing refugees and other people falling into homelessness – consider (sub)regional cooperation as a route for this.

Recommendations to central and local government:

- Information should be disseminated more actively, in translation, and much more upstream, so that people know what to expect if they get refugee status. Co-production with people with experience of the move-on period can make information provision more effective. To avoid duplication of effort, consider the benefits of more centralised information resource development, which can be updated easily with changes and adapted for use in specific local settings.
- Refugees need to be able to put down deposits to secure housing. Support with this needs to be more prompt, consistent and effective. This could come from LAs expanding, standardising and streamlining access to financial support with first payments; a pan-London scheme; or adjustments to the amount and timeframe of the Refugee Integration Loan.
- Ensure that efforts to improve supported accommodation do not cut off this vital housing route by addressing resourcing alongside standards.

APPENDIX: BOROUGH-SPECIFIC HOMELESS PREVENTION PATHWAYS FOR PEOPLE NOT IN PRIORITY NEED

These diagrams highlight distinctive approaches to working with newly granted (single) refugees on homeless prevention. The focus is on identifying initial pathways of information and advice, and then focus on ways that an LA may facilitate routes to housing specifically for non-priority refugees. This illustrates the scope for a variety of proactive approaches. With many refugees experiencing a period of rough sleeping or sofa surfing, there is a pressing need to improve the availability and consistency of these channels across London.



Brent

Context:
Prevention/relief duties to asylum accommodation leavers Jan-Jun 2025: 137

Proportion of homeless duties owed to refugees leaving HO accommodation Jan-Jun 2025: 9%

People living in asylum accommodation Jun 2025: 884

Relevant teams:
In August 2023, Brent council commissioned Crisis to deliver a Refugee Service to support newly recognised refugees leaving contingency hotels in the borough. This was modelled on the already existing SHPS service, and managed by Bridges Outcomes Partnership.

At a similar time, the council also created a Refugee Navigator role sitting within the single homeless team, who also supports individuals leaving Home Office accommodation.

AMLOs have been in Brent since February 2024 to provide additional move-on support and referrals to the two support streams. AMLO staff, the Refugee Navigator and Crisis Refugee Service meet weekly to discuss capacity updates, ways of working and specific cases.

Sources: MHCLG 2025 Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level Table A2R. Jan-Mar and Apr-Jun 2025; Home Office 2025 Immigration Statistics, Asylum - Asylum seekers in receipt of support, Asy-D09, Jun 2025; Pathway information from consultations with LA

Hounslow

Context

Prevention/relief duties to asylum accommodation leavers Jan-Jun 2025: 273

Proportion of homeless duties owed to refugees leaving HO accommodation Jan-Jun 2025: 24%

People living in asylum accommodation Jun 2025: 1,720

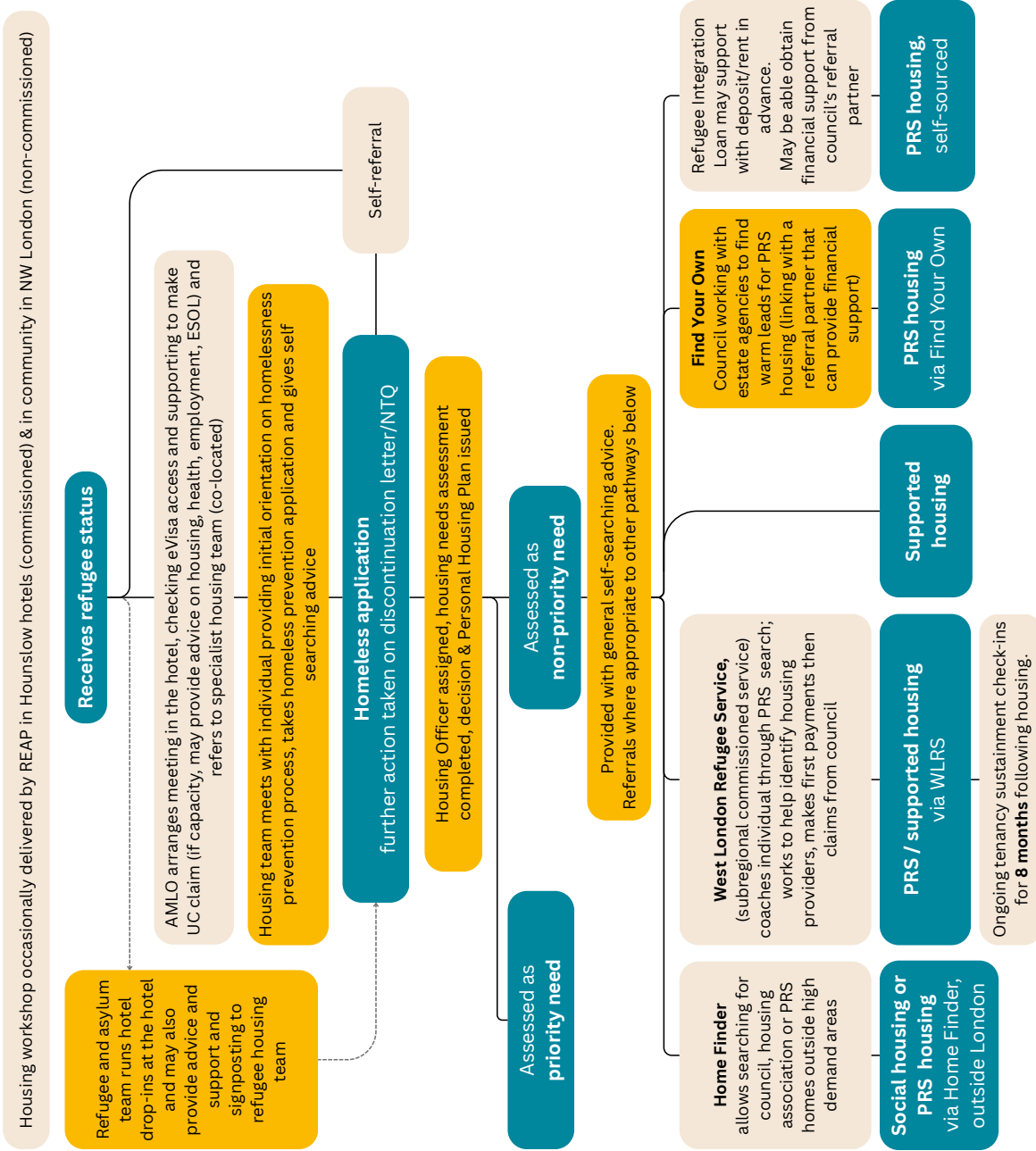
Relevant teams:

