



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan

January 2019



Jane Hutt
Deputy Minister and Chief Whip

Refugees and asylum seekers often arrive in Wales following traumatic experiences in their countries of origin and on their journeys to the UK. We want to ensure that these individuals are supported to rebuild their lives and make a full contribution to Welsh society.

We believe that the skills, experience and resilience of refugees and asylum seekers are useful to Wales and their inclusion will enhance our communities. Many communities across Wales have seen this for themselves, particularly since the inception of the Syrian Resettlement Programme and the related Community Sponsorship Programme.

I am proud of the response that Welsh communities and public authorities have made since our last Refugee and Asylum Seeker plan was published in 2016. I want to ensure we maintain this momentum and ensure support is available to asylum seekers, as well as those arriving under resettlement schemes.

The UK Government is responsible for asylum policy, which includes asylum application decision making, the provision of support and accommodation for asylum seekers, and the operation of refugee resettlement schemes. Therefore, many of the challenges experienced by these communities cannot be fully resolved without policy changes by the UK Government.

In particular, the Welsh Government believes that improvements need to be made to the standard of accommodation for asylum seekers, the financial support asylum seekers receive and the funding provided to Welsh public services to support integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Wales, regardless of their route to the UK. Although we will continue to work with the UK Government on these matters as far as possible, we have to accept that we cannot control their decisions. The proposed actions in this plan cannot contravene UK Government legislative rules relating to refugees and asylum seekers.

However, this plan focuses on proposals within the devolved areas which the Welsh Government can influence. The *'Nation of Sanctuary'* plan outlines the breadth of work which the Welsh Government is undertaking across Wales to ensure inequalities experienced by these communities are reduced, access to opportunities increased, and relations between these communities and wider society improved.

Whilst the plan includes many cross-Government actions, we will particularly prioritise key issues which have been highlighted by refugees and asylum seekers during the development of this plan and in response to the National Assembly's Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee Inquiry in 2017.

These include ensuring:

- » Refugees and asylum seekers can access health services (including mental health services) which they require throughout the 'asylum journey'. This includes health assessments on arrival and during the dispersal and post-trauma phases.
- » Refugees and asylum seekers are provided with the information and advice they need to begin to integrate into Welsh society from day one.
- » Asylum seekers are not prevented from accessing appropriate Welsh Government schemes which would support their integration.

- » New refugees and asylum seekers are less likely to fall into destitution.
- » All refugees and asylum seekers (particularly unaccompanied asylum seeking children) are properly safeguarded and can access advocacy support.
- » Refugees and asylum seekers can access educational opportunities, including language skills, to help them rebuild their lives and fulfil their potential.

The plan covers a wide breadth of commitments which could improve outcomes for these newly arrived members of our communities. However, I see this plan as a major milestone on a longer journey which will drive us towards becoming a true nation of sanctuary. Additional actions in other areas of policy may be needed to get us there and we will continue to build on the commitments in this plan through our work with people seeking sanctuary, Welsh communities and other key stakeholders.

I am grateful to the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee for their recommendations, the 120 refugees and asylum seekers who volunteered their time to Welsh Government officials, the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership and Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh Refugee Coalition and other stakeholders who have all helped to shape this plan including the respondents who shared their views on the draft version during the consultation process.

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

It is a privilege to introduce the *Nation of Sanctuary* Plan, a document deeply rooted in the values that we at UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, believe are essential to a humane and yet pragmatic approach to the reception of refugees and asylum-seekers.

As the rhetoric against asylum-seekers and refugees (and many categories of “others” as well) is translating into restrictive and discriminatory practices in some countries, it is refreshing to read a plan that is so thoroughly infused with a recognition of the need for inclusion and participation, and a desire to mitigate, as much as possible, the many hardships that those who seek asylum unavoidably face.

The desire for a comprehensive approach and the imperative to look at the various aspects of the refugee experience, identifying different needs and gaps along the journey from arrival to full integration, and understanding the ways these often reinforce and magnify each other, represent best practice. Achieving human wellbeing is complex, and can require support with a range of issues including mental health, physical health, housing, access and ability to study, to work, to find a place in a new community. These cannot be addressed in isolation. Nor can they be addressed through a “cookie cutter” approach. And, here, I would particularly commend the Welsh Government for its person-centric approach.

The Plan also addresses the other side of the coin, one that seems to us extremely important. Welcoming refugees is not just good for the refugees, it brings positives to all. When refugees become integral parts of the receiving community, they contribute to dialogue, and to social and economic life. It really can become a win-win. For this reason, inclusion and participation are among the principles that inspire the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), a landmark international commitment to address forced displacement in ways that comprehensively support refugees and host communities to the benefit of both. The GCR is not legally binding but is founded in existing refugee and human rights law, and, importantly, a strong dose of common sense.

