



Lewes Organisation in Support of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Responding to the crisis in Afghanistan and supporting refugees in the Lewes area

Limited numbers of Afghans who have worked with UK military and other organisations are currently being admitted to the UK under the *Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)*. The Government has also committed to a further 20,000 over the next five years, but has not yet released details of the resettlement scheme or how it will work.

If you have friends or family still in Afghanistan, this is a really useful site for reliable information on possible options:

<https://www.gardencourtchambers.co.uk/news/arap-resettlement-and-family-reunion-factsheets-for-afghan-citizens-seeking-asylum-in-uk?fbclid=IwAR0IkueJcW6JVtnvi6CUcGDQovJmKZVOZOxmN5H-0IEPZrrCk770jDGz6g8>

Locally:

Lewes District Council, together with the other East Sussex Districts is participating in these programmes and some families will be housed locally as accommodation is found. LOSRAS has been working with the Council for five years now in supporting and welcoming Syrian families into our community and will continue this work with Afghan and other refugees.

Volunteering: We co-ordinate and support volunteers to work with families in the Lewes District. We especially welcome volunteers with previous relevant experience, or appropriate language skills, though neither is essential. If you would like to apply to become a volunteer please email Jane Andrew – janeandrew953@gmail.com

Accommodation: It is difficult to find suitable and reasonably priced housing for refugee families. Under the ARAP and resettlement schemes *only self-contained* accommodation is used. If you are able to offer larger (preferably 3 -4) bed-roomed self-contained long-term accommodation at a reasonable rent please contact Annie Ralph in the first instance – anniefalph@gmail.com

If you are able to offer short-term accommodation or a room in your home for other vulnerable asylum seekers on a more informal basis (i.e. not part of the official Government-backed schemes), then you can contact one of these organisations:

Refugees at Home <https://www.refugeesathome.org/>

Rooms for Refugees <https://www.roomforrefugees.com/>

or locally in Brighton – Thousand 4 £1000 <https://www.thousand4thousand.org.uk/>

Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers in Brighton:

These are teenagers who have come overland and across the channel from various conflict zones. They are *not* part of the Afghanistan evacuation and are *not* young children. Monetary donations can be made to Brighton charities Voices in Exile and Hummingbird. At the moment there is no request from Brighton for specific clothing items etc.

Donating: Money is desperately needed for the relief effort. There are a number of national and international organisations working in Afghanistan, such as the International Rescue Committee, the UNHCR etc. to whom you can donate money. Those of you who particularly want to support children in war zones, may be interested in the organisation War Child. There are many options. We are not recommending any particular group

More locally, **RefugEase** with Care4Calais is organising an aid collection for Afghans from their offices at 77-81 High Street, Tonbridge between 2.00 and 5.30 pm on Friday 3rd September. See their website <https://www.refugease.com/afghanistan-aid-collection> for a list of the items they need.

Campaigning: We also campaign on issues concerning the human rights of refugees and asylum seekers. With Lewes Football Club we are actively pursuing an expansion of safe routes, especially for female Afghan athletes who are particularly at risk, and in opposing the anti-refugee Nationality and Borders Bill currently before parliament. Please consider joining us. Contact our membership secretary – Belinda.kirbyte@gmail.com