Refugee and asylum team of 10 (which started as H4U team)

Team of housing officers specialising in supporting asylum accommodation leavers

AMLO team regularly present in local asylum hotels

Sources: MHCLG 2025 *Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level Table A2R*, Jan-Mar and Apr-Jun 2025; Home Office 2025 *Immigration Statistics, Asylum - Asylum seekers in receipt of support*, Asy-DO9, Jun 2025; Pathway information from consultations with LA



Islington

Context

Prevention/relief duties to asylum accommodation leavers Jan-Jun 2025: 140

Proportion of homeless duties owed to refugees leaving HO accommodation Jan-Jun 2025: 11%

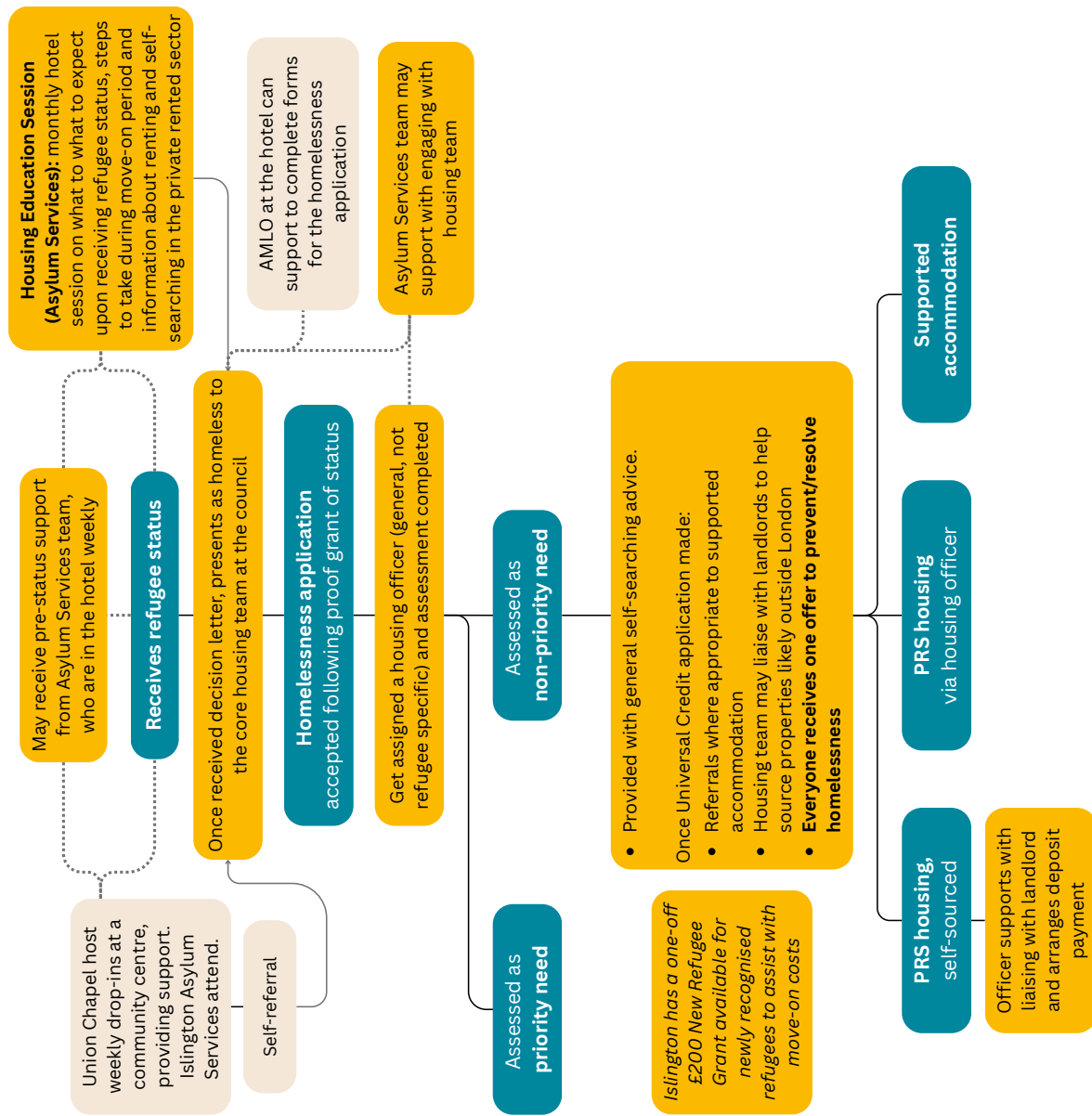
People living in asylum accommodation Jun 2025: 596

Relevant teams:

Islington has an Asylum Services team specifically supporting people seeking asylum in Home Office accommodation. They are separate to housing and do not have housing officers within the team of four people.