The GCR also places a great importance on solutions, not least among them resettlement to a third country. The number of refugees in need of resettlement has increased in recent years, along with the growth in the number of those forced to flee. Conversely, resettlement places available have been dwindling. In light of this, Wales’ unwavering commitment to the programme, alongside the other governments of the UK, is particularly significant. Resettlement saves and rebuilds lives, and is an important expression of solidarity towards those countries which, by dint of their geography, end up receiving the largest number of refugees.

To ensure that it can be realized, Wales’ ambition to become a *Nation of Sanctuary* deserves the active support of all: local authorities, civil society, citizens, businesses and the UK Government. In offering UNHCR’s full backing, I would like to encourage all of those partners to join this commendable effort, and to be part of its success.

Rossella Pagliuchi-Lor,
UNHCR Representative to the UK

Equality and Human Rights are central to the work of the Welsh Government and our vision for Wales. We believe in fair treatment of every person, especially those who are most marginalised by social systems that prevent people from meeting their basic needs. We work to ensure a fairer future which enables equitable access to services and human needs to support every individual to thrive.

Human rights are embedded throughout the actions of the Welsh Government. We work closely with the UK Government and other devolved administrations to ensure we fulfil our international obligations and comply with the seven United Nations Conventions signed and ratified by the UK. The UN Convention on the Rights of a Child is enshrined in Welsh law through the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

Responsibility for asylum and immigration rests with the UK Government rather than the Welsh Government. This means that some of the key levers to prevent harmful outcomes, such as timely and good asylum case decision-making, the quality of asylum accommodation and provision of legal aid, are out of our control. However, the successful integration of refugees and asylum seekers will

require concerted effort on the part of the Welsh Government, Welsh public services and Welsh communities.

In this plan we frequently refer to 'asylum seekers' and 'refugees'. These terms have precise meaning and relate to the immigration status of individuals. An **asylum seeker** is a person fleeing persecution in his or her homeland, has arrived in another country, made themselves known to the authorities and has exercised their legal right to apply for asylum. These individuals will be awaiting the outcome of their asylum claim.

Under the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, a **refugee** is 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 to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."*

The UK Government recognises an asylum seeker as a refugee when they satisfy the above definition. Within this plan, the term 'refugee' also includes individuals not recognised as refugees, but who have been granted indefinite leave to remain, offered humanitarian protection, or provided with discretionary leave following their asylum claim.

We also use the phrase '**people seeking sanctuary**' in this document as an umbrella term to refer to refugees or asylum seekers from any background. This is to combat the dehumanising rhetoric which can occur when referring to people by the immigration status which they have been assigned. We must recognise that these members of our communities are people first and foremost, and though their immigration status does confer important rights and obligations, it should not be considered more important than ensuring individual well-being and protection is secured.

Each of the actions in the Welsh Government's *Nation of Sanctuary* plan aligns to the themes and priorities of Prosperity for All: the National Strategy for Wales and, in turn the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, in particular 'a more equal Wales', 'a Wales of cohesive communities' and 'a globally responsible Wales'. The actions are also closely linked to our Strategic Equality Plan 2016-20.

The five ways of working set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 underpin our approach to tackling inequality and ensuring a fairer Wales. We are working alongside, and listening to the voices of, those who have the lived experience of inequality and disadvantage and doing things with them rather than to

them and for them. That includes involving the people who will be affected by our plans in every stage of their development. This is an important example of how we are implementing the Act.

This plan has been developed through the close **involvement** of refugees and asylum seekers themselves, organisations which support them, and a range of key public bodies whose work directly impacts on our aim for individuals to rebuild their lives and reach their full potential in Wales.

The Welsh Government firmly believes that the **integration** of refugees and asylum seekers should begin on day one of their arrival. This approach is key to ensuring we support the best possible outcomes for individuals and communities.

The actions in this plan are intended to provide holistic support to individuals and communities in Wales. For example, supporting refugee volunteering schemes would contribute to Welsh society, whilst also supporting language acquisition, mental health and the employability of individuals. As such, actions in this plan will be mutually reinforcing.

In developing these actions we have sought to **prevent** the most harmful problems experienced by refugees and asylum seekers in Wales. These include homelessness, mental health conditions, poor accommodation and the risk of

destitution. We have already made some encouraging progress in some of these areas but there is much work still to be done to improve outcomes.

This plan seeks to set Welsh Government policy direction relating to these communities until the end of this Assembly term. Therefore, it forms an important part of a **long-term** aim for Wales to be a true *Nation of Sanctuary* for refugees and asylum seekers.

This aim is reflected in the name of this plan and we encourage other organisations (Public or Private) to also consider what actions they can take and work **collaboratively** with the Welsh Government to support the concept of Wales as a *Nation of Sanctuary*.

Refugees and asylum seekers often experience similar issues upon arrival in Wales but they are drawn from many different cultures and countries of origin. The Welsh Government promotes a **person-centred approach** which ensures that individuals are supported to achieve integration, regardless of their background or circumstances. This should prevent 'one-size-fits-all' approaches which can leave some communities behind.

