Our Liverpool
Refugee, People Seeking Asylum and Vulnerable Migrant Strategy
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Foreword

Liverpool is a welcoming city, a City of Sanctuary that is famed for its long history of inward and outward migration, a history that has contributed to the city’s diversity, vibrancy and the development of our unique accent. But having a welcoming tradition alone is not sufficient; having a well thought out and co-ordinated approach to helping migrants settle in the city is also vital. Through this strategy, we aim to ensure that people who make Liverpool their new home feel safe, supported and are able to reach their full potential. We have deliberately called the strategy ‘Our Liverpool’ as we want to promote mutual understanding between and within communities, and support an inclusive culture in which longer-standing communities feel able to understand and welcome migrants.

The Our Liverpool strategy has been developed in collaboration with key stakeholders both within Liverpool City Council and those in the VCS, private sector and other statutory partners who provide services to refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants. We hope that it will improve the integration of newcomers to the city and broaden opportunities for all residents to be included in the economic, social and civic life of the city.

Councillor Liz Parsons

Cabinet Member, Liverpool City Council
TO CREATE A HOPE STREET OF THE FUTURE, OUR LIVERPOOL A CITY RICH IN CULTURE
Introduction

This Strategy sets out the Our Liverpool vision of making Liverpool a welcoming and safe place for refugees, people seeking asylum and other vulnerable migrants to rebuild their lives. It outlines the challenges that refugees and communities face and sets out our resources, our approach and our long term aims and objectives from 2019 to 2022.

Realising this vision of Liverpool as a welcoming and safe city for all refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants is an ambitious task, particularly during such challenging economic times and the uncertainty posed by Brexit which will inevitably impact on migrants living in the UK. Refugees, people seeking asylum and other vulnerable migrants will be included in the implementation of this Strategy through a Migrant Group. We have consulted extensively with our partners to develop our shared vision and will work collaboratively with our partners in implementing and monitoring this Strategy. This Strategy is intended for the city as a whole and is not limited to the work of the Council.

Who is a refugee?

The human rights of refugees and people seeking asylum are protected by various international human rights instruments. The UK is signatory to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention which defines a refugee as a person who:

‘Owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.’

According to international law everyone who satisfies this definition is a refugee. The UK was also one of the first states to ratify the European Convention on Human Rights in 1951. The Convention was given direct effect in domestic law through the Human Rights Act 1998. This states that everybody is entitled to seek, and enjoy in other countries, asylum from persecution. International law does not distinguish between refugees and people seeking asylum, although states often do. In the UK a person who has not yet received a decision on their application is referred to as an asylum seeker, or a person seeking asylum. Figure 1 gives an overview of the asylum process in the UK and the different types of immigration status and entitlements to support can be found in Appendix 1.
**UK Asylum System**

**Application for asylum**

**Screening interview**

**Asylum interview**

**Decision**

**Fresh claim**

**Further submissions**

**Appeal First tier Tribunal**

**Appeal Upper Tribunal**

**Removal/voluntary return/destitute in the UK**

**Status granted**

1. Refugee status
2. Humanitarian protection
3. Discretionary leave

**Figure 1**
Refugees can also arrive in the UK via a resettlement programme. Resettlement is the transfer of refugees, under the protection of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement. Local Authorities are responsible for the vast majority of the UK’s resettled refugees, however the Home Office also delivers a Community Sponsorship programme that allows community groups and organisations to support individual families with their resettlement.

**Who is a vulnerable migrant?**

We define a vulnerable migrant as any migrant whose immigration status is the cause or a contributory factor of their vulnerability. This could include:

- An EU migrant who is finding it difficult to secure settled status [1] or who is homeless (or living in extreme poverty) because they are unemployed and unable access public funds such as housing support.
- An EU migrant involved in exploitative labour who is unable to demonstrate their eligibility to benefits, as they may not have payslips or a tenancy agreement to evidence that they have been living and working in the UK.
- A survivor of trafficking who needs support to access services, understand their options and make a decision about how to move forward.
- A victim of domestic abuse who wants to leave their partner but whose immigration status is dependent on their spousal visa.
- Someone who has had their asylum application refused and has become homeless while they are making a fresh claim or are unable to return to their country of origin.

**Liverpool Context**

Liverpool has a proud history of welcoming people from abroad, and as a result has many established migrant communities. In recent decades the city has seen the emergence of new communities, in part as a result of the dispersal of asylum seekers by the Home Office but also as a result of migration to the UK following the enlargement of the EU.

Although less ethnically diverse than the population of England and Wales as a whole Liverpool’s BAME population has more than doubled in the 10 years from 2001 and 2011, increasing by 110.5% (33,700 people). People seeking asylum are not included in the census data. However Liverpool has been an asylum dispersal area since 2000 and as a single authority generally hosts the largest number of people seeking asylum in England. The Home Office’s Initial Accommodation centre for the North West is located in the city, as is the Further Submissions unit, which means people from across the UK whose asylum claims have been refused are required to travel to Liverpool to present any additional evidence in person to the Home Office. There is a strong correlation between those who have been trafficked into the UK and those that claim asylum, therefore the city also hosts a significant proportion of people who have been trafficked into the UK and are being supported under the National Referral Mechanism [2]. Liverpool has statutory responsibility for any unaccompanied asylum seeking children who present in the city spontaneously, come through the adult asylum system or who are transferred from other areas. As a result of being an established asylum dispersal area since 2000 and hosting the North West’s Initial Accommodation, Liverpool supports a significant number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children compared to other areas of the North West. Liverpool also participates in the Refugee Resettlement Programme which was established in 2015 following the Syrian refugee crisis. Alongside the LA delivered programme there is a
Our Contribution to Global Displacement

