



ASYLUM SEEKERS & REFUGEES

ISLE OF WIGHT JOINT AGENCY STATEMENT

DATE PRODUCED 1 SEPTEMBER 2004

REPORT TO SMG

FROM: MAURICE DIX

SUBJECT: JOINT AGENCY STATEMENT ON ASYLUM SEEKERS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The attached document outlines the impact of asylum seekers on local services and highlights the responsibilities of the Isle of Wight Council and other key agencies. At present the Isle of Wight is not supporting any Asylum Seekers. However, there are two people living on the Isle of Wight, one supported by NASS (National Asylum Support Services). Given the current turbulent Global political situation and the growing number of displaced people, it is important that the Isle of Wight prepares for the eventuality of a possible future increase in numbers, if the UK is required to accept its share of asylum seekers and it is vital that each service takes account of the impact that this may have. The joint agency statement seeks to do this as well as seeking to consolidate inter agency collaboration on this issue.

BACKGROUND

The asylum seekers have received their support from different sources such as the 1948 National Assistance Act, from the Local Authority and from the Benefits Agency.

The Isle of Wight has not been identified as a "Cluster Area" by NASS (National Asylum Support Services) and as such it is unlikely that numbers living here will significantly increase. Although any asylum seekers placed here by NASS will not be directly supported or funded by the Isle of Wight Council, they may come into contact with local services such as Health, Education, Housing, Social Services, Benefits Agency and Leisure. Some may choose to stay on the island once they have received a determination of their claim for asylum and again this may bring them into greater contact with services such as Housing.

Some regions in this country have chosen to contract with NASS, to provide accommodation and other services that they require. In doing so they seek to create extra revenue for support services. In the South most authorities have expressed a wish not to do this, partly resulting from the lack of social housing voids that could be offered up and our reliance on the private sector.

However, NASS may still look to make placements in the private sector in these areas and they have a target this year of a further 4000 placements in the South East of England.

NASS are also seeking to develop local emergency services in each region for the immediate accommodation of new arrivals. This is in the attempt to divert new arrivals away from already crowded areas, particularly in London. As yet this region has made no arrangement with NASS.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of whether we choose to contract with NASS to supply services directly to asylum seekers, or not, it is possible that we may see a further increase in numbers of asylum seekers living on the Isle of Wight. The multi-agency document attached demonstrates a commitment of those agencies that have contributed to working in partnership with this issue.

Maurice Dix

Team Manager

All Island Duty Team/Sensory & Physical Disability Team

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□ **INTRODUCTION**

This document is a joint agency statement regarding our responsibilities towards asylum seekers living on the Isle of Wight. It outlines achievements in service provision to date and considers key areas for improvement in services for asylum seekers, which will enable their integration into the local community.

The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 introduced a national dispersal policy for asylum seekers, to ease pressure on authorities in London and Kent. As a result of this dispersal policy, we may see asylum seekers settling on the Isle of Wight for some time to come. However, if such dispersal is to work, it is important that local services respond effectively and that good community relations are developed.

Although this document may not cover all aspects of work with asylum seekers, it does attempt to give a framework from which appropriate services can be developed which could assist in the process of integration.

□ **BACKGROUND**

The United Kingdom has a proud history of providing sanctuary for those fleeing war or persecution. We are committed to honouring our obligations under the United Nations Conventions on Refugees Act 1951 and its 1967 protocol. These require that all signatory countries must provide a safe haven for those with a well-founded fear of persecution for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Equally, the Government is determined to deter those who enter the country by unlawful means and take up residence here for the economic advantage it could bring.

For almost 40 years only small numbers of people applied for asylum in the UK. In the late 1980's the total started to rise dramatically from around 4000 a year during 1985-1988 to over 70,000 in 1999. Largely as a result of this increase, there has been a backlog of asylum seekers awaiting a decision and the costs of supporting them have increased substantially.

□ **WHO WE SUPPORT**

The support arrangements for asylum seekers are complex and have evolved as a result of challenges to legislation and High Court rulings. In 1996, changes were introduced with regard to entitlement to Social Security Benefits. Under these changes only those asylum seekers who claimed asylum at a UK port on arrival were entitled to Social Security and only then until their claims had been decided.

This left a large number of asylum seekers (who claimed asylum after entering the country and not at the point of entry), not entitled to Benefit and therefore destitute without their own means of support.

A subsequent High Court ruling determined that Local Authority Social Service Departments would support these destitute 'in country' asylum seekers, under the 1948 National Assistance Act. Families should also be supported under the Children Act 1989 where the children could be vulnerable, because their parents have no means to house and feed the family. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children are also supported under the Children Act.

The introduction of the Immigration and Nationality Act 1999 added further changes to how asylum seekers would be supported, with the Home Office taking over responsibility for all new arrivals of destitute 'in country' asylum seekers from mid 2000.

The range of legislation governing work with asylum seekers is extensive. All asylum seekers are now subject to the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. However, some will be affected by the following :-

The Children Act 1989
Housing Act 1985
National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990
Education Act 1981
Mental Health Act 1983
National Assistance Act 1948
Welfare Benefits Legislation
European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) 1951
Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
The Human Rights Act 1998
Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002

□ **THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PICTURE**

Following the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the government created the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) responsible for nationality issues as well as immigration and support. Local authorities have been asked to support NASS by forming regional consortia, throughout the country, to assist with dispersal and help develop cohesive local services. NASS relies on the regional consortia to assist with provision of accommodation and development of partnerships with other agencies to provide support services in regions.