We also encourage Welsh communities and organisations to recognise the assets which refugees and asylum seekers already possess, as they will often be the experts

by experience or offer skills which our society needs. For example, the Welsh Government-funded Wales Asylum Seeking and Refugee Doctors (WARD) Group, has been supporting refugee doctors to have their existing medical qualifications recognised and find employment in the NHS for 15 years. This scheme is estimated to have saved taxpayers at least £25m over that time, empowered refugees to utilise their skills to 'give back' to Wales and saved countless lives in the process. We recognise that cultural exchange and learning is a two-way process, and that people from different backgrounds have much to share and learn from each other.

Welsh communities already provide an inspiring welcome to many refugees and asylum seekers, exemplified by the 'Refugees Welcome' campaign and the growth of Community Sponsorship organisations. The frequent thanks and praise given by newly-resettled refugees themselves are testament to the warmth of our communities. We want to build on this goodwill through more opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to meet with existing Welsh residents and promote good relations and community cohesion.

Four areas in Wales – Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham – have supported asylum seekers and refugees for many years, but Welsh communities now have new opportunities to engage with these

individuals, due to the encouraging efforts of Welsh local authorities who have all participated in the Syrian Resettlement Programme. This commitment shows the type of country we wish to be. We expect Wales to continue to play a full role in refugee resettlement programmes over the coming years.

We know refugees and asylum seekers face considerable challenges upon their arrival in the UK but much of the evidence which would help us to ensure we best target support is not yet collected. As a result, creating measurable actions is very difficult. Therefore, we will establish an evidence group to improve data collection and sharing with those who are best placed to support these people.

This plan represents an important step towards making Wales a *Nation of Sanctuary* but we will need the support and engagement of key stakeholders, such as the UK Government, Welsh local authorities, the Welsh Refugee Coalition, Welsh communities and people seeking sanctuary to ensure that this plan leads to positive change. We will continue to work with these partners to make this a reality.

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>1. Ensure refugees are supported to transition from asylum accommodation to sustainable accommodation.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fund support for new refugees to transition to new accommodation and access services during the 'Move On' period. (The 'Refugee Well Housing' project delivered by the Welsh Refugee Council is currently funded to deliver this support). » Seek to influence the UK Government's Asylum Accommodation and Support Services Contract (AASC) and Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) processes to ensure the new contracts for asylum accommodation (beyond 2019) support new refugees in the 'Move On' period. » Ensure that forthcoming AIRE providers have knowledge of Welsh legislation including the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, the Housing (Wales) Act 2014, and the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. » Work with the four dispersal areas to ensure their Homelessness Prevention Strategies take account of the vulnerability of new refugees to homelessness. » Explore opportunities to reduce refugee homelessness by working with Registered Social Landlords, local authorities, credit unions and others to identify clearer pathways into accommodation during the 'Move On' period. 	<p>Welsh Government – Housing Division Communities Division</p>	<p>Prosperity for All objective ('PFA Obj.') 5; 10</p> <p>Strategic Equality Plan objective ('SEP obj.') 1; 7</p> <p>Prosperity for All – Priority Area – Housing</p>

Actions

- » Ensure Rent Smart Wales landlords' training includes an explanation of the Right to Rent checks and how to easily check the status of refugees to prevent discrimination (once the rollout date is known).
- » Work with local authorities and others to ensure the Supporting People programme, and the Housing Support Grant from 2019, supports those refugees who are eligible, to maintain their accommodation.

2. Promote good quality asylum accommodation provided by the UK Government.

Welsh Government will:

- » Work with the UK Government, Wales Strategic Migration Partnership and other key stakeholders to support an orderly and effective transition to the new asylum accommodation and support contracts from 2019 onwards.
- » Identify opportunities during the mobilisation and transition period to seek improvements to the Statement of Requirements under the new asylum accommodation and support contracts.
- » Monitor the implementation of the new asylum accommodation and support contracts through regular engagement with the providers, Home Office and other partners to ensure asylum seekers can access good quality accommodation and services.