GLOBALLY

68.5m
Million People forcibly displaced in 2018

40m
Internally displaced globally in 2019 (UNHCR 2019)

3.1m
People globally seeking asylum in 2018 (UNHCR 2019)

25.4m
Refugees globally in 2018 (UNHCR 2019)

55,692
Globally resettled in 2018 (UNHCR 2019)

NATIONALLY

43,383
Supported asylum seekers in UK in 2018 (UNHCR 2019)

5,944
Resettled in UK in 2018 (Home Office 2018)

LOCALLY

Liverpool

1,596
Asylum seekers supported in Liverpool in 2018, which is just 4% of the UK population of supported Asylum Seekers. 0.05% of the world’s asylum seeking population (gov.uk 2018)

170
Liverpool has pledged to settle through VPR/VCRS by 2020
small but growing number of Community Sponsorship groups providing support to resettled refugee families in Liverpool.

Liverpool benefits from a well-established and co-ordinated voluntary and community sector (VCS) that provides specialist services for refugees and people seeking asylum. These services are often delivered on limited and short term funds.

In September 2013 the Council signed the City Of Sanctuary motion, pledging that the council will:

- Support local people in welcoming and helping new communities to integrate into local life;
- Recognise the positive contributions migrants make to the social cultural and economic life of Liverpool;
- Support community and voluntary organisations in assisting in this process.

The vital role of the VCS to support refugees and people seeking asylum is recognised and has been resourced through commissioned services and a grants programme in order to achieve the objectives set out in this strategy.

In 2016 Liverpool facilitated a Community Cohesion Panel, which identified the need for the development of a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Strategy. Liverpool then went on to participate in the Inclusive Cities project, a UK wide learning exchange programme facilitated by Oxford University. The action plans from this, with its focus on English language learning and communicating an inclusive narrative, dovetail with the actions plans for this Strategy.

Although the focus of this Strategy is limited to the geographical boundaries of Liverpool Local Authority (LA) both the Council and the VCS provides advice, support and services to the neighbouring LAs in Liverpool City Region (LCR), who in recent years have become asylum dispersal areas and take part in refugee resettlement. LCR has taken a co-ordinated approach to this work. Each LA has a nominated lead officer, who regularly meet and report to the LCR Chief Executives Group. It is envisaged that the next iteration of this Strategy (2022-2025) will cover LCR.

In order to develop the strategy, one to one interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in Liverpool and all stakeholders were invited to a consultation event to identify the key issues that they faced, what changes they wanted to see by 2022 and how they could contribute to the identified changes.
Our Vision

Liverpool is a welcoming city where refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive.

Purpose of this Strategy

To co-ordinate the efforts within Liverpool City Council ensuring we work as 'One Team, One Council' and between organisations involved in supporting refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants in Liverpool. It provides a clear framework and enables partners to make the best use of resources and expertise that are available in Liverpool, by promoting partnership approaches, joined up working and early intervention, in order to achieve our vision of a welcoming Liverpool.

Overarching Aims:

1. Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to thrive in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections.
2. Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.
3. Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs
4. Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants will inform local policy, strategic planning and Liverpool's influencing to central government.

Objectives have been developed in line with the above overarching aims and according to the following seven thematic areas [3]:

1. Needs of People Seeking Asylum
2. Employability and Welfare Benefits
3. Housing
4. Education
5. Language
6. Health and Well being
7. Communities, Culture and Social Connections
The Inclusive Growth Plan

The Our Liverpool vision and aims align with the vision and aims in Liverpool City Council’s Inclusive Growth Plan, ‘A strong and growing city, built on fairness’. The action plans for each of the seven thematic areas illustrate how this work contributes to the aims and priorities of the Inclusive Growth Plan. Here are some examples:

- **Investing in our children and young people**
  We will ensure that young refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants (and their parents, carers or guardians) are aware and understand the options available to them, in terms of learning, education and funding support.

- **People who live well and age well**
  We will enable refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants to look after and improve their own health and well-being.

- **Quality homes in thriving neighborhoods**
  We will support resident communities to understand the needs of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants and to actively involve them in community life.

- **A strong and inclusive economy**
  We will provide refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants with the opportunity to achieve English language skills and the language qualifications they need to progress to further learning or employment.
Our Guiding Principles

Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are not a homogenous group. They each have their own backgrounds, cultures, experiences, challenges, skills and aspirations. This strategy recognises the importance of engaging with refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants themselves and working with partners and communities, seeing integration as a long term, two-way process which enables people to be included in society. Our approach is formed by the following guiding principles:

Integration and Support for All

We believe that all refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants should be supported to integrate into communities from the day that they first arrive in Liverpool. This includes people seeking asylum before they have been granted refugee status, those that are accommodated temporarily in Liverpool and those who have had their asylum applications refused but remain living in the city. We recognise that there are people with irregular immigration status living in Liverpool, often with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) who are supported by communities and voluntary sector organisations in Liverpool. We also acknowledge that people with irregular immigration status and/or without the right to work can be vulnerable to exploitation and modern slavery.

This strategy is intended for all people seeking asylum, refugees and vulnerable migrants regardless of their route to the UK/Liverpool. Central government provides significantly more support and resources for refugees that have arrived on the resettlement programmes, compared to those that have spontaneously arrived and have applied for asylum in the UK. As a result resettled refugees are often portrayed in a positive light by the media and central government, whilst those seeking asylum in-country can be perceived negatively. This difference in perceptions can impact on the relationships between people seeking asylum and resettled refugees themselves, the support organisations and the local communities welcoming them.