Union Chapel are contracted to provide wrap-around support and activities. Praxis are contracted for immigration advice.

Sources: MHCLG 2025 Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level Table A2R. Jan-Mar and Apr-Jun 2025; Home Office 2025 Immigration Statistics, Asylum - Asylum seekers in receipt of support, Asy-D09, Jun 2025; Pathway information from consultations with LA



Kensington and Chelsea

Context:

Prevention/relief duties to asylum accommodation leavers Jan-Jun 2025: 55

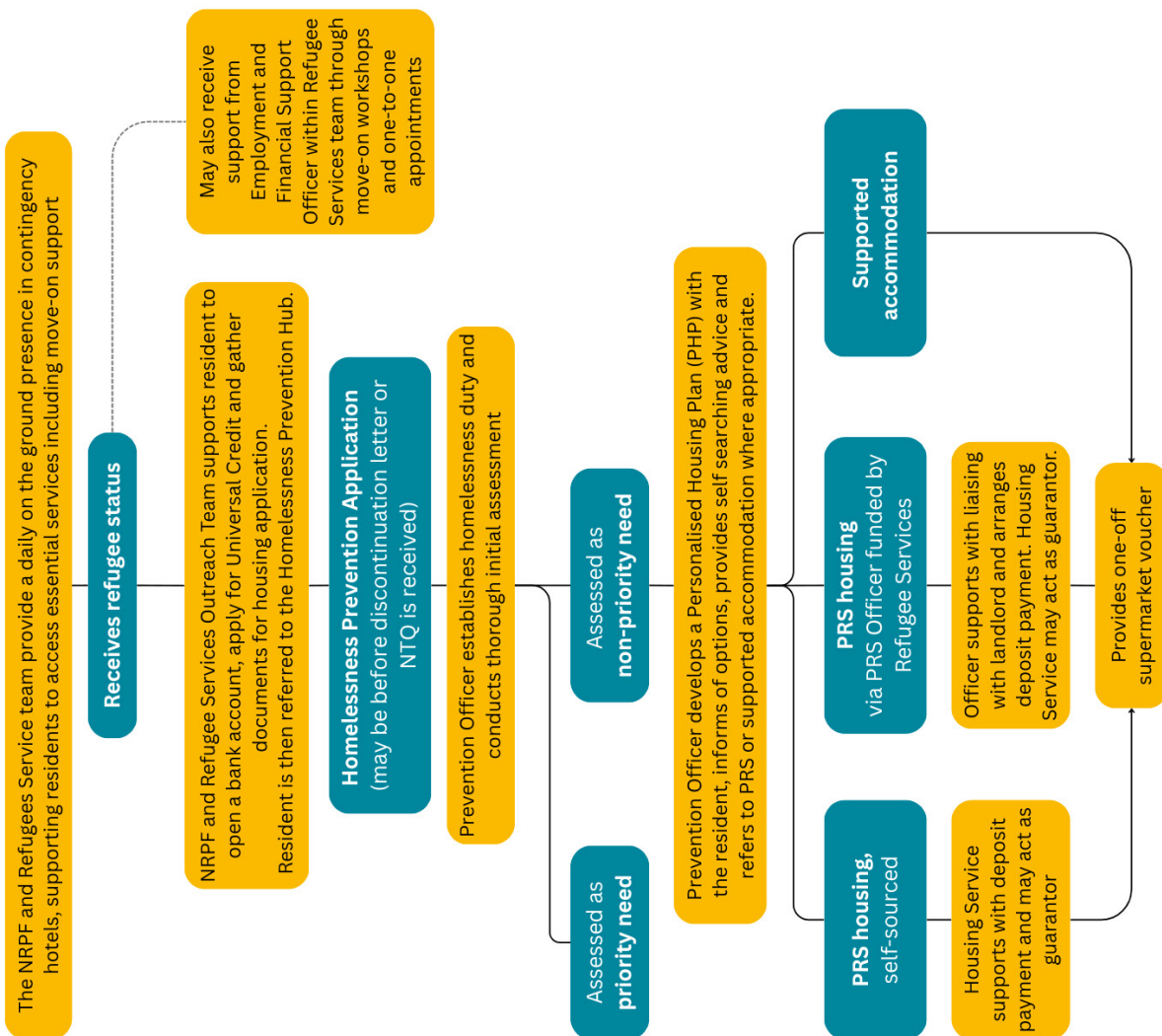
Proportion of homeless duties owed to refugees leaving HO accommodation Jan-Jun 2025: 9%

People living in asylum accommodation Jun 2025: 233

Relevant teams:

Kensington and Chelsea have a dedicated service supporting people on resettlement schemes, asylum seekers and refugees: the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and Refugees Service. This began as a small team working on the Afghan resettlement scheme, later adapting with the Homes for Ukraine scheme and now the general asylum-seeking cohort. It has recently expanded to include dedicated employment and financial support officer, as well as a dedicated officer focused on private sector housing.