Organisation

Welsh Government –
Communities Division

Link to Objectives

PFA Obj. 6
SEP Obj. 1
Prosperity for All – Priority Area – Housing

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>3. Support asylum seeker tenants to advocate for improvements to their accommodation.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fund advocacy forums in the four current dispersal areas in Wales (Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham) through the Welsh Government-funded Asylum Rights Programme until 2020 to ensure asylum seekers can discuss issues with their accommodation and other topics chosen by participants. » Work with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership to ensure regular meetings between the asylum accommodation provider, the third sector and asylum seekers, continues under the new AIRE and AASC contracts. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 6 SEP Obj. 2 Prosperity for All – Priority Area – Housing</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>4. Support the employability of refugees.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Develop and implement the £2m 'ReStart: Refugee Integration' project which will provide holistic support to refugees to enable them to have their needs assessed, access training or help to reduce barriers to employability and increase opportunities to enter the labour market. » Ensure the principles of equality and fairness, central to Welsh Government's 'Employability Plan' include consideration of the needs of refugees to get them into sustainable jobs. » Ensure Welsh Government funded Working Wales, Employment Advice Gateway and other employability programmes promote their services directly to refugees and amend data capture processes to identify positive examples of how the programmes have been able to support those eligible from within this community on a regular basis. » Work with the Welsh Refugee Coalition, the Welsh Strategic Migration Partnership, Business Wales, Department for Work and Pensions and employers to identify and remove barriers to refugee employment, through the ReStart project and other initiatives. » From 2019 onwards, seek to implement the recommendations of the Welsh Government-commissioned research on the employability of refugees undertaken by the People and Work Unit, through the ReStart project, other Welsh Government employability initiatives and work with other stakeholders. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division Further Education & Apprenticeships Division Employability and EU Funding Division WEFO</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 1;9 SEP Obj. 1; 3 Prosperity for All – Priority Area – Skills & Employability</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales is promoted to refugees and asylum seekers and service providers during 2019 to assist with the recognition of qualifications. » Ensure Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) continues to support asylum seeking and refugee doctors through initiatives such as the Wales Asylum Seeking and Refugee Doctors (WARD) Group which helps refugee doctors to meet professional qualifications to support the NHS. 		
<p>5. Work with Business Wales to support refugees to establish their own businesses.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provide face-to-face workshops and the Business Wales helpline to ensure refugees have access to business advice, information and links to investment opportunities, including through the provision of translation services (if required) through the Participation Fund. » Consider the specific needs of refugees in the development of the new Community Based Entrepreneurship Scheme. » Encourage existing refugee entrepreneurs to act as mentors for new-start refugee businesses. » Work with the Welsh Refugee Coalition to ensure Business Wales services are promoted effectively to refugees. » Ensure refugee women, in particular, are encouraged to consider entrepreneurship opportunities. 	<p>Welsh Government – Business Wales</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 1 SEP Obj. 3; 7</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>6. Promote financial inclusion for refugees and asylum seekers to avoid destitution, reduce or mitigate the impacts of poverty and improve living conditions for those on low incomes.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to monitor and seek to mitigate the worst effects of UK Government welfare reforms, as far as possible, to identify barriers for refugees and potential solutions. » Promote exceptional claims process to enable people seeking sanctuary to access the Discretionary Assistance Fund prior to receiving National Insurance numbers. » Raise awareness of the Financial Inclusion Strategy and Delivery Plan to ensure refugees are able to benefit from Credit Unions, the Discretionary Assistance Fund, debt advice and money guidance, and other services. » Continue to work with the Welsh Refugee Coalition and Wales Strategic Migration Partnership to map the availability of support for destitute refugees and asylum seekers and implement options to improve support during 2019. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 10 SEP Obj. 2; 7</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>7. Promote the Welsh Government as a place for refugees (subject to nationality rules)¹ to work. The Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Plan objective for 2016-20 sets the organisation the aim of being an exemplar of diversity and inclusion by 2020.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Improve the current placement and outreach programme to broaden the appeal of the Welsh Government as an employer, demonstrating fairness, openness and transparency to allow as many people as possible the chance to apply. » Ensure the outreach programme includes engagement with all protected characteristics; this includes refugee support organisations to make sure individuals within refugee communities (who are eligible as per the Civil Service Nationality rules) have the opportunity to apply for work experience or for a placement/internship, giving the opportunity to see what working in the organisation might be like. 	<p>Welsh Government – HR Expert Services Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 8 SEP Obj. 3; 8</p>

¹ 'Civil Service Nationality Rules': https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/536134/civil_service-nationality_rules_20_june__2016.pdf

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>8. Support survivors of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV).</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Revisit the recommendations of the 'Uncharted Territory: Violence against migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women in Wales'² report to ascertain the actions which the Welsh Government could take during 2019. » Work with stakeholders to develop a sustainable model for the provision of funding to specialist VAWDASV services, including those working with asylum seekers and refugees to ensure reliable support. » Ensure the needs of asylum seekers and refugees are considered within the national VAWDASV communications framework (The overarching theme for our campaign during 2018-20 will be control and will include those from diverse communities such as refugees and asylum seekers). » Directly engage with BME survivors of VAWDASV, including asylum seekers and refugees, via the development of National Survivor Engagement Mechanisms in 2019. » Take forward a pilot in 2019 for a national survivor engagement panel, which will be developed following further engagement with survivors of VAWDASV including BME and refugee and asylum seeking. » Give further consideration to whether the VAWDASV National Training Framework sufficiently addresses the circumstances of refugees and asylum seekers. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 10 SEP Obj. 4</p>