Regional Consortia link up at a national level with the NASS National Accommodation and Support Group and also with the newly formed National Refugee Integration Forum - a group chaired by the Home Office Minister.

Although there are no immediate agreed terms for a contract between the South Central Consortium and NASS for the provision of accommodation, NASS recognises the important enabling role the consortium can play and is providing funding to support the development of this role.

The National Asylum Support Services (NASS), the Government body, which supports Asylum Seekers, is opening 12 new regional offices, which will provide bases for half its staff.

The changes will help NASS be more responsive to local issues in key areas, such as social cohesion, in order to benefit the whole community.

The regional consortium is developing its strategy and business plan for the coming year and it is envisaged that local authorities will link their own local strategies for asylum seekers/refugees to the regional strategy.

The Isle of Wight's aims, objectives and key performance indicators outlined in this document take account of the regional strategic aims and of the Audit Commission recommendations in its report 'Another County' (see appendix 1).

The latest legislation governing this service is The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, which provides for a new network of Induction Centres, where Asylum applicants would be assessed to confirm their eligibility to apply for NASS support and go through the NASS support application process. It also provides for setting up a National Network of accommodation centres to house destitute asylum seekers. In addition, the new Act removes the right to apply for NASS support for those who do not quickly enough apply for asylum after entry to the UK.

□ **THE LOCAL PICTURE**

The lack of asylum seekers supported by the Isle of Wight Council over the past three years is a reflection of the geography of the Island, the cost of the cross Solent transport links, the small number of ethnic minority groups that are available to provide community support for asylum seekers and the limited quantity of social housing that is available.

For some considerable time, London and Kent authorities have provided support to the vast majority of destitute asylum seekers. Measures to alleviate this situation were put in place at the end of 1999 with the introduction of a voluntary national dispersal system, whereby local authorities from around the country offered up available accommodation for asylum seekers who could be moved from London and Kent. The Isle of Wight did not take part in this dispersal scheme due to a local shortage of social housing. Funding to enable the local authority to supply the necessary accommodation, food, clothing and transport to the four adult asylum seekers and one child has been provided by Home Office Grants.

Accommodation for these asylum seekers has been commissioned from the private rented sector. This can present some problems since market rents are much higher than the social housing sector rents. At present the small number of asylum seekers, on the Isle of Wight, is putting little additional strain on local services such as Housing, Education Health and Social Services.

□ **PROFILE OF ASYLUM SEEKERS ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT**

The Isle of Wight has not supported the large numbers of asylum seekers that many other towns and cities in the South have. However, those who have arrived here have presented the Island with a number of issues that needed to be addressed to provide the right kind of support which people required, as well as being sensitive to local needs.

There are currently no Asylum Seekers being supported by the Isle of Wight Council under the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 1999.

There may be a number of asylum seekers (as yet unknown) on the Island who have been placed here by other local authorities and NASS, who retain responsibility for supporting them. It is possible that this number may increase in the future.

□ **COMMUNITY FACTORS**

A number of factors affect the attitude and response of the receiving community:

- Particular attitudes, sympathy or antipathy towards specific groups, perhaps as a result of media coverage or historical opinion.
- The visibility of groups e.g. skin colour, language, dress.
- Numbers of asylum seekers and the rate at which they arrive.
- The area and specific issues to it, e.g. unemployment, housing, schooling, attitudes towards existing immigrant groups.
- Common features between those arriving and the local community e.g. religion or cultural attitudes.
- Behaviour of the asylum seekers themselves.

□ **OUR AIMS**

- To provide housing and support services to asylum seekers as required by legislation and Central Government, in line with local policies.
- To assist with the integration of asylum seekers and refugees into the local community.
- To enable equal access to service provision.
- To ensure cross-service collaborative working and to link this strategy to regional and national strategies.
- To work with the Regional Consortium and National Asylum Support Service (NASS) in the attempt to develop good practice across the region.
- If asylum seekers are placed on the Isle of Wight in greater numbers, to develop partnerships with local asylum seekers/refugee support groups.
- To consider how services could be more cost effective across departments (e.g. translation services).
- To develop a proactive role in presenting positive images of asylum seekers and challenge negative and racist views.
- To develop comprehensive policies and procedures for dealing with arrivals (those the authority is still responsible for and emergency assistance when required) and access to key services.
- Developing links to other services strategies (e.g. Police, Health etc).

□ **SERVICE POLICIES INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT**

- A) Social Services.
- B) Emergency Planning.
- C) Housing (including Planning).
- D) Education.
- E) Police.
- F) Health.
- G) Benefits Agency
- H) Media and Communications

A. SOCIAL SERVICES

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Social Services have been required to support destitute asylum seekers since changes to eligibility for benefits were introduced in 1996. This has meant providing assistance with accommodation and the provision of basic essential needs, such as food and clothing, to all those destitute asylum seekers that arrived here before August 2000. Since that date the Home Office has taken over financial responsibility for supporting new arrivals of asylum seeking adults and families.

