

13th February 2025

1. Update from previous notes:

Best Start Foods scheme –the Scottish Child Payments Team has confirmed in writing that

“The condition that the child should be a British citizen was removed for any new claims made on or after 5 August 2024. So long as all the conditions are met an application can be made.

These payments **are not considered public funds** by the Home Office and any application will absolutely have no effect on the client’s immigration status.

We would encourage anyone who meets the conditions to make a claim”

2. We held a **Full Partnership meeting** on 3rd December and the key points raised were:

- **E-visas** – Flora Kovacs from GREC gave a presentation on what we know so far and the experience of helping clients at GREC with creating and accessing their e-visas. Out of 13 people helped, nine applications went smoothly but 4 people had problems including what the Home Office call ‘data entanglement’ – i.e. logging in to see other people’s information.

Due to problems like this, the Home office announced that all biometric resident permits (BRP)s will now be accepted until the end of March 2025.

We would be grateful if you could report any problems encountered here:

<https://www.evisa-problems.org.uk/>

as the organisation The 3Million is logging these to request and inform improvements.

Please see this page to receive the latest updates (and videos on how to create and access an e-visa): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/online-immigration-status-evisa>

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.

We would be grateful if you could report any problems encountered here:

<https://www.evisa-problems.org.uk/>

as the organisation The 3Million is logging these to request and inform improvements.

- The Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme (UPE) opened for applications on the 4th February and there is concern that applying to this may also cause problems for people due to the lack of detail from the Home office as to how the system will work.

- GREC has been pleased to welcome Tom Pizarro-Escuti who is the new project co-ordinator working with **Just Right Scotland** on the **Hotel Rights Reps** project for people seeking asylum staying in hotels. Susan has provided training for Tom on the Asylum process and where NRPF intersects with people's asylum journey.

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.

- Jacqui Coutts from Instant Neighbour gave a presentation about the charity and its experience of NRPF.

3. The **NRPF and GBA (gender based abuse)** sub-group are working to co-create a Protocol on Honour Based Abuse for the Grampian region, with collaboration from NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, the Domestic Abuse Teams from City and Shire Councils as well as representatives from Rape Crisis Grampian and Grampian Women's Aid.

Relevant pages of the NRNE website have been updated and a poster with a QR code linking there was 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, NESCOL and other community spaces identified as appropriate.

In a recent meeting of the international students sub-group, the NHS representative flagged a concern that increasing numbers of cases of female genital mutilation (FGM) are being encountered by midwives amongst women presenting as pregnant in Aberdeen City. Our GBA sub-group is looking into training opportunities so that we can also include FGM in the new protocol in an informed way.

4. The next **NRPF and International Students sub-group** meeting will take place on 21st February 2025. As mentioned above, there is concern around the increasing presentation of FGM cases amongst international students.

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

Since I last reported, the new Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill has gone to parliament and we are looking at those changes now. It proposes repealing the Safety of Rwanda Act 2024 and parts of the Illegal Migration Act 2023 are also to be repealed. More detail will follow when we know how the bill progresses.

Our group held a second workshop on the 28th January 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.

6. We have had several further meetings of our **Lived Experience of NRPF group** and we have worked with **shmu** to create a video on the subject of lived experience of NRPF, which was ready for the Challenge Poverty Week event on the 11th October. This can be seen here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFwgiHV00r4>

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

7. EUSS Updates -

EUSS Clinics are still being run monthly with Iona, Vikki and Laura.

The next one is **Saturday 8th March 2025** from 10am to 2pm. These clinics will be held at the Turning Point Scotland Office; 45-49 Holburn St. (*Please note the change of street number as they have moved office)

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.