Liverpool an Inclusive City

We have developed the ‘Our Liverpool’ welcoming narrative for the city, through the Inclusive Cities Programme. We will use this to promote the welcome and integration of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants by working directly with local people in order to build resilient and inclusive communities.

A Rights Based Approach

We believe that refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants should be able to live safely and realise their human rights. We aim to empower people to understand their rights and know how to exercise them.
An Asset Based Approach

Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants have often experienced traumatic events and many have had to leave their homes and loved ones behind and start a new life. We recognise the resourcefulness and the resilience that is required to come through such experiences. We will build on the strengths that people have rather than just focusing on the deficiencies and problems that they may have.

Partnership: Collaboration and Co-ordination

Liverpool City Council and the VCS have an important co-ordination role, they regularly bring together key statutory and VCS stakeholders with the Home Office and Serco (the private sector contractors responsible for the asylum accommodation in the North West). The implementation of this strategy and the resources allocated to its co-ordination both within the Council and to the VCS, will ensure best use of existing resources further strengthening the delivery of services for and with refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants within and between all sectors.

Ensuring Equal Access

We recognise that the personal circumstances of individual refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants have a significant impact on their experience of integrating in Liverpool. This strategy ensures a person-centred approach by adhering to The Equality Act 2010 which protects people from discrimination on the basis of the protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. Whilst the status of refugees or people seeking asylum in itself is not a protected characteristic, everyone will have one or more of the protected characteristics and afforded protection. Similarly the Public Sector Equality Act Duty requires Liverpool City Council and other public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with different protected characteristics. Without diminishing the needs of individuals who have protected characteristics, we recognise some groups of refugees and people seeking asylum have particular needs:

- **Children and Young People**

  Children and young people can arrive with their families through the asylum dispersal programme and through the refugee resettlement programme, or they may arrive unaccompanied and be the responsibility of the local authority. Some children may have had traumatic experiences in their formative years and require mental health support. Added to this, many may have missed education and may not be accustomed to formal learning settings, which makes learning a new language challenging. We recognise that children and young people may require additional support to access the services they need to reach their full potential. Access to mental health services for young people transitioning from Childrens to Adults services is particularly challenging. There are also children living in families with irregular immigration status and/or No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), so are unable to access mainstream benefits. Such children face significant hardship and are often supported by the Local Authority under Section 17 of the Children’s Act as well as the VCS.

  Children without a parent or carer are known as unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) and are the responsibility of the local authority. UASC generally arrive in Liverpool spontaneously or through placements/programmes that are co-ordinated by the Regional Strategic Migration Partnership (RSMP). In recent years there has been a significant increase in
the number of young people presenting as children who have either arrived spontaneously in Liverpool and not yet submitted a claim for asylum, or who were initially accommodated and supported by the Home Office in the adult asylum system and then presented to Liverpool Childrens Services as children.

Determining the age of a young person can be a challenging and lengthy process. Often people seeking asylum, particularly young children, do not have access to any evidence of their age, some are not aware of their own date of birth as it is not considered important in some parts of the world. If there is significant reason to doubt that someone is a child, then local authorities are required to conduct a Merton Compliant Age Assessment with specific processes and criteria to be met. Medical professions, even with the use of x-rays and dental examinations, are only able to provide an estimate of a person’s age within a 3-5 year range. As a result medical procedures are not required in the Merton Compliant Age Assessment. The assessment involves observing the young person in a variety of settings and can take a number of months to complete. Whilst ongoing the local authority are responsible for the accommodation and support of the young person.

Liverpool tends to accommodate UASC who are under 16 years of age in foster care, whilst those assessed as 16-17 years of age are accommodated in supported living. Young refugees supported under Section 20 of the Children’s Act have access to Leaving Care provision and many young refugees go on to access Further and Higher Education opportunities with this support. Young people seeking asylum who are assessed as over 18 years of age are entitled to support and accommodation in the adult asylum system, if/when they have exhausted any appeals to the outcome of their age assessment. Many UASC require and would benefit from independent advocacy to guide them through the processes of claiming asylum, undergoing an age assessment and being a child under the care of a Local Authority.

UASC have particular needs to enable them to live safe and healthy lives. Living in shared accommodation with other young people and no adult present, UASC often require support with independent living skills and need advice and guidance on how to understand and mitigate the risks around them. Vulnerable UASC can be targeted to take part in criminal activity.

All UASC are allocated a named Social Worker and an Accommodation Key Worker or Foster Carer (depending on their age). However, many would benefit from being able to access the wider services for people seeking asylum provided by the VCS such as wellbeing and community cohesion activities. The VCS require additional resources and capacity in order to widen their services out to UASC.

- **Women**

Refugee and asylum seeking women face particular challenges that can hinder their integration into communities. Women may fear authority, or experience physical or mental health problems as a result of gender based violence such as Female Genital Mutilation or Honour Based Violence. Migrant women whose immigration status is dependent on their partner: such as those on a spousal visa or classed as a dependant on their partners’ asylum claim can be particularly vulnerable to Domestic Abuse.

Women can often experience isolation due to a lack of confidence or time due to childcare responsibilities and opportunities to socialise, study or work may be impacted by families who hold different cultural understandings to the UK norm, regarding the role of females.

To help overcome the barriers that refugees and asylum seeking women face in accessing support, services should consider providing female interpreters, female only spaces, and provision during school hours and/or childcare. It is particularly important that migrant women have access to maternity and reproductive health services. Pregnant women with irregular
“Local organisations began working together tirelessly to support and address the day-to-day problems that the family were experiencing and the family were supported through the actions of this multi-agency approach”

Family Link Worker, Children’s Centre

Within four days of arriving into the UK with her husband on a spousal visa, Mary’s husband physically assaulted and abandoned her. After relying on friends for support she met a new partner and had a daughter. Her new partner soon stopped supporting Mary and their daughter, only giving her a small amount of the child tax credits he was claiming. Mary and her daughter became destitute and faced homelessness.