Unless the global situation deteriorates and the Home Office policy changes, we would not expect to see any increase over time in the number of people we support on the Island, once they have received a determination of their claim. The Home Office could look to disperse asylum seekers here, as could some authorities that have large numbers of asylum seekers.

DAY TIME ADULT SERVICES DUTY TEAM

PRINCIPLES -

- The Duty Team will establish whether an applicant who presents for a support service is the responsibility of NASS (National Asylum Support Service), in which case there will be no Local Authority involvement.
- If Local Authority support is required, copies of all asylum seekers paperwork, indicating their asylum status will be copied and retained. These documents will be required to assist with Home Office grant claims.
- The Immigration Office should be informed of support being given. The Duty Officer will contact the One Stop Service in Southampton in the first instance. At present there is no designated officer appointed to liaise with the Immigration office.
- EITI will be used as a translation service. Costs can be recovered from the Home Office provided it is included in the weekly financial returns.

• **KEY FUNCTIONS / OBJECTIVES**

- Ensure all destitute asylum seekers for whom the local authority has a duty to support are adequately and appropriately housed.
- Provide food and other essential items such as clothes.
- Enable people to access other key services such as Health, Social Services and Education.
- Assist those people who have received refugee status with benefit claims and accessing appropriate and affordable accommodation in conjunction with the Housing service.
- Asylum seekers who have special needs through physical disability or old age etc will be referred to the appropriate specialist long term teams for assessment and support, following an initial screening assessment by the Adult Duty Team
- Access to the Council Direct Services by the Care Manager, will be undertaken following an assessment of the individual's need for support.
- Develop links with other statutory and voluntary sector organisations in order to ensure that the needs of asylum seekers are taken into account when planning service provision and that a culture of inclusion is developed.

DAYTIME CHILDREN'S SERVICES REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT TEAM

Any child or young person who presents either alone or as part of a family group on the Isle of Wight as an asylum seeker will be referred to the Referral and Assessment Team at the Children's Services Centre, Atkinson Drive, Isle of Wight, PO30 3LS, telephone 01983 525790.

The child or young person will be assessed by the Referral and Assessment Team under the

Department of Health “Framework of Assessment of Children In Need and their families.” The Department of Health Guidance requires this Directorate to complete this assessment within 7 working days of the referral being received by this Directorate.

If the Child or young person presents as ‘alone’ he/she will be accommodated by this Directorate to provide them with a ‘safe place’ whilst the Initial Assessment is carried out, to inform the Directorate of what resources are needed to promote the ‘child’s safety welfare and best interests.’

Following this Initial Assessment the case will be transferred to the Children and Families Community at the Children’s Services Centre, who will then undertake with the child, family and fellow professionals in relevant agencies an in depth Core Assessment of the child’s needs. The Department of Health Guidelines requires this Core Assessment to be completed within 35 working days.

Children’s Services currently do not employ any dedicated staff that undertake these key responsibilities but will provide support services as required following an assessment of need.

As mentioned, it is possible that numbers of asylum seekers will arrive on the Isle of Wight. It will be important therefore, to ensure all agencies from which asylum seekers and refugees are likely to require some advice and support, are engaged in the discussion on social inclusion and how we can help people become part of the local community.

B. EMERGENCY PLANNING

In the event of -

- a) The Isle of Wight Council being asked by Refugee Action to provide interim help with a number of asylum seekers; or
- b) The unexpected arrival of a group of refugees on the Island; or
- c) The arrival of any unaccompanied minors.

Emergency Planning would, in conjunction with the relevant Council services and Island agencies, endeavour to provide short-term accommodation and other services as required, taking advice from Refugee Action.

- Translation facilities will be one of the first requirements, although there may be English speakers amongst the refugees. The EITI Translation Service Point Card or the Red Cross Receptionist’s Language Handbook (copies via Emergency Planning) should be used to determine the language being used. Social Services have a contract with EITI, whereby a translator can be contacted by telephone to talk to those involved. Once the person’s language has been identified, attempts should then be made to bring in someone locally to act as an interpreter.
- Action should be taken immediately on the arrival of asylum seekers, to provide a health check by a doctor to eliminate any risk of possible spread of disease. Contact should therefore be made with the Public Health Department.
- The accommodation used will be dependent on numbers and the period of time involved. In consultation with the Housing Department, Emergency Planning will determine whether hotels could be used, or if there is the need for a rest centre to be opened. Bed status in hotels will be determined by liaison with the Tourism Department.
- If a rest centre is required, arrangements will need to be made for the provision of food and drink. Arrangements are in place with the council’s Client Catering Officer and the

WRVS to provide food in an emergency situation. Consideration will have to be given to any ethnic requirements.

- A multi-agency group, led by Social Services, is already in existence to provide a counselling service in circumstances such as these. The clergy are represented on this group and may have contacts with leaders of the relevant religious sects involved.
- The British Red Cross will provide First Aid in a rest centre.
- Transport can be arranged with the Council's transport service via Emergency Planning.
- Clothing may require renewing and arrangements are in place with the Red Cross to access their charity shops.

C. HOUSING

1). Housing Accommodation

The Housing service of the Council is a vital element of providing services to assist asylum seekers and refugees. The Council's Housing Division is not a direct provider of accommodation but does have an enabling role not only in assessing the number of homes, but also in ensuring the accommodation is safe for the occupants.

