

No Recourse North East Partnership report to NESAF

2nd October 2024

1. I like to start with good news, and I may have some!

Best Start Foods scheme –for a month now, I have been in touch with Social Security Scotland to ask for written confirmation about the recent changes. The Scottish Government website has removed the wording that the child needs to be a UK citizen, and so it appears that *any* family with a status of NRPF can claim this support for children under 3 years old. However, there has been no promotion of this change and the guidance so far issued does not specifically include an explanation on this to make it clear that applicants would *not* be accessing any ‘*public fund for immigration purposes*’. As soon as we know for definite, we will of course let everyone know via our mailing lists and Partnership Update.

2. We held a **Full Partnership meeting** on 10th September and the key points raised were:

- **Public Health Scotland** are promoting new resources for people with NRPF. Their new publication aims to help health boards and health and social care partnerships improve the health and wellbeing of people subject to the immigration condition No Recourse to Public Funds. The publication explains what NRPF is, the impact it can have on people’s health and highlights some practical solutions that health boards and health and social care partnerships can implement to try to improve the health outcomes of people subject to the NRPF condition.

The publication is available here: [Right to healthcare for people with no recourse to public funds - Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)

- **E-visas** – A reminder that concerns are still high about an impending change due to the UKVI replacing physical documents with an online record of people’s immigration status by the end of 2024. Please see this page to receive the latest updates: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/online-immigration-status-evisa>

All biometric resident permits (BRP)s will expire on 31st December. We have still not heard which organisations will be supporting people locally to apply for this, so we anticipate a lot of work after the deadline to support people. GREC has had input and is looking to get training on e-visa help as soon as possible.

There is a government list of national organisations (who are receiving funding to do this work) and in Scotland this is Citizen’s Advice Scotland.

Supporting someone with this process is not immigration advice, so any organisation can support this. Action for people who only have ILR (indefinite leave to remain) stamped in their passports is slightly different, as they’ll need to request a BRP and then change to e-visa.

The Government have created videos to give more information on what an eVisa is. They explain:

- how to create a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account and access the eVisa

- how to travel with an eVisa
- how to prove immigration status with an eVisa

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-immigration-status-evisa-help-video>

At the moment, these are only available in English

The House of Commons Library **eVisas report** came out yesterday (1st October)

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10097/>

- For over a year **Just Right Scotland** has been implementing a **Hotel Rights Reps** project for people seeking asylum staying in hotels. This project aims to create a network of people seeking asylum that co-designs and participates in a series of sessions aiming to better inform people about their rights, entitlements, the asylum system, NRPF condition, etc. The idea is that a small number of people from different hotels connect and learn and then cascade this information to other people staying in the hotels with them. To date this has only been implemented in hotels in Glasgow. JRS is working with GREC who will implement this model of engagement as a pilot in the North East in October. A project co-ordinator has just been appointed.
 - Nour Halabi from Aberdeen University has been participating in the Third Sector New Scots meetings and mentioned that there is a change in the funding landscape and work done in partnership between LAs, academics and third sector. If there are interested partners, Nour is keen to explore this. For example, the Nuffield Foundation put out a Diversity Fund opportunity recently, in response to the recent far right riots: <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/news/new-racial-diversity-uk-programme-now-open>
3. The **NRPF and GBV** sub-group held a meeting on the 1st October and the main point of discussion (after we had covered eVisas again!) is how best to distribute the best information on rights of survivors of gender based abuse in the community. The relevant pages of the NRNE website are being updated and the aim is to have a poster with a QR code linking there ready for the 16 Days of Action Women's Wellbeing event on 26th November. The poster will also be made available in GP surgeries and both universities and other community spaces identified as appropriate. The Rights of Women charity has several useful resources including a new Immigration guide to *Indefinite leave for victims of domestic abuse*: <https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/immigration-asylum-law-information/>
 4. The next **NRPF and International Students sub-group** meeting will take place on 29th November. We have reduced the number of meetings per year to two, as there has been an indication that there is less pressure on services since the government policy change of no longer being allowed to bring family dependants on taught post graduate courses.

5. We have had several further meetings of our **Lived Experience of NRPF group** and these have been to work with **shmu** to create a video on the subject of lived experience of NRPF, ready for the Challenge Poverty Week event on the 11th October.

There are now seven members in the group, but we would welcome more - please email sbains@grec.co.uk for details.

6. **The NRPF and Asylum sub-group** had two further meetings.

Since the new government has been in office, the Rwanda plan has been scrapped, but as yet the immigration laws enacted over the last few years remain in place, so there is still uncertainty for everyone in the asylum system.

In July and August the far right violence seen in cities throughout the UK, as a response to the Southport tragedy, caused us to be on high alert. Although mainly in England, these riots also caused fear and anxiety to our asylum communities in Scotland.

GREC has been working closely with Grampian Police to liaise with all our communities in the City, and has not seen a marked increase in hate crime or prejudice/ discrimination incidents being reported in Aberdeen but has seen an increase in graffiti or stickers with hateful messages.

A reminder - **To report hate crime** you can either go directly to the Police or, if for any reason someone doesn't feel comfortable going to the Police, or wants to learn more about their options, you can also come to GREC or to any other third party reporting centre in Grampian: <https://grec.co.uk/hate-crime/>

Hate Crime Online Form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfXzZEeSETnGmdToCgq005LhcK_ddtw2f8dz5CElcN-wEFfXQ/viewform?c=0&w=1

Our group held a workshop on the 17th September to look at the New Scots Integration Strategy Delivery Plan (created by COSLA, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Refugee Council) in detail and map out a local framework in response.

The House of Commons Library report on **Asylum statistics** (10th September 2024) may be of interest: <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01403/>

7. **EUSS Updates** -

EUSS Clinics are still being run monthly with Iona, Vikki and Laura. The next one is **Saturday 26th October 2024** from 10am to 2pm. The venue for these clinics will be confirmed upon making an appointment, as Turning Point Scotland have now left their 27, Holburn Street premises. Please remember that these clinics are **by appointment only** - email EUSSreferralsaberdeen@outlook.com to make an appointment. Thank you.

8. **Free training** is still available to any groups within the city - updated sessions on *An introduction to NRPF and The Asylum process and NRPF*. Please contact Susan via email for any questions about the Partnership or to request free training on sbains@grec.co.uk or look at our website at nrnpartnership.org for more information.