Sources: MHCLG 2025 Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level Table A2R. Jan-Mar and Apr-Jun 2025; Home Office 2025 Immigration Statistics, Asylum - Asylum seekers in receipt of support, Asy-D09, Jun 2025; Pathway information from consultations with LA



Lambeth

Context:

Prevention/relief duties to asylum accommodation leavers Jan-Jun 2025: 66

Proportion of homeless duties owed to refugees leaving HO accommodation Jan-Jun 2025: 4%

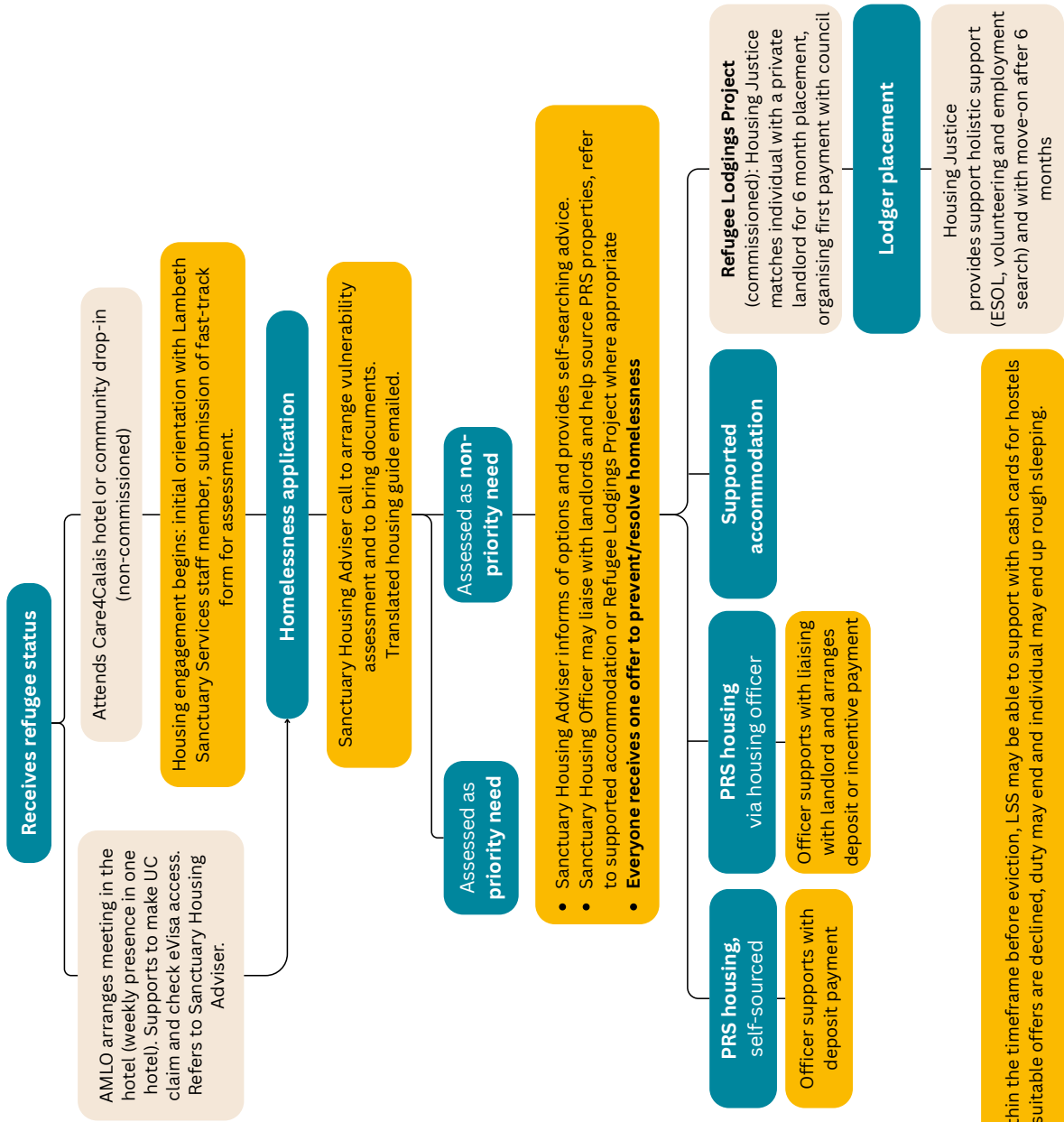
People living in asylum accommodation Jun 2025: 425

Relevant teams:

Lambeth has a dedicated Lambeth Sanctuary Services team of 17 staff members supporting people seeking sanctuary, including people seeking asylum and recently recognised refugees. This includes a Sanctuary Housing Adviser and a Sanctuary Housing Officer. They also recently started having an AMLO presence in the hotels.

Sources: MHCLG 2025 Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level Table A2R, Jan-Mar and April-Jun 2025, Home Office 2025 Immigration Statistics, Asylum - Asylum seekers in receipt of support, Asy-D09, Jun 2025; Pathway information from consultations with LA

Note: If none of these options are possible within the timeframe before eviction, LSS may be able to support with cash cards for hostels or B&B booking for up to 7 nights. If any suitable offers are declined, duty may end and individual may end up rough sleeping.



Newham

Context:

Prevention/relief duties to Home Office accommodation leavers Jan-Jun 2025: 142

Proportion of homeless duties owed to refugees leaving HO accommodation Jan-Jun 2025: 8%