Asylum Seekers who have been looked after by the Council were accommodated in the private sector. They were the responsibility of the Council because they applied for asylum during the Asylum Support (Interim Provisions) Regulations 1999. The responsibility for supporting new asylum seekers after 3 April 2000 was taken over by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). The introduction of the new support arrangements with the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) in 2000 could result in NASS contracting with private sector landlords in providing accommodation for Asylum Seekers dispersed to the Island. Generally and dependant on their Class and until an asylum seeker's application has been determined in their favour to remain in the UK, they are not eligible for homeless assistance or social housing. They do however have equal access to housing advice although there are difficulties, which include:

- inability to access private sector accommodation due to lack of up front funding for deposit/rent and being unable to provide references.
- fear of persecution.
- language difficulties.
- cultural difficulties.
- complete lack of knowledge about procedures, help, advice and advocacy services.

There may be certain other households unable to claim benefits who approach the Council for support following an unfavourable decision on their application. Housing Services together with other support agencies would work in partnership with NASS in such cases.

In the event of an influx of larger numbers, Housing Services will work in partnership with other agencies including Adult and Community Services and Children's Services and Emergency Planning to provide emergency accommodation during the early stages of arrival. Housing will then assist in exploring options for providing medium and long-term accommodation in partnership with NASS.

Asylum seekers whose applications are accepted, may be eligible for housing assistance

as homeless and for social housing. Every level of assistance will be given by Housing Services to support any asylum seekers granted leave to remain in order suitable housing.

The Housing Service will

- assist by providing detailed housing advice.
- explore options for accessing accommodation.
- work in partnership with support agencies assisting asylum seekers.

2). Housing Conditions

The demand for housing on the Isle of Wight is such that the only available accommodation for asylum seekers would be in the private rented sector. As with any residential property the main objective is to ensure that accommodation provided for asylum seekers meets fitness standards as set out in The Housing Act 1985 (as amended). Additionally there may be concerns about:

Overcrowding

- too many people sharing
- too little communal space
- lack of shared facilities (such as toilets/bathrooms)

Safety

- adequate fire safety provisions
- gas/electrical safety
- furniture/furnishings fire safety

Properties, which are occupied by a small number of people (less than six) from the same ethnic group, will be deemed to constitute a single household. These units will have to be fit for habitation, in a good state of repair and not overcrowded. Where people of differing nationalities and cultures share accommodation a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) is likely to be created. These properties must meet the Council's adopted standards for HMO's. A working arrangement has been in place whereby Housing Services, Planning and the Fire and Rescue Service ensure HMO's are inspected and approved.

Housing Services, Planning and the Fire Service departments are taking a collaborative approach to tackling the need for decent accommodation in HMO's. Housing Services are able to provide a report about the accommodation, detailing appropriateness of occupation (numbers of people) and recommendations/requirements in relation to any defects. Where there is serious disrepair or unfitness, the report will detail what steps Housing Services propose to take.

PLANNING

It is important to ensure that asylum seekers requiring support are placed appropriately in suitable accommodation, taking account of local planning requirements. This was not always possible to achieve in the past, with the need for a number of local authorities to respond, on occasion, to large numbers of unexpected arrivals. The introduction of new support arrangements since the middle of 2000 should mean that all proposed placements of asylum seekers in hostel/hotel type accommodation will have the required planning permission in advance of any placement made. The main Planning requirements are as follows;

- Six persons can live together as a single household in a dwelling house without requiring planning permission.
- Planning permission is needed if their sole place of residence is a hostel, even if some

- facilities such as laundry are provided.
- Applicants for new hostels or HMO's may involve the change of use of existing small hotels and guest houses, which have become uneconomic as tourist accommodation.
- Premises should have planning permission for the use. The Planning Service will be able to advise on whether a planning consent exists or the likelihood of planning consent being granted.

Other local authorities may place asylum on the Island as will the National Asylum Support Service under contract with private companies. Any such placements will also need to meet local planning requirements.

D. EDUCATION POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY -

The education and training requirements of refugees are diverse. There may be a need to respond to children of all ages within the compulsory school age range and to pre-school and professional/vocational needs of those falling outside this range. Refugee and asylum seeking children are entitled to attend educational institutions and to benefit from the experience. Local Education Authorities have a legal duty to ensure that education is available which is appropriate to their age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs.

Central Government provides funding for asylum seekers who have dispersed to 'cluster groups' through the offices of the National Asylum Support Service (NASS). Up to £500 is available to schools for each child in addition to money through SSA arrangements and the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Grant (EMTAG).

Acquisition of English Language skills is seen as vital for access to the job market and participation in the community. Pilot activity in existing 'cluster areas' includes orientation courses to help provide information on British citizenship and to understand British institutions.

□ LOCAL EDUCATION POLICY

Our policy is for all children to be placed in mainstream schools, with minimum delay, as close to their place of residence as possible. In the first instance Client Services at County Hall should be alerted to the need for a school place. They will liaise with Head of the Support Teaching Service, and the Teacher of EAL, to arrange for an early assessment of specific needs.

