
Statement to end the destitution of people seeking asylum



CHURCH ACTION
ON POVERTY

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it” *Hebrews 13:2*

We believe that it is inhuman and unacceptable that some people seeking asylum are left homeless and destitute by government policies. Every city has people destitute or living on food parcels because they have no means of support. We support Church Action on Poverty's call to change the policies that make refused asylum seekers destitute.

As a society we have international moral and legal responsibilities to welcome those fleeing adversity from other parts of the world and provide social security. But the threat of destitution is being used as a way of pressuring refused asylum seekers to leave the country.

There are many people seeking asylum who have their cases refused but have no safe route to return or whose travel documents cause logistical problems for removal. There are also many cases where people are unjustly refused asylum.

All those within our borders - including people seeking asylum - should have the opportunity to help themselves and society through paid employment. Where this is not possible people seeking asylum, whatever their status, should be given the necessary rights to “food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services” (UN Declaration of Human Rights).

Refused asylum seekers are still human, and deserve to be treated the same, as we would expect if we had to flee to another country. We should offer the respect to our neighbours that we expect ourselves. This is at the heart of the Christian faith, and of many other religions.

We therefore call on the Government to allow people seeking asylum to sustain themselves and contribute to wider society through paid work, and where this is not possible, to re-instate 'refused' asylum seekers' entitlement to benefits until such time as they may be removed.