

How the next Mayor of Bristol can make our city a safe and welcoming place for asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants

A request by BRASP and other asylum seeker and refugee support organisations in Bristol



Our Asks of Our Mayor

We ask you to take the following local actions over which you will have influence.

1. Commit to Bristol being a City of Welcome and sanctuary for migrants and people seeking sanctuary, whether from war, violence, persecution, trafficking or the impact of climate change, to be made clear on the Council's web pages, including public support for Bristol's Refugee Festival.
2. That Bristol reviews its governance structure to ensure that the voices of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are adequately represented in all strategic planning, decision making and preparation for any future emergency response.
3. Commit to Bristol City Council's refreshed [Refugee and Asylum Seeker Inclusion Strategy](#), and to continuing and resourcing the internal Council Senior Staff Working Group responsible for its implementation. All council employed front line staff/managers should have training on asylum seeker and refugee issues.
4. Continued commitment to provide appropriate shelter for Bristol's homeless and destitute, irrespective of immigration status, as per Bristol's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019. Work with city partners to: identify appropriate shelter for new refugees to coincide with evictions from Home Office accommodation; make surplus residential properties available through the VCSE.
5. Ongoing support for the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (or other national resettlement initiative, if replaced), enabling people to find routes to safety without undertaking arduous journeys.
6. Continued work with an Inclusion Adviser specifically tasked with supporting Bristol to welcome and include asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.
7. Where the Council does not have expertise to deliver direct services to refugees and asylum seekers, explore funding options (including commissioning) for third sector organisations to deliver necessary services.
8. Commit to Bristol's ongoing participation in the Inclusive Cities Network and the national [City of Sanctuary Local Authorities Network](#).
9. Via the Health and Wellbeing board, ensure that local arrangements by clinical commissioners provide effective health, including mental health, services to asylum seekers and migrants, that no person seeking sanctuary is refused primary health care and that Primary Care Trust decisions on eligibility for free secondary health care have full regard to the physical and mental vulnerability of people seeking sanctuary.
10. Ensure that new asylum seeker and refugee children are admitted to school within statutory guidance. Ensure children of asylum seeking and NRPf families obtain free school meals and school uniforms.
11. Ensure disabled asylum seekers receive timely care assessments.
12. Ensure that in Covid economic recovery plans, refugees are recognised as skilled experienced citizens and pathways are developed to maximise their participation and potential.
13. To be a public voice on asylum seeker, refugee and migrant issues locally, nationally and internationally. To ensure that refugee and asylum seekers and their issues are represented on all key partnership Boards.

14. Play an active role in global migration related networks e.g. the Mayors Migration Council; UN Migration Network; Global Parliament of Mayors; The Mayors Dialogue on Growth and Solidarity.

We ask you to advocate and lobby on the local and national stage, for a humane asylum system for all. We ask you to give your support for:

15. National campaigns to [Lift the Ban](#) on working, to end No Recourse to Public Funds, to end asylum destitution, for better legal aid provision, to Close the Barracks, to abolish reporting ([These Walls Must Fall](#)) and for [Patients Not Passports](#).
16. Replacing reporting to UKVI at Patchway Police Station with landline or digital reporting.
17. Accepting evidence for fresh asylum claims by post or email instead of requiring travel to Liverpool to present documents in person.
18. Raising asylum seeker payments by an equivalent amount to the rise in Universal Credit.
19. Ensuring that Home Office contracts include provision of Wi-Fi in asylum accommodation.
20. Further reduction in use of immigration detention, and holding no-one for more than 28 days.
21. Scrapping all health care charges for people seeking sanctuary, including refused asylum seekers.

We ask you to recognise the link between Climate Change and Migration.

22. Recognising that environmental disasters are a growing cause of migration, and so to work with residents, city partners and international networks (e.g. C40) to explore the nexus of Climate change and migration, giving a platform to local migrants who have been impacted by climate change, and consider mitigation of climate change in all new council policies adopted.

Please Pledge Your Support

This Request has been prepared by:

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On behalf of:

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