Some key Stage 4 Students (14-16 year olds), particularly those entering at Year 11 with less than six months before the statutory leaving age, should be entered on the local school roll but arrangements can be made with the Isle of Wight College for access to its courses. Existing financial arrangements would apply.

Further education options for adults, including English classes, can be accessed by contacting the Manager of the International Division at the Isle of Wight College (01983 526631).

Pre-school provision should be discussed with the Early Years co-ordinator (01983 528645).

E. POLICE - COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Hampshire Constabulary's approach to asylum seekers is based on three key

principles:

- Asylum seekers are entitled to the same protection to live free from crime, harassment and intimidation as any other member of our society.
- The Hampshire Constabulary is committed to working in partnership with other statutory agencies to improve community safety for the benefit of asylum seekers.
- Asylum seekers who offend will be treated in the same manner as any other offender who challenges the rule of law.
- To support these principles the Hampshire Constabulary appoint Officers with specific responsibility for asylum seekers at three separate levels:

Force Level -

A Chief Inspector is responsible for liaison with NASS, The Immigration Service, Regional Consortia, Refugee Action and for the formation of Constabulary Policy. Chief Inspector Operational Support PHQ Winchester.

Divisional Level -

A Chief Inspector is appointed to lead on issues surrounding the policing of the local asylum community and to facilitate partnership working - Divisional Chief Inspector at Newport Police Station, is the locally appointed officer.

Community Level -

An officer will be nominated when it is known in which area of the Island the majority of the asylum seekers have settled. There may be more than one nomination.

In any society there are those who resort to crime in order to exploit the vulnerable. It is acknowledged that asylum seekers are amongst the most vulnerable in our community and may experience harassment, intimidation, victimisation and racial discrimination.

Asylum seekers are positively encouraged to report all forms of crime and racist incidents to the Hampshire Police. To enable victims to do this in a climate free from fear, operational police staff are trained to deal with, and record, all racist incidents. For those who do not speak English as a first language, the interpretation facility Language Line is made available at all Hampshire police stations and within some police vehicles.

All non-emergency contact with the Hampshire Constabulary can be made by telephoning **0845 045 4545**.

F. HEALTH

PRIMARY CARE

Asylum seekers at present can be addressed by an extension of the system for new immigrants where they are visited by a designated Health Visitor, who screens for TB/immunisation uptake and encourages the new entrants to register with a GP. New entrants, who wish to, do not generally have difficulty in registering with a GP but if they did, the Primary Care Trust would direct a practice to take in the individual/family.

If the Island were allocated significant numbers of asylum seekers, additional screening services would have to be commissioned, although nationally there is no such funding for such services.

SECONDARY CARE

New entrants have equal rights of access as existing residents. Translation might be a problem but liaison with other local agencies would resolve this problem.

G BENEFITS AGENCY

Any claims made by asylum seekers for Job Seekers Allowance/Income Support will be processed in accordance with current Social Security legislation.

H MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Communications Policy for Asylum Seekers is to ensure a clear strategy is in place to deal with any activity that the Island has with Asylum Seekers. This is to avoid misinformation, which could lead to community tension, bad feeling and negative publicity.

This can be achieved by

- Putting forth an accurate view of the dispersal of asylum seekers to the region.
- Ensuring as far as possible that councillors, officers and the public have as much information about the situation, in as timely a manner as possible.
- To create awareness and promote a balanced understanding of the plight of asylum seekers.
- To deal with enquiries about asylum seekers promptly and with authority.
- Establishing that if there is to be any concerted settlement of asylum seekers on the Island, then the relevant authorities will have timely contact with the communications team ahead of such an event, in order for good communications to be in place.
- Establishing a set of key messages, which should be made in each communication with the media.

The kind of messages used by other regions include points such as:

Central Government is meeting the majority of costs for accommodation and essential items.

Dispersal of asylum seekers is taking place across the country. Accommodation for asylum seekers in the south is found largely within the private rented sector.