Mary presented at the local Children’s Centre, looking for support. She was referred to a Family Link Worker, who opened an Early Health Assessment and set up regular core group meetings. Her Family Link Worker contacted numerous organisations who could provide support, issued foodbank vouchers and applied for grants on Mary’s behalf.

Mary began attending free drop-ins at local organisations, which helped to reduce social isolation and also provided her and her daughter with a regular cooked meal. Her Family Link Worker contacted her regularly and supported her when she became homeless.

Mary was granted leave to remain on a ten year parent route, however she was not granted access to public funds. A local charity supported her in appealing this decision and it was overturned. The Family Link Worker supported Mary with housing and council tax benefits.

Mary is now accessing ESOL classes at her local Children’s Centre. She and her daughter are now happy and settled in their new home and do not need further support. They know where to find support if they need it.
immigration status can find themselves vulnerable due to being ineligible for free antenatal and maternity care [4].

- **Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender or Intersex Identity**
  People seeking protection as a result of their sexual identity can face particular challenges, they are often excluded from the asylum seeking and refugee community and at the same time as someone seeking asylum or as a refugee they can also be isolated from the wider LGBTI community. They are often referred to as an excluded group within an excluded group. There is a fear of disclosure as hate crime towards LGBTI is prevalent in the asylum seeking and refugee community. Similar to women, many LGBTI people have experienced trauma in their country of origin or on their journey, which can make it difficult to be open about their identity with other people, services and authorities. Added to this they may be unfamiliar with the language used to express their identity which also hinders their access to support services. There is however a lack of safe spaces and specialist support services for LGBTI refugees and people seeking asylum.

- **Disability**
  As a consequence of conflict, some refugees and people seeking asylum have experienced trauma and/or torture and are now living with a physical and/or mental health disability. Disabled people seeking asylum and refugees are likely to face additional challenges and barriers in accessing services. Accessible dispersed asylum accommodation is often not available or in short supply, which results in disabled people having to stay longer than expected in Initial Accommodation where access to GP services, schools and other amenities can be limited. The assessment and provision of care needs for people seeking asylum is the responsibility of the Local Authority rather than the Home Office contracted accommodation and support provider. The assessment process can be lengthy and challenging for both the individual concerned and Social Services. Some may present without any formal diagnosis and/or medical histories, particularly if they are new to the UK. Additional communication challenges are experienced by those who are deaf and do not understand neither British Sign Language (BSL) nor English. Some deaf migrants communicate through an informal sign language that they have developed with their family or community, for which there are no interpreters. However in these circumstances BSL is more likely to be understood than attempts to use spoken language. Children who are not yet in school are unable to access a Special Educational Needs Assessment. For children in school, assessments can be challenging as previous records often do not exist.

- **Service User Involvement**
  We hope for the active participation of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants in the implementation of this strategy. We will establish and provide support to a Migrant Group, which will contribute to the monitoring of the action plans. The lived experience of the members of this group will be invaluable in identifying the issues and solutions. We will seek to better understand the specific needs of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants who are: Children and Young People, Women, Disabled and those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender and Intersex LGTBI and to include such individuals on the Migrant Group.
Asylum Link Merseyside provide essential items to those in need, alongside access to the casework team.
Liverpool accommodates higher numbers of people seeking asylum than any other city in England. Most choose to remain here once they have been granted refugee status, or indeed if they have been refused asylum. Similarly some people seeking asylum in neighbouring Liverpool City Region Local Authority areas move to Liverpool when their asylum claims have been granted or refused. This context demonstrates the demand on both statutory and voluntary sector services. However the impact of austerity has led to reduced public sector funding and the VCS are also competing for reduced resources with which to provide services. Below is a summary of the challenges for each thematic area, given by stakeholders during the consultation.

**Needs of People Seeking Asylum**

Stakeholders recognised the challenges that people seeking asylum face as a result of the complexities of and the conditions placed upon them during the asylum process and that responsive services are required in order to meet their specific needs. People seeking asylum need timely information and advice on the asylum process, their rights and entitlements and how to access local services. Legal aid and access to legal advice is limited, there are no equitable referral systems in place to enable people seeking asylum to access legal support, meaning many people seeking asylum attend their substantive interview without having any legal advice. Asylum claim cases are funded by the Legal Aid Agency, for a fixed fee, which means providers can choose how much time they spend on each case before the client attends the Home Office substantive interview. There are both ‘for profit’ and ‘not for profit’ immigration legal providers operating in Liverpool that serve people seeking asylum from across LCR and sometimes the wider North West (due to shortage of immigration solicitors in these areas). The pursuit of profit can result in minimal time being spent with each client as providers strive to see as many clients as possible to claim the fixed fee.

Immigration work such as a family reunion application is not funded by Legal Aid and must be paid for privately. As a result some people who require immigration advice will seek advice from unregulated and unqualified advisors who offer a lower cost, but often poor quality advice. Immigration advice is regulated by the Office Immigration Services Commission (OISC). However, many VCS advice services lack the capacity in terms of costs, staffing resources and skills to register with OISC, again allowing space for unregulated individuals to operate. There is a need for more VCS and/or not for profit legal immigration providers in the city.