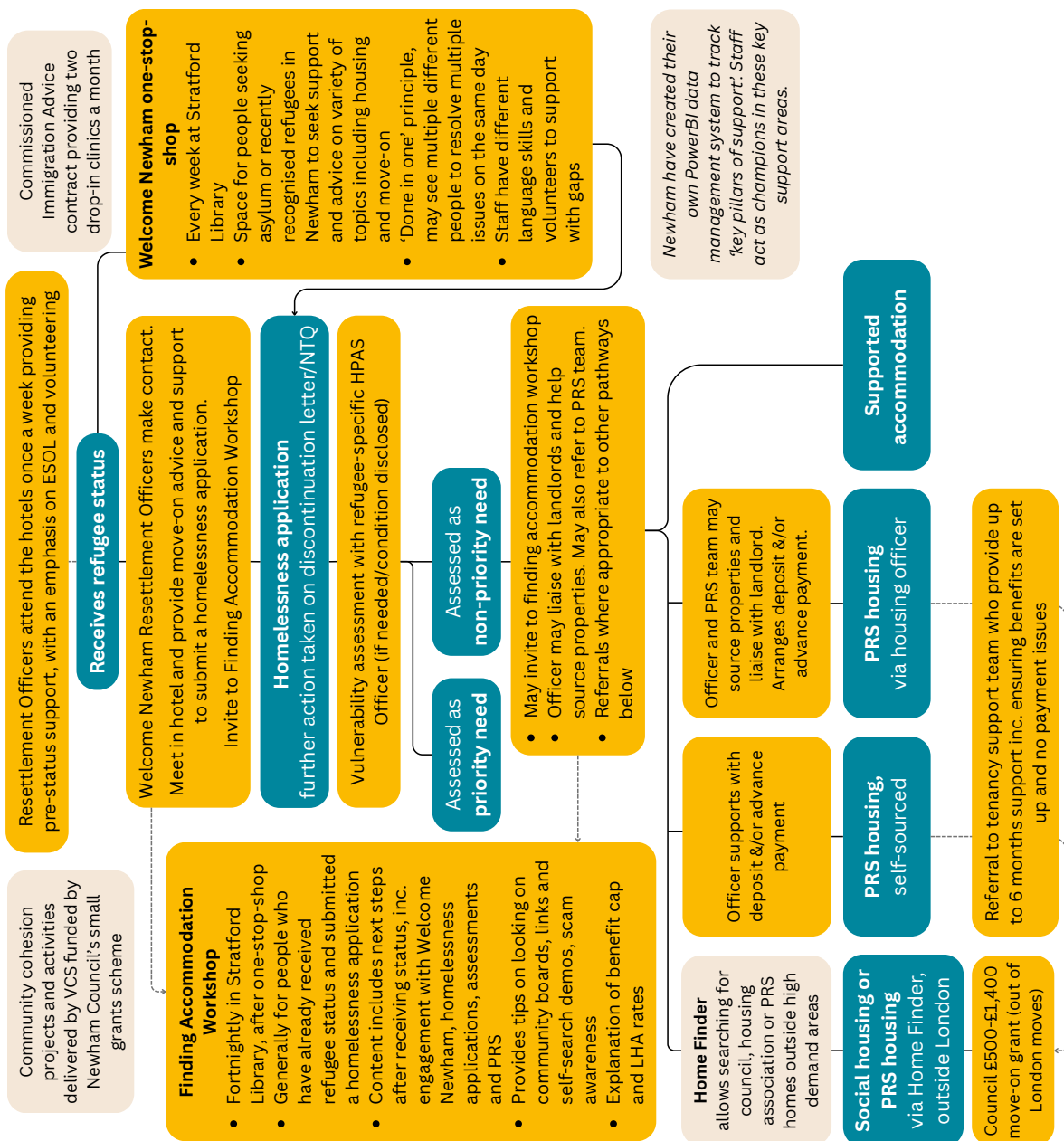
People living in asylum accommodation Jun 2025: 1,226

Relevant teams:

Newham council has a dedicated Welcome Newham team to support refugee and asylum-seeking individuals in the borough. They deliver the majority of their support in-house, hiring refugee specific housing officers and a PRS officer, alongside resettlement officers.

The Welcome Newham one-stop shop is a key part of the support Newham provides to people seeking asylum and newly recognised refugees, providing a weekly drop-in hub in Stratford library and a fortnightly finding accommodation workshop.

Sources: MHCLG 2025 Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level Table A2R. Jan-Mar and Apr-Jun 2025; Home Office 2025 Immigration Statistics, Asylum - Asylum seekers in receipt of support, Asy-D09, Jun 2025; Pathway information from consultations with LA



