



Pioneer Scheme Day-release programme

Wednesday 6th December 2017

Horselethill Road, Glasgow

Glasgow Asylum Destitution Action Network (GLADAN)

With Dr Becky Macfarlane, GP and GLADAN co-founder

Background

Sigerist HE, *Medicine and human welfare* (1941)

- Recognition of the social causes of illnesses
- Translating the privilege of medical practitioners into a shared voice to improve the conditions of the disadvantaged
- Important work by Morag Gillespie on the plight of destitute asylum seekers. Available at <http://www.rst.org.uk/reports/research>
- Change in political will and climate has a significant impact, often on the most vulnerable.

Between 2000 and 2017...

- c 2,500 asylum seekers housed per year locally
- c 40,000 asylum applications in total in Scotland to date
- At least 10,000 refused housing and public funds.

THE ASYLUM PROCESS

1951 Refugee convention: RIGHTS, DIGNITY AND PROTECTION

OVERVIEW VIDEO: <https://vimeo.com/76650383> [Refugee Survival Trust video on destitution]

(SHORT GUIDE)

http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/0572/Guide_on_asylum_for_journalists_January_2016_-_Final.pdf.

(MORE DETAILED)

http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/1548/Practitioners_guide_to_Housing_Refugees_22_March_2011_FINAL.pdf.

JOURNEY TO DESTITUTION

- **APPLICATION + SUCCESS**
- On reaching UK, application for asylum at screening interview at port of entry or Croydon, then allocated a case work team from UK Visa and Immigrations
- If no family/ friends, application for Section 95 support – ARC card allowed cash collection at post office, £35 pp cash per week via ASPEN card (ATM and or debit) + accommodation during asylum application process (slightly more if pregnant)
- Just under 40% are approved after second substantive interview
- State support stops at 28 days – they become eligible for job / mainstream welfare
- Previously ‘Indefinite Leave to Remain’ → Now ‘Leave to remain’ 5yrs, Nat Ins Number, family reunite + job / welfare (Or Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave)
- At 5yrs, allowed to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain.

- **APPLICATION + REFUSAL**
- Some leave voluntarily or are removed
- 10 working days to appeal (5 if detained)
- 75% appeal – HM Courts and Tribunal Service administer ‘Reserved’ i.e. not devolved Tribunal Court in Glasgow.
- c30% of these are approved so 51-60% finally achieve state support
- Upon final refusal: ‘high and dry’ → 21 days → Leave Or destitute + homeless.
 - If dependant children, support continues until family leave or are removed
- Section 4 if refused and destitute - ‘Aspen’ (previously Azure) debit card only no cash OR housing with meals, usually Fitness to fly issues/ pregnant or fresh appeal in process (via Liverpool)
- Legal aid or Might be able to submit a fresh asylum claim with new information (in Liverpool!)

SOME GLASGOW SERVICES TO TACKLE “The 4 Ds”: *Decisions, Destitution, Detention and Deportation*

- GLADAN website <https://destitutionaction.wordpress.com/resources/>
 - Particularly good network map of services
https://destitutionaction.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/destitution_network_9nov_2015.pdf
- At the Reporting centre (Ibrox in Glasgow) risk of detention and deportation
 - Unity (next door to Reporting centres) will look after keys and retrieve possessions if the person is detained.
- Support around completing applications and advocacy by
 - Medical Justice (in Detention centres) and
 - Freedom From Torture (in community)
- Asylum seekers housing project <https://ashproject.org.uk>
- Positive Action in Housing: www.paih.org/ Also their www.roomforrefugees.com scheme for anyone with a spare room to host refugees!
- Glasgow Night Shelter and Red Cross support destitute asylum seekers with night shelter.
- Migrant Help is a charitable phone line (run from Dover) to support the asylum seekers
- Refuweege for gathering supplies for distribution and raising awareness

- Govan Law Centre: Advocate and help with access to schooling
- Refugee Survival Trust: One off grants + Bus pass if > 2 miles @ St Rollox Community Outreach, Positive Action in Housing + Govan Community Project
- Refugee Integration Networks – see Scottish Refugee Council website + community + bus pass
- Scottish Refugee Council community newsletter – Can request to be on the mailing list by emailing communities@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk
- GLADAN google documents – open to all

CROSS PARTY POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

A promising report

Scottish Parliament Equalities and Human Rights Committee Enquiry: Hidden Lives, new beginnings – destitution, asylum and insecure immigration status May 2017

Available at http://www.parliament.scot/S5_Equal_Opps/Reports/EHRiC_3rd_Report_2017.pdf

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- IMPROVING LOCAL ADVICE
- SHELTER /ACCOMMODATION
 - Orchard & Shipman managed the £221 million Home Office contract to provide "safe, habitable homes" for asylum seekers in Scotland and Northern Ireland on behalf of international service company Serco since September, 2012. In 2016 SERCO took back control from O&S as complaints about O&S. A difficult set up.
- FOOD DISTRIBUTION – prioritise coordinate resourcing.
- LEGAL CASE WORKING (DASS project)

UK WIDE EFFORTS

- Asylum Matters – advocacy and local support “refugees welcome”
Website under construction – but currently hosted by <https://cityofsanctuary.org/2017/04/20/city-of-sanctuary-hosts-new-advocacy-and-campaigns-project-asylum-matters/>
- NACCOM (supporting networks in Sheffield, Bristol, Birmingham, Bradford, Merseyside, London, Nottingham, Glasgow – for asylum seekers with no accommodation)
- MANCHESTER Boaz Trust
- NOTTINGHAM
Nottingham and Notts Refugee Forum, HOST Nottingham, Nottingham Arimathea Trust, British Red Cross
Documentary Films by Allan Njanji:
 - Destitution Story
 - 10th anniversary Arimathea Trust
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KPBsKf0dLI&t=232s>