² 'Uncharted Territory: Violence against migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women in Wales': <http://www.wmp.org.uk/documents/wsmf/WSMP%20Info/Uncharted%20territory%20violence%20against%20migrant%20refugee%20and%20asylum%20seeking%20women%20in%20Wales.pdf>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Roll out VAWDASV 'Ask and Act' training to front-line professionals. This training includes information on difficulties faced by BME communities, including refugees and asylum seekers. » Provide advice and support through the 24 hour, 365 days a year Live Fear Free Helpline, which incorporates 'Language Line' support. 		
<p>9. Work towards preventing people seeking sanctuary, including those with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), becoming human trafficking or modern slavery victims.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to raise concerns regarding the vulnerability of people seeking sanctuary to exploitation with the UK Government. » Continue to deliver training across Wales with the aim of improving awareness of modern slavery, including those working with asylum seekers and refugees. » Ensure future funding awards to organisations comply with the 'Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains'³ to combat modern slavery and ensure workers are treated fairly. 	<p>Welsh Government – Community Safety Division Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 10 SEP Obj. 4</p>

³ 'Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains': <https://gov.wales/docs/dpsp/publications/valuwales/170502-ethical-en.pdf>

Actions

1. Ensure the health needs of refugees and asylum seekers are assessed and the results are fed into service planning.

Welsh Government will:

- » Work with health boards to ensure services are able to meet the healthcare needs of new arrivals and throughout the asylum and resettlement processes in Wales.
- » Instruct Local Health Boards to complete assessments of refugee and asylum seeker health, and proposed service changes.

2. Ensure barriers to healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers are reduced.

Welsh Government will:

- » Maintain free healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers, including those who have No Recourse to Public Funds.
- » Publish Healthcare practitioners policy guidance to support practitioners to deliver more accessible services.

Organisation

Welsh Government –
Mental Health & Vulnerable
Groups Division
Local Health Boards and Trusts

Welsh Government –
Mental Health & Vulnerable
Groups Division
Communities Division
Local Health Boards and Trusts
NHS Centre for Equality and
Human Rights

Link to Objectives

Prosperity for
All objective
(PFA Obj.) 5; 6
Strategic
Equality Plan
objective
(SEP obj.) 1
Prosperity for
All – Priority
Area –
Housing