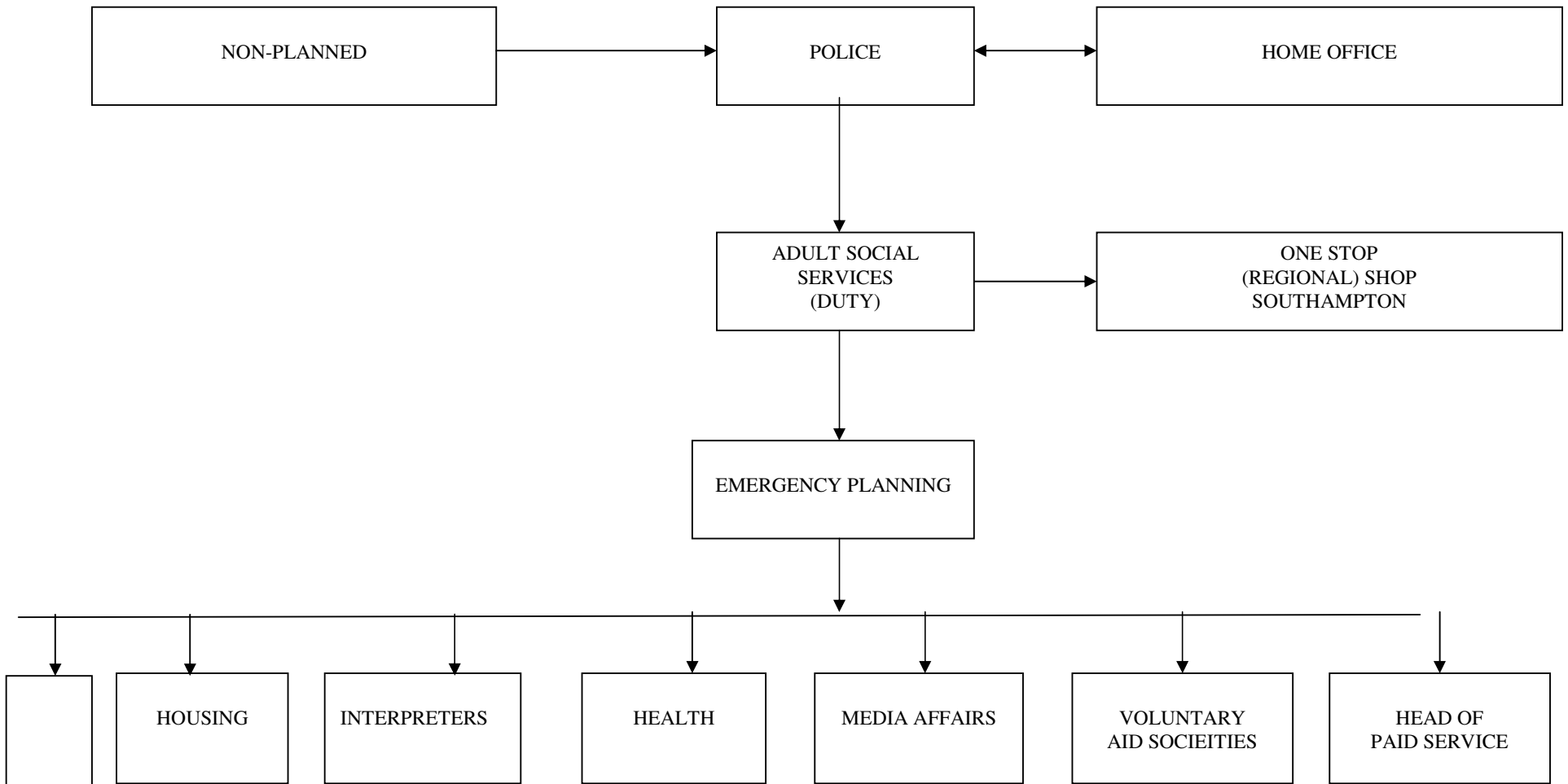
People are seeking asylum here because they are vulnerable. We are able to offer help and there are existing communities in the area who will understand their needs and help to provide the support needed to settle in.

The arrival of refugees in this country is not new. People have been coming to the UK for hundreds of years and many have contributed greatly to our achievements.

The South Central region already supports a number of asylum seekers. The consortium will attempt to ensure wherever possible that new placements are planned for and co-ordinated.

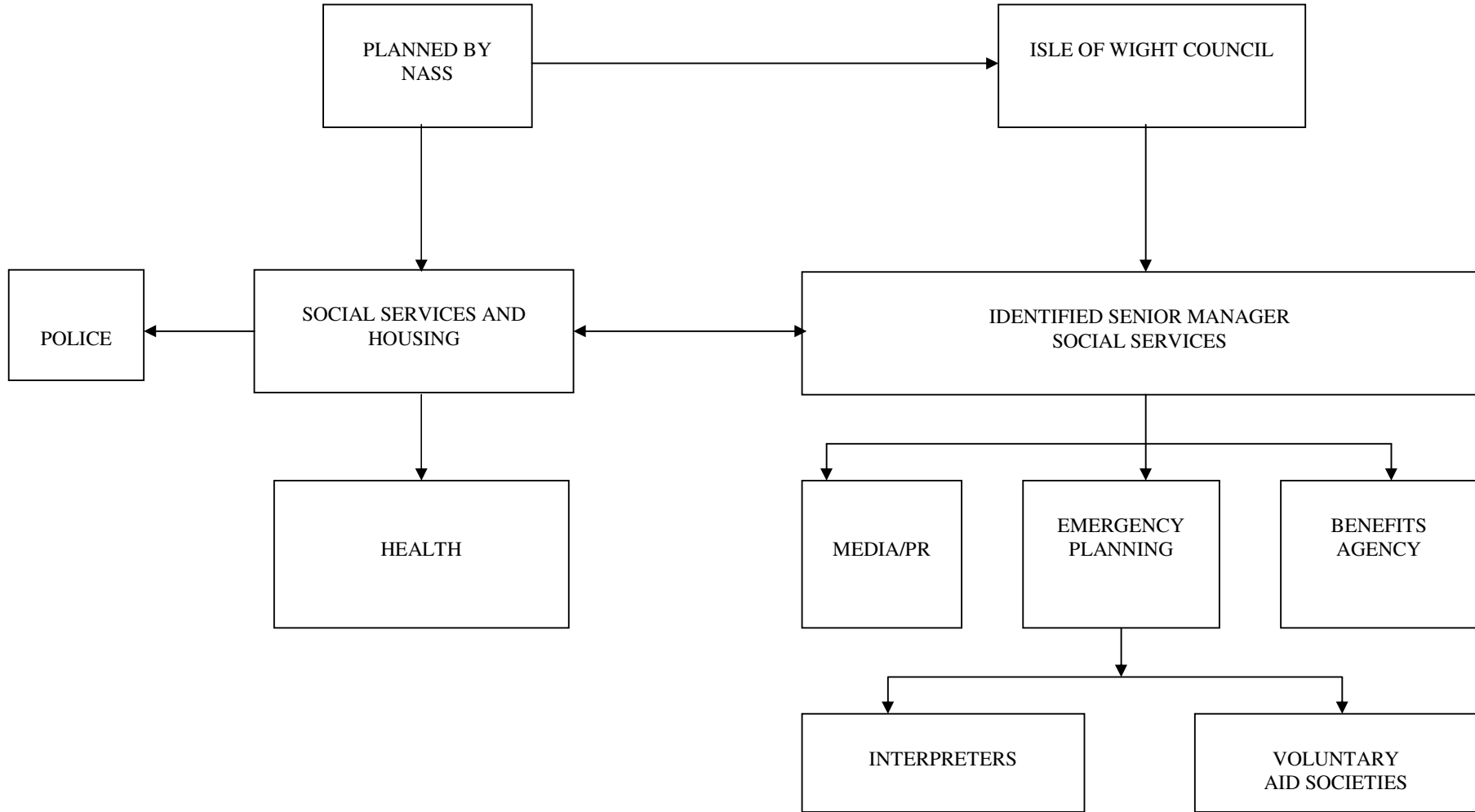
FLOW CHART OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR ARRIVAL OF ASYLUM SEEKERS OR REFUGEES