People seeking asylum are provided with accommodation and financial support, by the Home Office, if they are unable to support themselves. In order to qualify for asylum support the person is required to prove they are unable to access funds from elsewhere and are destitute. There has been an increase in refusals of asylum support and subsequent asylum support appeals in recent years [5]. Asylum support rates set at less than mainstream benefits means people seeking asylum are often unable to afford travel costs to access advice/support services or attend meaningful activities. Organisations should consider providing outreach services or providing transport costs or bicycles. People seeking asylum often feel isolated from the
community and are at risk of mental ill health. This is exacerbated by the lack of volunteering opportunities that are responsive to the barriers faced by people seeking asylum in accessing and maintaining a voluntary role and the fact that some people can wait years for the outcome on their asylum claim. Frontline staff in statutory and mainstream services often have a limited understanding of the needs, rights and entitlements of people seeking asylum, often due to a lack of ongoing training. These services and their service users would benefit from awareness raising and cultural sensitivity training.

The needs of people seeking asylum should be embedded in future Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and across all relevant strategy and policy documents. For example, the Council should explore offering people seeking asylum concessionary rate access to the Lifestyles Leisure Services and through its procurement processes the Council could encourage providers to include people seeking asylum and refugees in their services.

People with irregular immigration status (such as those whose asylum claims have been refused and they have exhausted all appeal rights) are at risk of removal or detention. The Home Office also deliver a voluntary returns programme which provides financial assistance to those who meet the eligibility criteria [6]. There are no detention centres in Liverpool or the North West, which means people who are detained are separated at long distances from their friends, families, communities and support systems. A significant number of people who are detained are later released, often having experienced trauma. Detention and the fear of being detained can have a detrimental impact on mental health, many people experience symptoms associated with anxiety and depression when they are required to report to the Home Office. The These Walls Must Fall campaign calls for an end to immigration detention [7].

Employability and Welfare Rights

Employment is a key determinant of integration. The right to work and the eligibility of welfare benefits are dependent on immigration status. People granted refugee status, humanitarian protection and EU migrants all have the right to work. People seeking asylum are not permitted to work, unless they have been waiting longer than 12 months for a decision on their asylum claim. Then they may apply for permission to work, however any job taken up must be on the list of Shortage Occupations [8]. The Lift the Ban campaign calls upon the government to allow people seeking asylum to work if they have been waiting longer than six months for a decision on their asylum claim [9]. Those who have been granted discretionary leave have the right to work but may not be entitled to claim benefits. Whereas EU migrants have the right to work but may not be able to claim benefits until they have been in the UK for longer than 3 months.

Refugees and other migrants with permission to work, whilst often skilled and trained in a vocation in their home country, can however face multiple barriers in accessing employment, such as: their understanding of the UK labour market, the lack of recognition of overseas qualifications, a lack of documentary evidence and no previous UK work experience or suitable referees. Refugees may require intensive support to overcome these barriers and support services, such as Liverpool in Work, need tailoring and resourcing to the needs of refugees. Job Centre Plus face particular challenges in supporting refugees without English language skills into employment.

The JCPs in the city that support refugees have the same ‘in work’ targets to meet and are measured against other JCPs whose service users are fluent in English/local residents. The Immigration Act requires employers to conduct right to work checks to prevent illegal working [10]. Employers can face civil penalties if they employ illegal workers. The government has
issued guidance on how to avoid discrimination when conducting the checks. However understanding immigration documentation is complex and as a result stakeholders reported instances of people who have the right to work being refused by employers who do not understand the validity of immigration documents.

Newly granted refugees face particular barriers during the Move-On period, with many lacking an understanding of the process and what is expected of them. Key documents such as NINOs and BRP [11] can be missing or incorrect and there is often a lack of cultural understanding and joined up working between key stakeholders such as the Home Office, Serco, statutory and voluntary providers and the DWP. All of which result in newly granted refugees not being able to access mainstream benefits in a timely manner and being made temporarily destitute. Universal Credit presents unique challenges for refugees. It presumes IT access, literacy and access to a bank account which many refugees do not have. Refugee families who arrive via the Family Reunion route can experience delays to their benefits being set up, which results in families having to survive on a single person’s (benefit) income [12]. Newly granted refugees and those arriving via the Family Reunion route require timely information, advice and intensive support during the Move-On period and key stakeholders need to work to an agreed protocol, sharing key information in a timely manner.

Housing
Good quality housing underpins people’s life chances in terms of accessing healthcare, education, employment, welfare and to be part of the community. For people seeking asylum and refugees, homes offer a place of safety where they can enjoy life free from persecution and become valued members of communities. The housing system for people seeking asylum and newly granted refugees can be complex, therefore we will consider the various stages in turn.

Asylum Dispersal Accommodation
The Home Office has a duty to provide people seeking asylum with accommodation if they have nowhere else to stay or the funds to support themselves whilst their claim is being assessed. Accommodation is provided on a no-choice basis, through regional accommodation contracts in asylum dispersal areas throughout the UK. Serco is the accommodation provider in the North West. Once granted status, refugees are entitled to apply for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Costs and apply for housing, including social housing, in the same way as anyone else legally resident in the UK.

Initially concentrated in the more ethnically diverse wards in the city, such as Princes Park and Picton, asylum accommodation is now more widespread in wards predominately north of the city that are less ethnically diverse but have low cost private rented sector housing more readily available (for Serco to procure). Local Authorities have a role in deciding if a property is suitable to be used as asylum accommodation. Liverpool checks all potential property request locations for incidents of Hate Crime, Anti-Social Behaviour and the capacity of local services to support people seeking asylum. Concerns were raised by stakeholders surrounding the location and quality of some asylum accommodation, particularly where this is in already deprived areas and/or far from services which refugees and people seeking asylum need to access. Stakeholders reported that some people seeking asylum were reluctant to report housing quality issues such as faulty boilers, insecure doors, damp and rodents for fear of losing their asylum accommodation or in some cases their asylum claim. The Home Office are responsible for monitoring the quality of asylum...
"I don’t feel like it’s another country that is not my country, I feel it’s the same as my family and many people supported me and my husband so much, so I love the people and I loved the support. It gave me a better feeling, I don’t feel alone."

