

## Destitution Project Impact Report April - June 2023

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| <b>Food Support: parcels</b><br>Destitute Asylum Seekers (DAS) 9<br>incl unregistered DAS:<br>Asylum Seekers: <b>462</b>                                            | <b>Food support financial: £5416</b><br><br>Emergency funding: medical, essential travel, accommodation, cash support |
| <b>Casework sessions</b><br>Face to face: <b>30</b><br>Remote: <b>157</b><br>Walk-in: <b>33</b><br>New Service Users registered: <b>2</b><br>Files closed: <b>1</b> | <b>Drop in Attendance</b><br>Total: <b>659</b><br>Average: <b>51</b>                                                  |

**Agencies that Destitution Project (DP) has connected with:**  
SWAP (Supporting Arrivals in Wigan Project), Rainbow Haven, NACCOM, Refugee Action, Red Cross, Migrant Help, Bolton SERCO Housing' Mental Help Support workers, Solicitors

### Key learning to take forward

Due to the cost of living increase we still receiving fewer donations and are having to buy more of our staples to make up the difference so the impact is twofold. This, combined with the increase in demand (first evident in the last quarter and continuing), has meant that we have had to reduce the value of the food parcel by giving out less. Whereas a food parcel used to be valued at about £20 it is now valued at £11.50.

New HO rules mean five countries, Eritrea, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya and Yemen will no longer have a face-to-face interview with the HO. Instead, they will receive a 50 page complex questionnaire which their solicitors will fill out. Currently these questions are not available in these five languages and many people do not have a solicitor on legal aid (due to the shortage of legal aid), which means they will not meet the deadline to fill out the complex questionnaires. Frontline caseworkers can request the deadline to be extended. Shaheda has been asked by some solicitors to check questionnaires before they send them in to identify if key information is included and accurate. This promotes the likelihood of a good outcome but creates additional workload

Lots of our SUs have been refused for a first or second time so time is being spent on appeals.

Lack of access to VH's CCTV footage continues to be problematic because can no longer get a facial image of SUs about whom we have concerns (in some cases barred). A suggestion is to take our own images but at the moment we do not have capacity to carry that out safely and consistently.

Increasingly we are accommodating families with school age children who have not been given a school place or not been able to take up one offered eg. because of cost of travel.

Some new Service users have been bringing friends from out of the area. Whereas these were once accommodated as visitors, confusions over access to our services have meant we now signpost to service providers in their own area where possible.

## Case studies

B is from Kazakhstan;. She came to the UK and married a Sudanese refugee. Her issue is on whether she should apply for Leave to Remain in her own right or whether her husband should apply for a spouse visa. This is an ongoing case requiring support and mentoring since B suffers from depression and is also receiving mental health services; DP has been assisting with her case since August 2019 and is currently waiting for a court appeal date.

V is from Algeria and has been in the UK for 10 years without receiving Leave to Remain. Currently he is still being accommodated by the Home Office in a SERCO house due to his medical condition. DP is currently supporting him with submitting a fresh claim.

X is a Korean refugee who received casework support from DP when she was an asylum seeker. She has a history of schizophrenia and was getting medical help/medication. DP was contacted by a member of the public who met her when she became homeless and was suffering symptoms of schizophrenia, to see if we could assist her as she had lost her house and benefits. We provided advice on how to get urgent medical attention and, once settled on medication, how to reestablish her housing, benefits and how to link with a mental health support.

Initials of Service Users' names have been changed.