A)



FOR ARRIVAL OF ASYLUM SEEKERS OR REFUGEES

B)



□ **APPENDIX 1**

FINANCIAL COMMENTARY - The cost to local services

Accommodation and Support

The majority of costs associated with the provision of accommodation and basic essential living requirements for asylum seekers and the support services required to deliver this, are met through government grants.

For each destitute adult single asylum seeker (over age of 18 years) we receive, 140.00 per week. For each destitute family we receive £220.00 per week, regardless of the number of children. For each unaccompanied child we receive £400.00 per week (15 years and under) and £200.00 per week (16 & 17 years).

Education

Up to £500.00 per pupil will be available to help schools access English language. This is in addition to the funding available to all schools through normal Standard Spending Assessment funding and the support provided by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant.

Police

Actual costs incurred by the Police Authority in dealing with asylum seekers are difficult to gauge at present. It is estimated however that the costs to Hampshire Police for the two counties are in the region of £1 million per year including at least £300,000 attributed to work on Immigration related matters.

□ **APPENDIX 2**

AUDIT COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGIONAL CONSORTIA AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES/OTHER AGENCIES

- 1). Carry out a strategic review of services, priorities and resources for asylum seekers and refugees, considering how resources can be pooled to develop joint provision.
- 2). Identify the needs and profile of all asylum seekers and refugees within the area, ensuring that data is shared between agencies.
- 3). Establish information systems to monitor the take-up of services among asylum seekers and refugees, and to identify the costs arising.
- 4). Develop a public relations strategy for asylum seekers for communicating with the media.
- 5). Promote sensitive policing policies to ease community tensions.
- 6). Review accessibility of services to asylum seekers, and improve access where problems are apparent, for example, through better signposting, staff training, interpretation, translation and advocacy service.
- 7). Develop effective consultation mechanisms to involve asylum seekers and refugees and their community groups in service planning.
- 8). Promote the development to refugee community organisations and ensure that local grant criteria address the needs of this group.
- 9). Consider whether existing regeneration programmes, National Lottery funding or private sector sponsorship could provide additional resources for dedicated services for asylum seekers or refugees.

APPENDIX 3

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Appellant a person who is appealing against the Home Office decision to refuse their claim for asylum.

Special adjudicator person who hears an asylum seeker's first appeal against refusal of their asylum claim.

Asylum Screening Unit Home Office department that holds preliminary interviews with in-county asylum seekers to establish a person's identity, prior to full IND interview on the details of the case.

Certified claim some refused asylum claims are 'certified' by the Home Office, which means that the person has only limited appeal rights. The conditions for certification are so wide that it can be applied to virtually any claim.

CECSC Council of Europe Social Charter (signatory countries are: all EU, EEA, ECSCMA states, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Switzerland and Ukraine).

CTD Convention Travel Document, or 'blue document.' People with refugee status use this document to travel overseas. A CTD is valid for all countries except the one from which the person sought asylum.

Disbenefited asylum seekers People claiming asylum at the port of entry into the UK prior to April 3 2000 and eligible to claim benefits, who subsequently lose their entitlement to benefits as a result of a negative decision on their application.

Dublin convention European Union agreement (1990) that aims to ensure that only one EU Member State considers an individual's asylum application. It also provides a framework for deciding which member state that should be and confirms the right of Member States to return asylum seekers to 'safe' third countries.

EAL English as an Additional Language (specialist language support for children in schools who do not speak English as their first language).

ECSCMA European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance (signatory countries are all EU and EEA states, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus).

EEA European Economic Area (members are all EU states, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland).