Jasmine, talking to the Red Cross

Jasmine shares her experiences of moving to Liverpool whilst seeking asylum.

‘I didn’t have any idea about Liverpool. You know, I was in a bad situation and I was in London in a hostel, and one morning a person knocked door and said ‘please be ready, you have to go to your home’ and I asked ‘where is the home?’ He told me ‘Liverpool’ and it was first time for me, I didn’t have any imagining of Liverpool before that.

I wasn’t with my husband, we were separated on the journey to UK and I was just waiting for him. I was searching for him, I didn’t know where he is and I was very depressed and I was very sad. But I felt safe.

In my initial accommodation, some of my friends introduced me to Red Cross. I didn’t have any clothes when I arrived and they helped me to find some clothes. And I didn’t have any food. I could speak with Iranian people and I could have experience with other different people. [When I was searching for my husband] the Red Cross helped write a letter for me and after I find him they helped me to bring him here because we were separated for 3 months in the UK, he was in Birmingham and I was in Liverpool. Then I brought him to yoga and music class with Red Cross. I had a nice feeling. Now I would love to help all the other people because the people helped me. I want to volunteer.'
accommodation. Liverpool City Council’s Landlord Licensing scheme and mandatory licensing requirements for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) is extended to asylum accommodation. These schemes require landlords, including Serco, to effectively manage tenancies in respect of completing repairs in a short timescale, providing information packs to tenants and preventing anti-social behaviour. Environmental Health Legislation is also used to remedy physical defects and hazards in privately rented properties.

Some, including disabled refugees and people seeking asylum have experienced hate crimes by their neighbours and people in their local area, resulting in them not feeling safe in their own homes. Similarly the LGBTI asylum seeking community are concerned about risks when sharing accommodation with other people seeking asylum who may be physically or psychologically aggressive towards them, they also feel isolated when accommodated in areas without LGBTI services and communities. Refugees and people seeking asylum can be targeted for more than one aspect of their identity, even after they have left their home to escape such fear of persecution.

**Move-On Housing**

**Liverpool’s housing tenure is made up of...**

- 44% Owner occupied
- 30% Private rented sector
- 26% Social housing

Compared to other cities in the UK Liverpool has a higher proportion of private rented sector housing. To ensure quality homes throughout its large private rented sector, Liverpool has implemented a Landlord Licensing scheme across the city and hopes to improve the quality and provision of private rented sector offer to refugees.

Newly granted refugees face a number of challenges in being able to secure Move-On housing. Many lack an understanding of their rights and entitlements, the processes involved and what they can realistically expect in terms of housing location and affordability. Once granted leave to remain refugees have 28 days to vacate their asylum accommodation, this proves challenging for them and for Local Authorities, who have duties under the homeless legislation. As a result single refugees or couples without children can find themselves homeless and requiring temporary/hostel accommodation. Refugee families in Liverpool are usually placed in emergency accommodation, often for a number of weeks before suitable permanent housing is secured. This can sometimes be for longer periods particularly for large refugee families who require larger properties, which are in short supply.

There are a number of pressures on social housing in the city, including providing access to newly granted or newly arrived refugees, whilst at the same time managing the demand for social housing from local residents. On receiving leave to remain, most refugees will present to the Council’s Housing Options service, this is one of the most common reasons for statutory homelessness in Liverpool. During the stakeholder feedback both Serco and VCS organisations reported that the current Housing Options call back system needed improvement in terms of accessibility, particularly for refugees who require interpreters or who have an advocacy service representing them.
WE ARE NO DIFFERENT, WE LIVE WITH BEATING HEARTS, WE LIVE IN THE SAME WORLD JUST IN DIFFERENT PARTS
Access to social housing is dependent on ‘local connection’ and priority banding. Refugees without children or certain diagnosed health conditions or vulnerabilities are likely to be given a lower priority banding. Local connection is secured for those whose asylum accommodation was in Liverpool. Many refugees once granted status move into Liverpool from across Liverpool City Region. In such cases they may be unable to demonstrate a local connection and therefore have a lower priority in accessing social housing, they are however eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Costs and able to access private rented sector housing in Liverpool.

Single/lone males, make up the majority of people seeking asylum. Once granted leave to remain they can face restrictions, without diagnosed health conditions they are likely to be given a low priority banding and may have to wait some time before they can secure more permanent housing. In the meantime they are accommodated in homelessness hostels. Many refugees report that they do not feel safe in hostels particularly mixing with other service users with complex needs such as substance misuse. It is a challenge to be able to accommodate the needs of homeless refugees separately from those with complex needs. For disabled refugees, there is a shortage of wheelchair accessible and mobility standard accommodation in the city. Therefore disabled refugees can have a longer wait in temporary accommodation or be placed in unsuitable accommodation.

Move - On accommodation for single refugees can also be challenging due to the pressures on one-bedroom accommodation in the City. If they are placed in one of the city’s commissioned temporary accommodation services they will receive a high priority for social housing. However, if they are placed in other services and they do not have any issues that may increase their priority banding, such as a diagnosed health condition, then they are likely to wait some time before they can secure more permanent housing. In terms of Housing Benefit, single young people are only eligible for shared accommodation housing costs until the age of 35. As young refugees often do not have another source of income or have peers to share accommodation with they will often be living in shared accommodation with people they do not know. This can prove difficult for some, especially those experiencing mental ill health.