Endnotes

- 1 While acknowledging that homelessness is also a serious issue among people who have received negative decisions, this report focuses on people who have been granted Limited Leave to Remain in the UK via refugee or humanitarian status.
- 2 OECD (2024) [HC3.1. Population Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- 3 This initiative contributes towards a key recommendation of a recent report by Huddersfield University housing specialists (looking at this issue UK-wide and regionally), i.e. to 'Share best practice across local authorities including on how different authorities respond to refugees during the move-on process'. (P. Chatterjee and P. Brown (2025) Navigating Statutory Homelessness Support: Impacts of Asylum and Refugee Policy. University of Huddersfield.)
- 4 The survey elicited responses from 21 local authorities and 17 VCS organisations working across boroughs (including refugee/migrant, commissioned street outreach, commissioned and non-commissioned homelessness services). It was analysed for examples of good practice.
- 5 Home Office (2025) [Asylum claims and initial decisions detailed datasets, year ending June 2025](#); Institute for Government (2024) [Part 1: Why is asylum a chronic policy problem in the UK?](#). The increase is also not entirely unprecedented, although somewhat exceeds an analogous rise in asylum claims in the context of a proliferation of post Cold War conflict in the early 2000s. Moreover, comparing asylum claim statistics with UK population statistics, asylum-seekers were 0.12% of UK population in 2001, 0.17% in 2002 – compared with 0.13% in 2023, 0.15% in 2024 (Home Office (2025) [Asylum claims and initial decisions detailed datasets, year ending June 2025](#); Office for National Statistics 2024 [United Kingdom population mid-year estimate](#); Home Office (2025) [How many people claim asylum in the UK?](#)).
- 6 Home Office (2025) [Asylum seekers in receipt of support by local authority detailed datasets, year ending June 2025](#), Note 5; The Migration Observatory (2025) [Asylum accommodation in the UK](#). Participants voiced concerns that hotel accommodation may be more profitable for contractors that dispersal accommodation, reducing the incentive for contractors to meet government objectives to increase dispersal. See also NAO (2025) [The Home Office's asylum accommodation contracts](#), p.18. The proportion of residents living in asylum accommodation in London increased from 0.01% to 0.18% between June 2015 and June 2025 (compared with 0.05% to 0.15% for the UK as a whole). E. Kirk-Wade and C. Barton (2025) [Asylum statistics](#) House of Commons Library p.25, and authors' calculations based on [United Kingdom population mid-year estimate - Office for National Statistics](#)) and GLA projections for London [London's Population Projections](#).
- 7 NAO (2025) [The Home Office's asylum accommodation contracts](#), p.25
- 8 Local Government Association (2025) [Briefing for new councillors](#)
- 9 I. Loubser (2025) [Hell hostel is shut down](#) *Islington Tribune*
- 10 L. Mort and M. Morris (2024) [Transforming asylum accommodation](#) IPPR
- 11 J. Fenwick (2025) [Asylum sites to be expanded as ministers bid to end hotel use](#), BBC News; G. Dona, C. Sanders and P. Novak (2025) [As protesters and politicians call for the closure of asylum hotels, what are the alternatives?](#) *The Conversation*
- 12 MHCLG (2025) [The Funding and Sustainability of Local Government Finance](#)
- 13 Henceforth 'refugee status'
- 14 Home Office (2024) [56 Day Move-On Update - Letter to External Stakeholders](#) Or previously once they have been sent their BRP card.
- 15 NACCOM (2023) [Statement and joint letter | Changes to procedure for ending asylum support causing increased homelessness](#); UNHCR (2024) [An uncertain future, a journey through the move on period](#)
- 16 Home Office (2024) [56 Day Move-On Update - Letter to External Stakeholders](#)
- 17 [Home Office reverts to 28-day move-on period for new refugees | Homeless Link](#) Vulnerable groups include pregnant women, >65yrs, people with a disability – Right to Remain (2025) [Move On Support for Newly Recognised Refugees: What's Changing from 1 September 2025](#) It remains to be seen whether this will be affected by a recent High Court order overruling the government by halting the eviction of a refugee from his asylum accommodation on Wed 23 October, see D. Taylor (2025) [High court halts eviction of refugee under Home Office 28-day policy](#)
- 18 British Red Cross (2018) Still an ordeal. Available at: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/research-publications>; UNHCR (2024) [An uncertain future, a journey through the move on period](#); Refugee Council (2024) [Keys to the City 2024: Ending Refugee Homelessness in London](#).
- 19 See MHCLG (2025) [Homelessness Code of Guidance](#).
- 20 See also C. Morgan (2019) [Making homelessness applications for refugees in England](#), Refugee Council.
- 21 See also A. Lindley, A. Mamo and H. Reed (2024) [Home Beyond the Home Office: Addressing Refugee Move-On Challenges in the Oxford Area](#).
- 22 See also Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group and Hope At Home (2024) [Safe homes: ensuring access to safe accommodation for survivors of modern slavery](#)
- 23 Shelter (2022) [Local authority duties to prevent and relieve homelessness](#)
- 24 Backlog in initial decision-making had been accruing since 2018 when there was a slow down – C. Yeo (2025) [Briefing: the sorry state of the UK asylum system](#) *Free Movement*.
- 25 Analysis of MHCLG (2025) [Statutory Homeless Statistics](#)
- 26 '841 people were recorded as having left asylum support accommodation with a positive Home Office

decision, while 33 had left with a negative decision' GLA (2025) [CHAIN Data Annual Report April 2024-March 2025](#), p.26

27 A local connection is generally established by living in the area, being employed in the area, or through family connections – or by receiving refugee status when residing in asylum accommodation in the local authority area. UK Government [Housing Act 1996](#), c.52, s.199, Shelter Legal England (2025) [Local connection in homelessness applications](#). See also C. Sutton-Hamilton, M. Allard, R. Stroud and F. Albenese (2022) [‘I’d Hoped there’s be more options’: Experiences of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018-2021](#); P. Chatterjee and P. Brown (2025) *Navigating Statutory Homelessness Support: Impacts of Asylum and Refugee Policy*. University of Huddersfield.

28 British Red Cross (2018) Still an ordeal. Available at: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/research-publications>; Refugee Council (2024) [Keys to the City 2024: Ending Refugee Homelessness in London](#); UNHCR (2024) [An uncertain future, a journey through the move on period](#); P. Brown, S. Gill and J.P. Halsall (2024) [The impact of housing on refugees: an evidence synthesis](#); S.M. Hughes (2025) [Theorising legal gaps geographically: Exploring the transition from asylum seeker to refugee in the UK](#).

29 D. Taylor (2025) [Scrap policy that gives refugees with leave to remain 28 days to find housing, say UK groups](#) *The Guardian*.

30 M. Wehmeyer (2024) [How London’s local councils build proactive responses to asylum](#)

31 MHCLG [Households on Local Authority Waiting List, Borough](#) Last updated Jan 2025.

32 London Councils (2025) [£330m homelessness overspend as housing crisis threatens to bankrupt London boroughs](#); K. Scanlon, B. Provan, C. Whitehead, L. Lane and A. Gaganis (2025) [The temporary accommodation subsidy gap in London: Analysis and implications](#).