ESOL English as a Second or other Language (specialist language tuition for UK residents who do not speak English as their first language).

EU European Union (member states are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Spain, Sweden and UK).

Exceptional Leave to Enter (ELE) Immigration status granted to port asylum seeker who does not meet the strict definition of refugee as defined in the UN convention, but who is allowed to remain in the UK for other reasons eg if it would be dangerous for them to return to their home country at that time. Entitlements are the same as for women as for someone with ELR

Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR) Immigration status granted to in-country asylum seeker who does not meet the strict definition of refugee as defined in the UN Convention, but who is allowed to remain in the UK for other reasons eg if it would be dangerous for them to return to their home country at that time. Rights are the same as for someone with ELR. Entitlements are the same as for someone with ELE.

Family Reunion people granted refugee status are entitled to family reunion, ie to have their spouse and dependant children join them in the UK. People with Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR) are entitled to family reunion after four years. Asylum seekers have no right to family reunion.

Immigration Appeals Tribunal (IAT) panel of three people who consider the second appeal against refusal of an asylum claim.

Integrated Casework Directorate (ICD) Home Office department that assesses claims for asylum (part of IND).

ILPA Immigration Law Practitioners= Association.

In-country applicant a person who applies for asylum after passing through immigration control, for example, as a student, visitor or illegal entrant.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) Home Office department responsible for all immigration and asylum issues. IND contains both the ICD and NASS.

Indefinite Leave to Remain immigration status meaning that there is no time limit on a person's permission to stay in the UK.

JCWI Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

Judicial Review High Court examination of whether the law has been correctly applied (in an asylum decision, or any other by a public body).

LEA Local Education Authority.

LGA Local Government Association.

National Asylum Act (NAA) welfare legislation passed in 1948. From 1996 to December 1999, destitute in-country asylum seekers were supported by local authorities under this the terms of this act.

Naturalisation a process of applying to become a British Citizen after five year=s legal residency in the UK. (Three year's residency if married to a British Citizen).

Overstayer: a person who has remained in the UK for longer than they have permission.

Permission to work permission to work in the UK is automatically granted to any person (and their spouse and children) with refugee status or ELR. It is also usually granted to an asylum seeker who has been waiting for a decision on their claim for more than six months (not spouse or dependants): individuals must apply to the Home Office.

Port Applicant or at Port Applicant an asylum seeker who makes their claim for asylum at port of entry, before passing through immigration control.

RCO refugee community organisation (hundred throughout the UK).

Refoulement signatories to the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees are committed to 'non-refoulement' of recognised refugees. This means not returning them to a country where they could be in danger.

Refugee a person who 'owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.' Definition quoted from the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees.

Refugee status: status awarded to someone if the Home Office decides that they meet the definition of refugee as described in the 1951 UN Convention. A person with refugee status has Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK.

RETAS Refugee Education and Training Advisory Service.

Roma a generally accepted generic name for a group of persons who speak a Romani tongue and/or share a common ethnic identity, culture and history. The Roma have many names for themselves, and are known across Europe by names with pejorative associations, such as Gypsy or Cigan. The majority of Roma live in Slovakia, Romania and the Czech Republic where they suffer discrimination and, often, racist violence.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL) non-profit rented housing provider registered with the Housing Corporation, mostly housing associations.

Safe Third Country the Home Office deems certain countries to be places where a refugee is safe from persecution: all EU states, Canada, the USA, Switzerland and Norway. If an asylum seeker travels through any of these en route to the UK, he/she may be returned there on the >safe third country= grounds.

SAL 1 Standard Acknowledgement Letter 1 - acknowledged letter given to port applicants.

SAL 2 Standard acknowledgement Letter 2 - the acknowledgment letter given to in-country applicants.

Settlement when a person is granted Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR), this is sometimes also described as 'settlement.' The term is also used to mean the process of by which refugees become full and equal members of society, accessing mainstream services without disadvantage.

Temporary Admission immigration status given to port asylum seekers who are not taken into detention, but allowed to enter the UK.

UNHCR United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

White List formally abolished in 1999, the White List was a list of countries whose nationals in general were considered not to be at threat of persecution. Nationals from White List countries were almost invariably refused asylum and only given limited right of appeal. The countries named on the White List varied with time. Although the White List was formally abolished in 1999, it may continue in practice, since asylum claims are to be immediately classified as >manifestly unfounded=.

CONTACT LIST

<u>SERVICE</u>	<u>TELEPHONE NUMBER</u>
Out of Hours Services - Wightcare (including Social Services)	821105
Emergency Planning	525121
Benefits Agency (Income Support - New Claims)	273026
Home Office (Direct Line Immigration and Nationality Direct)	020 8633 4245
Southampton One Stop Shop (Refugee Action) - NASS	02380248130
Police (Senior Officer on Duty on the Isle of Wight)	0845 045 45 45
EITI Translation Service	Operations Centre 0870 701 2020 Email: www.eiti.com
Housing (Duty Homeless Officer)	821105
Health (Pre 01.04.02 Public Health On Call Health (Post 01.04.02)	0239228 6000 524081
Voluntary Agencies - Red Cross WRVS	522718 524021
Adult & Community Services Directorate	Duty Service: Monday – Thursday 9am – 5pm Friday – 9am – 4:30 pm
	823340

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