Many lone male refugees, once they have received leave to remain, apply for their families to join them in the UK via the Family Reunion route. Unlike resettlement, Local Authorities are not given notice of imminent arrivals of such families, which results in families presenting as homeless on arrival and having to be housed in emergency accommodation before suitable housing is secured. Due to the short notice and particularly when there are sporting events on in the city and hotels are fully booked, families may need to be placed in temporary accommodation outside of the city.

The VCS play a crucial role in supporting newly granted refugees in accessing Move - On housing, particularly in understanding the process, managing expectations, completing applications and bidding for properties. Once refugees have secured Move - On accommodation they often need support in setting up utilities and furnishing their new homes. The VCS in Liverpool provide donated furniture and the Council’s Liverpool Citizen Support Scheme provides emergency support in terms of cash awards for subsistence, household appliances and furniture items to enable people to set up or remain in their home.

Social housing providers have a duty under the Equality Act to communicate with their tenants and therefore provide interpreters. Stakeholders reported that such practice is inconsistent across Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and gave examples of both RSL and private landlord tenancy agreements being signed without the contents being understood and refugees not able to report
“Parents have bonded and enjoyed being together. They have found friendship and many regularly meet up outside of the sessions. Parents have said they now understand how it all works and it has been a lifeline in enabling them to be involved and for some removing a sense of isolation.”

Teacher who took part in Family Learning Programme.

The Family Learning Programme supports newly arrived families and carers to navigate their way through the education system. The programme supports participants to register at their local library and gives the opportunity to visit museums and galleries. Families at New Park Primary School visited the ‘Terracotta Warriors’ Exhibition as part of their programme! A teacher who took part in the Family Learning programme commented that ‘parents have bonded and enjoyed being together. They have found friendship and many regularly meet up outside of the sessions. Parents have said they now understand ‘how it all works’ and it has been a lifeline in enabling them to be involved and for some removing a sense of isolation.’ Pivotal to the programme is legacy. Many of the families who participated now use libraries regularly and some schools have continued this work by delivering an ESOL provision or, maintaining regular meetings.
repairs. Some refugees and EU migrants benefit from floating tenancy support services which enable them to maintain their tenancies, however stakeholders reported that this service was not available to all refugees that require it.

Some refugees granted Limited Leave to Remain have faced significant rent arrears and the threat of eviction as a result of their benefits (Universal Credit, Housing Costs or Housing Benefits and Council Tax Benefits) being stopped when their Leave to Remain has expired, despite having submitted an in-time application for extension to the Home Office. **The JCP and Council benefit decision makers need to understand the Home Office policy regarding Leave to Remain applications and amend and apply their own procedures to prevent refugees being at risk of rent arrears/eviction.**

**No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**

There are a significant number of people in Liverpool whose asylum claims have been refused and they have exhausted all appeals. The Home Office ask some to report regularly and they may be at risk of detention or forced removal. However, the majority are encouraged to return voluntarily to their country of origin. Many people feel unable to return to their country of origin and choose to remain in Liverpool homeless and destitute with NRPF and very limited pathways out. Some of this cohort make regular use of the city’s homeless night hub Labre House. This applies to vulnerable migrants, as well as those who have exhausted all appeals in their claim for asylum. While it is acknowledged that this provides a safe and warm space, it is not suitable as a long term solution, especially where people have a combination of health and support needs. The VCS provide vital services to this particular group such as representation to legalise immigration status, provision of food parcels, daily hot food and limited temporary accommodation through safe houses and hosting schemes.

**Education**

All children have the right to an education, regardless of their immigration status. The Children’s Act defines children of migrant backgrounds as children first, before their immigration status and affording them the same rights and entitlements as resident children. Local authorities have a duty to provide education for all children living in their area.

Liverpool’s schools support children of many different ethnicities with up to 100 languages. However, there is a concentration of a small number of primary and secondary schools with diverse populations either in or serving children from the most diverse wards of the city, many of these schools are Schools of Sanctuary [13]. Liverpool’s schools are facing an increasing challenge with hundreds of children who are ‘new to city’ and ‘new to country’, many of whom are migrants who have no academic profile and require suitable places in educational establishments equipped to meet their needs. Two secondary schools in particular accepted the majority of the ‘new to city/country’ children. For a number of complex reasons, there is also a cohort of Roma children who are not immediately registering for school places. A more informed picture needs to be built in this area through positive engagement with families, children’s centres and schools in order for the city to support this group to access education and also become ‘school ready’.

Due to the city hosting the North West Initial Accommodation (IA), Liverpool has more school age children who are temporarily without access to education. The length of stay in IA should be 2-3 weeks, before being dispersed elsewhere across the North West. However stakeholders reported the average length of stay can be 8-12 weeks with some families residing in IA for up to 6 months. Families who have a long stay in IA are understandably concerned about their children missing education, so some will register with schools local to the IA sites, which causes duplication on waiting lists or results in the children taking a place, only to be moved elsewhere shortly afterwards, causing disruption for both the children and the schools.
“Wherever I’ve been, I’ve been blessed with good neighbours, and I’m blessed to have that in Liverpool too.”

Resettled Refugee
There are challenges for both schools and families at particular stages: around the year 6/7 transition; new to country arrivals accessing schools in Year 10/11 GCSE years and a lack of provision for young people aged 15-18 years, many of whom are unable to access education for long periods.

Children with disabilities and special needs often arrive without any prior assessment history to share with health and education professionals, which makes assessing their needs a lengthy process and results in delays in the appropriate support for them.

