

Destitution Project Impact Report July - Sept 2022

Food Support: parcels Destitute Asylum Seekers (DAS): 36 Asylum Seekers: 315	Food support financial: £8000 Emergency funding: medical, essential travel, accommodation, cash support £56.31
Casework sessions Face to face: 40 Remote: 137 New Service Users registered: 0 "Walk in": 54	Drop in Attendance Total: 558 Average: 47

Agencies that Destitution Project (DP) has connected with:

Probation Services (supporting asylum seekers on probation)
 Asian Elders Resource - donations
 Manchester Refugee Action
 Bernardos therapy/counselling services
 Various immigration solicitors in Bolton, GM, Birmingham, London and around the UK based on SU needs; Bolton and GM mental health providers and GPs
 Bolton Unemployment Advice Services

Key learning to take forward

With the first flight to Rwanda taking place on 5th Sept there is still concern within our Service User (SU) community about deportation.

Recently we have been contacted by the Probation Service for guidance on supporting their clients who are asylum seekers. Welcoming them to Drop in has entailed putting further safeguarding measures in place and spending time informing Probation Officers about the asylum process.

The Home Office (HO) has ruled that asylum seekers who have been waiting for longer than 12 months for a decision through no fault of their own are entitled to work, but only in jobs on the 'shortage occupation' list. Some of our SUs have been enquiring about this, not understanding that it only applies to shortage occupations and often requires UK certification/qualifications. Explaining the complexity of this is time consuming for Casework.

Procedural problems DP has experienced at the Home Office e.g.: they claim deadlines have not been met (when in fact they did receive but not checked/acknowledged our correspondence). This has entailed resending of docs with proof of date sent etc; regarding arranging accommodation, mistakes have been made with times and addresses resulting in SUs not being picked up. Also, on occasion, SUs have been housed in remote areas where they cannot easily access food etc so Casework have needed to arrange support. A complaint has been made.

Over the period the DAS (Destitute Asylum Seekers) reduced to three, which is positive. This is because Casework has been able to open fresh claims.

O is Kurdish from Iraq and has been our service user since 2016. He has been in and out of destitution and we have supported him with fresh claims during that time. In July he finally got leave to remain. DP has supported him with casework help and with food parcels and activities at the Drop in.

O is from Nigeria and has 4 children. She started accessing DP in 2015; the family's asylum case was refused and her two eldest sons were detained by Home Office for deportation as they were over 18 years old. The sons managed to do a fresh claim, were released and received leave to remain. However the mother and her two children were refused. Later she was able to put in a fresh claim and, after 6 years, she and her two young children were granted leave to remain.