PFA Obj. 4; 5
SEP Obj. 1; 6

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure health boards make available awareness training for staff by supporting Public Health Wales in the promotion and dissemination of a new e-learning module on refugees, asylum seekers and health, which will be made available to all NHS staff by March 2020. » Work with the UK Government to ensure asylum seekers in Initial Accommodation are encouraged to attend health screenings and receive support with registering for primary healthcare services when they are dispersed to other accommodation. 		
<p>3. Establish mechanisms to promote sharing of good practice for the improved health outcomes of refugee and asylum seeker communities.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work with Health Boards and Public Health Wales to ensure access to a range of accessible health promotion materials by 2019. » Work with Health Boards to ensure the needs of refugees and asylum seekers are kept under review and services meet needs effectively by reviewing Welsh Government Healthcare policy guidance by December 2020. 	<p>Welsh Government – Mental Health & Vulnerable Groups Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 4; 5 SEP Obj. 1</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>4. Create the conditions for every child from these backgrounds to have a healthy start in life.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to work with Public Health Wales and Health Boards to ensure refugees and asylum seekers can access vaccinations and other aspects of the Healthy Child Wales Programme (HCWP). » Continue to consider the specific circumstances of refugee and asylum seeker children in relation to work looking at Adverse Childhood Experiences. » Work with health boards and other partners to ensure Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services are able to meet the needs of young people seeking sanctuary. 	<p>Welsh Government – Major Health Conditions Division</p> <p>Mental Health & Vulnerable Groups Division</p> <p>Communities Division</p> <p>Local Health Boards and Trusts</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 4; 5; 7</p>
<p>5. Reduce the prevalence of mental health conditions experienced by refugees and asylum seekers and support more effective diagnosis and treatment.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work with the Welsh Refugee Coalition and other partners to develop volunteer and mentoring schemes which combat isolation and depression for those living in dispersed accommodation. » Work with health boards and other partners to ensure mental health services are able to meet the needs of refugees and asylum seekers in a timely and effective manner by reviewing the Mental Health Care Pathway and associated guidance by December 2020. 	<p>Welsh Government – Mental Health & Vulnerable Groups Division</p> <p>Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 4; 5</p> <p>Prosperity for All – Priority Area – Mental Health</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>» Consider the feasibility of developing an all-Wales Traumatic Stress service, which includes consideration to the support we provide to refugees and asylum seekers.</p> <p>6. Support refugee and asylum seeker participation in sport and physical activity.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <p>» Work with Sports Wales Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Inclusion project to ensure refugee and asylum seeker participation.</p>	<p>Welsh Government – Sports Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>1. Ensure access to independent counselling services for refugee and asylum seeking children.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Update the Counselling Operating Toolkit by Summer 2019, to highlight that refugee and asylum seeking children/young people are more likely to have been through particularly traumatic experiences. » Establish a working group to improve counselling data recording, including consideration of children from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds. 	<p>Welsh Government – Support for Learners Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 7 SEP Obj. 4</p>
<p>2. Support and challenge Local Authorities and regional education consortia on actions they are taking directly, and through support to schools, to improve educational outcomes for all learners.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Use our existing mechanisms, including our review and challenge programme and our engagement with the Association of Directions of Education in Wales (ADEW) and regional education consortia. » Work with ADEW to ensure 'Good Practice' sharing is included as a standing agenda item of discussion at the Minority Ethnic Achievement Local Authority Forum. 	<p>Welsh Government – Education Business Planning & Governance ADEW</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 7; 9 SEP Obj. 3</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>3. Explore ways to raise take-up rates of the Foundation Phase early education entitlement by refugee and asylum seeking families.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Encourage increased take-up rates of the Foundation Phase early education entitlement by asylum seeker and refugee families. » Explore ways of promoting the Childcare Offer amongst eligible refugee working families. 	<p>Welsh Government – Curriculum, Assessment and Pedagogy</p> <p>Local authorities and their regional consortia</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 7</p> <p>SEP Obj. 7</p>
<p>4. Support engagement by refugee and asylum seeker families in Flying Start programmes to give children the best start in life.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work with organisations who are engaged with these families to ensure support can be provided within eligible Flying Start areas and in ways which are culturally appropriate. » Ensure local authorities are aware that Flying Start Outreach can be used to target the children of specific communities of interest found in their local authority, even if this is outside the Flying Start areas. 	<p>Welsh Government – Children and Families Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 7</p> <p>SEP Obj. 7</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>5. Promote Essential Skills for refugees and asylum seekers to improve employability prospects, social cohesion and school attainment levels for children (Essential Skills, English for Speakers of Other Languages and Digital Literacy remain the key priorities for adult learning provision in Wales).</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Promote English for Speakers of Other Languages in line with our 2018 policy. » Rollout the development of ESOL Hubs through the 'ReStart: Refugee Integration' project during 2019 to ensure coverage across all four dispersal areas (Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham) following the success of the Cardiff pilot. ESOL Hubs will improve collaboration between ESOL providers in the four dispersal areas, as well as supporting more appropriate placement of students to aid ESOL progression. » Ensure quicker and more consistent assessment of ESOL needs and increase availability of ESOL provision for refugees via the Restart project until the end of 2020. Access to ESOL for refugees will also be improved through a dedicated 'Barriers Fund' as part of the ReStart project. Barriers to be addressed may include childcare or transport arrangements, or other factors where personal circumstances prevent attendance at courses. » Work with Digital Communities Wales until 30 June 2019 to identify and provide support to organisations which can help digitally excluded refugees and asylum seekers to improve their lives by engaging with technology. A successor programme will be procured to commence on 1 July 2019. 	<p>Welsh Government – FE & Apprenticeships Division Communities Division Prosperous Futures Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 7; 9; 10 SEP Obj. 3</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>6. Ensure refugees and asylum seekers are made aware of and are able to access support services provided through the Families First programme.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure local authorities are implementing the revised Families First Programme Guidance which requires them to consider the needs of refugee and asylum seeker families as they plan and deliver services. » Guidance also requires local authorities to make links with organisations working with refugee and asylum seeker families to ensure they are aware of the programme and the support it can provide. 	<p>Welsh Government – Children and Families Division Local authorities</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 7 SEP Obj. 7</p>
<p>7. Promote awareness of apprenticeship opportunities with refugees to enable increased employment and learning opportunities.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work with the equality champion, hosted by the National Training Federation for Wales, to improve access to apprenticeships. » Develop greater understanding across the Work Based Learning provider network of the barriers that face refugees through the NTFW Equality Champion’s Equality and Diversity Group meetings and create opportunities for partnership working. » Raise awareness of the Apprenticeship programme within refugee groups by engaging with the Welsh Refugee Coalition. 	<p>Welsh Government – Further Education and Apprenticeships Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 1; 9 SEP Obj. 3</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>8. Tackle bullying in schools against refugee and asylum seeker children.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Seek to ensure that any views expressed by refugees and asylum seekers are considered as part of the development of the anti-bullying guidance 'Respecting Others' during the consultation period. » Work with education practitioners, relevant authorities, children and young people to ensure the revised guidance has the maximum impact possible. 	<p>Welsh Government – Support for Learners</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5 SEP Obj. 4</p>
<p>9. Increase opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to access further and higher education.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure Further Education and Higher Education institutions provide information, advice and guidance to support the application process and financial support available. » Work towards changes to the Education Maintenance Allowance and Financial Contingency Fund to enable asylum seekers to be eligible from the September 2020 term. » Ensure refugees continue to be eligible for student support funding as 'home students' through Student Finance Wales, as well as exploring potential eligibility for asylum seekers. 	<p>Welsh Government – Higher Education and Delivery Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 7; 8; 9 SEP Obj. 1; 3</p>

Actions

- » Work with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), Universities and their partners to audit and publish practice on supporting refugees and asylum seekers.
- » Work with the Sanctuary in Higher Education group (Higher Education 'Widening Access' teams) to identify opportunities to increase the participation and retention of refugees and asylum seekers in Higher Education.