33 MHCLG (2024) [Homelessness Prevention Grant 2025-26: technical note](#); Local Government Association (2024) [Temporary accommodation subsidy gap has cost councils more than £700 million over the last five years](#)

34 F. Greaves, A. Lusuardi and W. Wilson (2025) [Rough sleeping in England: Local and national government action](#), House of Commons Library; MHCLG (2025) [Funding arrangements for the Homelessness Prevention Grant from 2026/27 onwards](#); MHCLG (2024) [Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant allocations 2025 to 2026](#); G. Hurst, L. Teixeira and N. Davies (2025) [A smarter approach to homelessness](#), Institute for Government, and Centre for Homelessness Impact; National Audit Office (2024) [The effectiveness of government in tackling homelessness](#).

35 MHCLG (2025) [The Fair Funding Review 2.0](#).

36 London Councils (2025) [£330m homelessness overspend as housing crisis threatens to bankrupt London boroughs](#); K. Scanlon, B. Provan, C. Whitehead, L. Lane and A. Gaganis (2025) [The temporary accommodation subsidy gap in London: Analysis and implications](#), p. 5.

37 Home Office (2025) [Funding Instruction for Local Authorities: Asylum Grant 2025 - 2026](#).

38 Home Office (2025) [Funding Instruction for Local Authorities: Asylum Grant 2025 - 2026](#).

39 Barnet, Brent, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Hackney, H&F, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Redbridge, Southwark, TH. Home Office (2025) [Funding instruction for local authorities: Move On grant funding](#).

40 See also J. Broadhead (2020) 'Building Inclusive Cities: Reflections from a Knowledge Exchange on the Inclusion of Newcomers by UK Local Authorities.' *Comparative Migration Studies* 8(1) <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-020-0172-0>.

41 The Asylum Accommodation and Support Contract stipulates that accommodation providers inform the LA when they will cease support, within two working days of being notified by the HO of the discontinuation of support date, as well as any known needs and vulnerabilities relevant to preventing homelessness. Asylum Matters (2019) [The Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility Contract \(AIRE\) A Guide](#)

42 Since the introduction of the AMLOs (see below) they have been supporting residents to complete Homeless Prevention Applications – previously this was the council.

43 P. Chatterjee and P. Brown (2025) *Navigating Statutory Homelessness Support: Impacts of Asylum and Refugee Policy*. University of Huddersfield.

44 Crisis (2018) *Everybody In: How to end homelessness in Great Britain*. [Chapter 12: Ending migrant homelessness](#); Homeless Link and NACCOM (2024) [Vital solutions to ending migrant homelessness](#).

45 E. Page and C. Hicks (2024) [Beyond the Ward – Exploring the Duty to Refer in Hospital Settings](#)

46 9 key touchpoints accompanied by email follow-up: 1 – Inform of move-on period; 2 – Inform how to access accommodation/benefits; 3 – Info on applying for NINO, bank account and eVisa; 4 – Signposting to CAB for help accessing benefits and employment; 5 – Liaising with CAB to support with UC application; 6 – Providing info on documentation needed for DWP appointment; 7 – Checking attendance of scheduled appointments; 8 – Signposting to suitable housing solutions, liaising with/referrals to LA housing teams; 9 – Signposting to other support/networks/services e.g. Refugee Integration Loan, local drop-ins, community activities.

47 Asylum-seekers can apply for the right to work after one year if the delay on their asylum claim decision is 'no fault of their own', and then only in shortage occupations listed on the [Immigration Salary List](#). See: UK Visas and Immigration (2024) [Permission to work and volunteering for asylum seekers](#); Home Office (2016) [Immigration Rules part 11B](#) Updated 09.2025.

48 F. Calo, T. Montgomert and S. Baglioni "You have to work...but you can't!": Contradictions of the Active Labour Market Policies for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK. *Journal of Social Policy*. 2024;53(3):638-656. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047279422000502>