10. Support unaccompanied refugee and asylum seeking children to ensure they have access to the advice and advocacy they need.

Welsh Government will:

- » Provide funding to local authorities during 2019 to support a pilot measure in respect of Guardianship, building upon existing and ongoing advocacy support under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Independent Child Trafficking Advocacy service.
- » Continue to fund TGP Cymru until March 2020, through the Asylum Rights Programme, to provide advocacy support to asylum seeking children and young people.
- » Work with Third sector partners to gather the views of asylum seeking and refugee children, to help inform future working, including consultation with the TGP Cymru Participation Forum.
- » Raise awareness of children's rights through the promotion of the Children's Legal Centre Wales advice and information resources, our Sanctuary website and our work with TGP Cymru during 2019.

Organisation

Welsh Government –
HSS Social Services &
Integration Directorate
Communities Division

Link to Objectives

PFA Obj. 5; 7;
10
SEP Obj. 1; 2

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>11. Support local authorities to ensure unaccompanied refugee and asylum seeking children can be adequately looked after.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to provide funding to enable social workers to be appropriately trained on the age assessment process. » Review and republish the Age Assessment Toolkit to ensure it is fit-for-purpose by April 2019. » Continue to provide funding to train foster carers and social workers in a range of skills and knowledge to improve their capacity to deliver for refugee and asylum seeking children. » Publish a suite of Wales-specific information resources for practitioners working with asylum seeking and refugee children and for the children themselves during 2019. » Work with the All Wales Heads of Children's Services and the National Fostering Framework Strategic Steering Group to explore ways in which a pool of foster carers can be developed from refugee backgrounds. » Monitor and report on the risks of trafficking to looked after asylum seeking children. » Work with the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership to review and republish the All Wales Practice Guidance on Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children. 	<p>Welsh Government – Enabling People Division National Fostering Framework Strategic Steering Group All Wales Heads of Children's Services</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 7 SEP Obj. 1</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>12. Support local authorities to ensure their staff and partners are able to safeguard refugee and asylum seeking children and adults.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ensure safeguarding issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers are understood, through discussions with local authorities, the UK Government and at meetings of the Cross-Government Safeguarding Group. » Ensure that the ongoing review and development of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures takes account of the specific needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children, including in respect of children going missing and child sexual exploitation. » Ensure that the updated Wales Safeguarding Procedures are aware of and sensitive to the cultural differences of refugees and asylum seekers when dealing with child protection issues. 	<p>Welsh Government – Social Services & Integration Division</p>	

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>1. Provide cohesion support around the widening of dispersal areas and the resettlement of refugees.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to fund the work of the Community Cohesion Coordinators. » Support the effective implementation of refugee resettlement schemes in Wales. » Monitor community tension as new dispersal areas are proposed. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>Prosperity for All objective (PFA Obj.) 10 Strategic Equality Plan objective (SEP obj.) 6</p>
<p>2. Refugees and asylum seekers will be supported to report Hate Crime.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fund the All-Wales Hate Crime Support Service and Asylum Rights Programme until March 2020 to raise awareness of hate crime amongst refugees and asylum seekers and promote increased reporting. » Encourage opportunities for Police Community Support Officers/Liaison Officers to engage with refugees and asylum seekers to counter negative perceptions of the police which may arise from treatment in their countries of origin and build positive relationships. » Ensure refugees and asylum seekers are made aware of hate crime through the Sanctuary⁴ website from 2019 onwards. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 10 SEP Obj. 4; 6</p>

⁴ The Sanctuary website formerly had the working title of ‘Welcome to Wales’.