- 49 British Red Cross (2018) Still an ordeal. Available at: <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/research-publications>; UNHCR (2024) [An uncertain future, a journey through the move on period | UNHCR UK](#).
- 50 Homeless Link & NACCOM (2025) [Vital solutions to ending migrant homelessness](#)
- 51 GLA and London Councils (2025) Survey on supporting people rough sleeping after leaving asylum accommodation: Best practice examples.
- 52 T. Bridgett (2024) [Refugee Employability Programme: Letter to stakeholders](#). [Letter] Home Office.
- 53 See also L. Mayblin and P. James (2018) [‘Asylum and refugee support in the UK: civil society filling the gaps?’](#) *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(3), 375–394.
- 54 See also L. Mayblin and P. James (2018) [‘Asylum and refugee support in the UK: civil society filling the gaps?’](#) *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(3), 375–394; F. Calo, T. Montgomery and S. Baglioni (2022) [‘You have to work...but you can’t!’: Contradictions of the Active Labour Market Policies for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK.](#) *Journal of Social Policy*, 53(3), 638–656.
- 55 People seeking asylum cannot access courses funded by the Adult Skills Fund, such as formal ESOL, until they have been in the UK for six months. Once someone receives their refugee status, this rule does not apply. See: Department for Education (2025) [Adult skills fund: funding and performance management rules 2025 to 2026](#); Refugee Education UK [Help for College](#).
- 56 N. Lester (2021) [A trauma-informed approach: best practice for the legal profession](#).
- 57 Boaz Trust (2025) [From surviving to thriving: Preventing homelessness in Greater Manchester among people recently granted refugee status](#).
- 58 Hitting a low of 3.1% of total available properties in Q4 of 2023. This recovered slightly to 5% in Q2 of 2024 after LHA rates were raised, after a long freeze. See Savills (2024) [Private Rented Housing Supply in London](#).
- 59 Research with landlords in England suggests 68% ask for deposits and at least a third request rent in advance, a guarantor, or both. See: TDS (2025) [Letting in the private rented sector in 2025: The voice of the landlord survey](#)
- 60 Office for National Statistics (2025) [Private rental market in London: July 2024 to June 2025](#).
- 61 Based on a five-week rent deposit, and one month’s rent in advance.
- 62 GOV.UK [Refugee integration loan: Overview](#).
- 63 Refugee Council (2024) [Keys to the City 2024: Ending Refugee Homelessness in London](#).
- 64 Affordable rent defined as at or below 30% of an individual’s income. ONS (2025) [Private rental affordability, England, Wales and Northern Ireland](#).
- 65 Savills (2024) [Private Rented Housing Supply in London: Residential Research Report for London Councils and Trust for London](#).
- 66 An issue also highlighted elsewhere, e.g. M. Buchanan (2023) [Clearsprings: Home Office asylum contractor prices out homeless](#) BBC
- 67 GOV.UK [Asylum support: What you’ll get](#)
- 68 Home Office (2025) [Landlord’s guide to right to rent checks](#).
- 69 L. Cheetham (2025) [Right to Rent: discrimination in private renting](#), Shelter England; T. Simcock (2018) [The Right to Rent Scheme and the Impact on the Private Rented Sector](#); JCWI (2017) [Passport Please: The impact of the Right to Rent checks on migrants and ethnic minorities in England](#); K. Mckee, S. Leahy, T. Tokarczyk & J. Crawford (2021) [‘Redrawing the border through the ‘Right to Rent’: Exclusion, discrimination and hostility in the English housing market’](#). *Critical Social Policy*, 41(1), 91–110.
- 70 A. Binner, C. Timmins and G. Pryce (2024) [The local drivers of housing discrimination](#); W. Wilson (2023) [Can private landlords refuse to let to benefit claimants and people with children](#).
- 71 J. Meers (2021) [“‘Professionals only please’: discrimination against housing benefit recipients on online rental platforms.”](#) *Housing Studies*, 39(1), 29–51.
- 72 Housing Justice (2025) [The London Lettings Network: The ‘Housing Benefit Rightmove’](#)
- 73 Housing Justice (no date) [Message for Estate Agents/Landlords – London Lettings Network](#)
- 74 Housing Justice (2025) [Boost-Up: Now taking referrals](#).
- 75 Hosting schemes such as Refugees at Home and Room for Refugees have helped to connect refugees with homeowners offering spare rooms on a voluntary basis, whilst lodging schemes such as the Bristol-based Refugee Welcome Homes find people with spare rooms who need additional income. See Refugees at Home [Advice for hosts - Refugees at Home](#); Room for Refugees [How it works](#); Refugee Welcomes Homes [Refugee Welcome Homes - Refugee Lodging Scheme](#)
- 76 Refugee Welcomes Homes [Refugee Welcome Homes - Refugee Lodging Scheme](#);
- 77 Crisis (2021) [Crisis Policy Briefing: Tackling problems with non-commissioned exempt housing](#); Department for Work & Pensions (2022) [Housing Benefit guidance for supported housing claims](#); National Audit Office (2023) [Investigation into supported housing](#)
- 78 DWP (2022) [Housing Benefit guidance for supported housing claims](#)
- 79 F. Hobson (2022) [The Shared Accommodation Rate in Universal Credit and Housing Benefit](#), House of Commons Library; Shelter Legal England (no date) [Local housing allowance exempt tenants](#).
- 80 See also Chartered Institute of Housing (2023) [What you need to know about the Supported Housing \(Regulatory Oversight\) Bill](#) p.2; The concerns were also summarised in the [Levelling Up, Communities and](#)

[Housing Select Committee inquiry into exempt accommodation](#); and the National Audit Office report on this in 2023 [Investigation into supported housing](#).

81 Crisis (2021) [Crisis Policy Briefing: Tackling problems with non-commissioned exempt housing](#); Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee (2022) [Exempt Accommodation](#), House of Commons; London Assembly Housing Committee (2023) [Unsafe and unregulated: London's rogue supported housing providers](#); National Audit Office (2023) [Investigation into supported housing](#).

82 Chartered Institute of Housing (2025) [Chartered Institute of Housing's response to the consultation on supported housing regulation](#); Homeless Link (2025) [Government update on Supported Housing regulation](#).

83 R. Ali, [Written Ministerial Statement on the Supported Housing Regulation Consultation](#).

84 Department for Work & Pensions (2009) [C8 - Suspension and termination of benefit](#) outlines the reasons Housing Benefit can be suspended or terminated. This includes when 'there is an issue about whether the conditions for entitlement to HB are or were fulfilled', 'there is an issue about whether a decision to award HB should be revised or superseded', when 'an appeal is pending against a decision', or if 'the claimant has failed to satisfy information requirements' within a month of request. This may, in part, be linked to the DWP Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative, which provided local authorities with additional funding to 'tackle fraud and error' in Housing Benefit claims by conducting monthly full case reviews of claims, see DWP (2025) [A7/2025 Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative for the financial year ending March 2026](#) and (2025) [A8/2025 Housing Benefit operational information, performance support and engagement for the financial year ending March 2026](#).

85 Refugee Council, [London Integration and Housing Pathways Service](#) accessed 1.09.25

86 Bridges Outcomes Partnerships (2025) Single Homelessness Prevention Refugee Services – Performance Update. (Unpublished report)

87 Bridges Outcomes Partnerships (2025) Single Homelessness Prevention Refugee Services – Performance Update. (Unpublished report). See also Research & Evaluation Team (2024) SHPS Refugee Evaluation. (Unpublished report). Crisis