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>3. Foster good relations between refugees and asylum seekers and wider society.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to develop and implement a communications plan to promote equality and diversity during 2019-2020, that will emphasise the benefits of immigration to Welsh society and dispels myths and inaccuracies about refugees and asylum seekers. » Work with the media to promote more balanced reporting of refugees and asylum seekers during 2019-2020. » Ensure the Asylum Rights Programme will train community members to become 'Sanctuary Speakers' during 2019-2020. » Continue to convene the Asylum Seeker & Refugee Communications Group, including through seeking the views and Refugees and Asylum Seekers themselves. » Ensure the Asylum Rights Programme will develop activities and communication between refugees and asylum seekers and the wider community between 2019-2020. » Promote participation of all sections of society in Refugee Week each year. » Support the development of Community Sponsorship, and other community-led empowerment initiatives, to welcome, support and integrate refugees. » Work with Arts Council Wales to promote projects which foster good relations between refugees and asylum seekers and wider society. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division Asylum Rights Programme partners Arts Council Wales</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 10 SEP Obj. 6</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>4. Ensure the provision of high quality, accessible advice, information and advocacy services to enable refugees and asylum seekers to exercise their rights and make informed choices.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to fund the Asylum Rights Programme, via Welsh Government Equality and Inclusion programme funding, to provide advocacy and advice for refugees and asylum seekers. This includes general advice and advocacy, legal advice, support for survivors of violence or trafficking, and specialist support for children. » Promote awareness of rights for refugees and asylum seekers, including knowledge of Human Rights, Children’s Rights and this delivery plan. Knowledge of rights will be communicated to refugees and asylum seekers via the 7 partner organisations of the Asylum Rights Programme until 2020. » Review and update ‘Welcome to Wales’ through the new ‘Sanctuary’ website to ensure it addresses the needs of all refugees and asylum seekers, including information on rights and entitlements. We will also work with the UK Government to ensure the information is provided to people seeking sanctuary as soon as possible. » Ensure information provided to refugees and asylum seekers explains rights to make complaints and reassures individuals that complaints will not impact negatively on asylum claims or immigration status. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 5; 10 SEP Obj. 1; 2; 6</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Seek to identify gaps in advice and advocacy support (including legal advice) and interpretation services across Wales and work with partners to identify solutions to these gaps. » Ensure local authority front-line services are provided with training about non-UK nationals (including people seeking sanctuary) to ensure individuals are provided with services which they are eligible to receive. 		
<p>5. Support volunteering and mentoring initiatives, particularly for asylum seekers without the right to work.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work with the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), County Voluntary Councils and other partners to identify and promote opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to access volunteering opportunities to combat isolation, support more effective integration and informal language acquisition. » Support opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to share their language and culture with their local communities. » Encourage the greater use of asylum seekers and refugee mentors as the experts by experience to improve the integration of asylum seekers and new refugees, including through the 'ReStart: Refugee Integration' project. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 1; 8; 10 SEP Obj. 1</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<p>6. Provide coordination and leadership in relation to the resettlement and integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Wales.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue the Taskforce and Operations Board to consider the needs of all refugees and asylum seekers, as well as seeking to ensure the views of people seeking sanctuary are represented at these meetings. » Liaise closely with the UK Government about reserved policy matters, such as asylum accommodation and dispersal or changes to immigration policy, to ensure the needs of Wales-based people seeking sanctuary and Welsh public authorities are properly understood. » Work towards the aim of Wales becoming a 'Nation of Sanctuary' in collaboration with the Welsh Refugee Coalition. » Work with the UK Government and other partners to identify means of improving data capture and analysis relating to the needs and outcomes of refugees and asylum seekers in Wales. » Encourage local authorities to develop a common recording system to capture consistent data in relation to individuals with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) to enable better understanding of the impacts of UK Government immigration legislation and policies. » Continue to engage widely with all the key stakeholders involved in the resettlement and integration of refugees and asylum seekers, including commitment to consult people seeking sanctuary through Asylum Rights Programme 'Advocacy Forums', TGP Cymru 'National Participation Group' and through bespoke consultations. 	<p>Welsh Government – Communities Division</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 12 SEP Obj. 1; 6</p>

Actions	Organisation	Link to Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Continue to consider the needs of people seeking sanctuary, including through schemes such as Family Reunion and others. » Continue to promote Welsh values of welcoming those fleeing violence, persecution or war. » Establish an evidence group with key stakeholders to develop better datasets to understand the outcomes experienced by refugees and asylum seekers and assess ongoing efforts to reduce inequalities. 		
<p>7. Promote understanding of Welsh culture and heritage to refugees and asylum seekers.</p> <p>Welsh Government will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Maintain free access to the National Museum/Amgueddfa Cymru and promote this to refugees and asylum seekers. » Explore opportunities with Cadw to promote Welsh heritage to refugees and asylum seekers. » Promote the involvement of refugees and asylum seekers in the Welsh Government's Fusion: Creating Opportunities through Culture programme until 2020. » Ensure refugees and asylum seekers are included in opportunities to learn Welsh language. 	<p>Welsh Government – Museums, Archives and Libraries Division Arts Council Wales</p>	<p>PFA Obj. 10; 12 SEP Obj. 2</p>

Actions

- » Include section on Welsh culture on our Sanctuary website.
- » Ensure that Arts Council Wales 'Arts Portfolio Wales' clients include specific reference to refugees and asylum seekers in their equalities plans and then monitor the impact of this.

6. Endeavour to provide equal access to the internet for refugees and asylum seekers in Wales.

Welsh Government will:

- » Work with the UK Government and local authorities to ensure that people seeking sanctuary can access the internet, including through facilities in Initial Accommodation and raising awareness of facilities in public buildings, such as libraries.
- » Ensure our Sanctuary website provides embedded translation to increase accessibility.

Organisation

Welsh Government –
 Communities Division
 Museums, Archives and
 Libraries Division
 Local Authorities

Link to Objectives

PFA Obj. 11
 SEP Obj. 2