Refugee parents themselves face a numbers of challenges in supporting their children to access and attend school. Many do not understand how the UK education system works, the various admission procedures particularly for high school, the compulsory school age for younger children and that attendance in school is compulsory, with the potential for fines for unauthorised absences.

Schools are presented with a number of challenges, those that are new to working with refugee children often require additional support and expertise. English as an Additional Language (EAL) support is available to Liverpool schools. Most primary schools are able to access induction support through EMTAS [14] . Secondary schools or primary schools wanting support beyond induction can purchase English as an Additional Language support. However school budgets are under pressure and schools have difficult choices to make. Asylum seeking children arrive at school throughout the school year and often miss the ‘roll call’ days which results in the school missing out on some funding for that particular child. Unlike for resettled refugee children, schools do not receive additional funding for children seeking asylum or refugee children that have spontaneously arrived.

Budget constraints can also affect how and whether schools use interpreters to communicate with migrant parents who do not speak English with some schools unaware of how to access or use an interpreter. Children are often used to communicate messages between the home and school, which at times can be inappropriate, exclude the parent and put too much responsibility on the child. Schools familiar with refugee children have developed good practice such as: using translated flash cards to communicate common key messages to parents at school pick-up time, put on English classes to support parents with their English skills and celebrated children with additional language skills as an asset to the school, encouraging them to maintain their mother tongue.

Many young people seeking asylum and refugees aspire to go to university, however they can face challenges in terms of entry qualifications and access to student finance. People seeking asylum and refugees granted Humanitarian Protection status are not entitled to apply for Student Finance for tuition fees and maintenance loans. In response to this Liverpool University provide bursaries for people seeking asylum.

Language

Language is crucial to all elements of integration. It enables people seeking asylum and refugees to understand essential information about housing, healthcare, find employment or pursue further education or training, public services, civic participation and understanding of wider rights and responsibilities. It also enables communication with neighbours and members of local community groups which helps people to build social connections and feel part of their local community.

Overwhelmingly refugees and people seeking asylum want to learn English and many appeal for additional classes or hours. Progress in language acquisition is dependent on the amount of provision available and the educational capacity of the learner. It is recognised that people’s former education levels will have an impact on their ability to learn English. Refugees and people seeking asylum have a broad range of abilities, some
Language is crucial to all elements of integration.
are illiterate in their own language and others educated at a tertiary level in their own language but do not speak English. For those with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or autism their learning can be impaired as they may not feel at ease in a classroom setting with others. Others with or without a diagnosed condition often lack the confidence to speak their newly acquired English, particularly in formal settings such as with the JCP or medical practitioners.

The Home Office require (and fund) Local Authorities to provide 8 hours per week English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for refugees arriving on the resettlement programmes. Other refugees are allowed to access accredited ESOL, if it is available, but there is no requirement or funding from the Home Office to do so. The DWP are able to fund ESOL for refugees claiming benefits if it is not available locally, however this tends to be short term courses. Funding for travel costs and childcare can be given at the discretion of JCP Managers. If awarded to refugees, their attendance at ESOL will be a requirement of their ‘Claimant Contract’, a condition of them receiving benefits. Some advocacy service providers felt that JCP staff often have unrealistic expectations of the length of time it takes to reach ESOL Entry Level 3 (the level that people are expected to reach to enter employment), particularly for those who are illiterate in their own language, or have not learnt in a formal classroom environment before, or for many years. Extra learner support is sometimes needed to ensure that learners progress. Funded organisations have limited budgets to respond to these specific identified needs. There is also a need for employment sector specific ESOL such as ESOL for Taxi Drivers and ESOL for Social Care. People seeking asylum are prohibited from accessing accredited ESOL, unless they have been waiting longer than six months on their asylum claim. The VCS in Liverpool provide non-accredited ESOL for people seeking asylum, however provision is limited and does not meet the demand.

ESOL is delivered by a variety of providers across Liverpool: Adult Learning Services, Liverpool Community College, private providers and VCS organisations. With a constantly moving population, it is a challenge to ensure provision is widespread across the city in the areas it is needed and at the levels required. There are some progression opportunities up to and including GCSEs, with some providers in Liverpool such as Adult Learning Services and Liverpool Community College. There is a shortage of pre-ESOL level classes and qualified ESOL tutors across the city, specifically those trained in pre-ESOL methods, such as using pictorial images to aid communication (similar to that used for people with learning disabilities). Some providers are either reluctant to or unaware that they can draw down the Adult Education budget for pre-ESOL. In addition concerns were raised regarding the quality of some ESOL delivery in the city and the perception that progress was slow for learners despite progression routes being in place.

There is limited co-ordination between providers in terms of planning provision, shared waiting lists and standardised assessments. This results in over exaggerated waiting lists with individuals sitting on a number of different providers’ lists and inconsistent assessment of ESOL levels. There is a need to co-ordinate the existing ESOL provision across the city to identify and address the gaps. The fragmented funding structure would also benefit from some co-ordination as ESOL is currently funded by the Home Office, JCP and MHCLG.

The provision of interpreters is essential for people seeking asylum, refugees and vulnerable migrants without English language skills to access the services they need. The Equality Act requires statutory services to enable access
and communicate with their service users, in practice this means providing interpreters (including sign language). However many do not and refugees are often not aware that they should be provided. Stakeholders reported numerous incidents of hospitals, schools, GP surgeries and Council services not using interpreters or asking children to act as the interpreter. VCS organisations often use volunteer interpreters and without adequate vetting, training and supervision there can be issues with quality, boundaries and confidentiality. To overcome these issues, **the requirement to use interpreters should be built into commissioned services and funding needs to be available to VCS services. All front line staff in statutory services should know how to book an interpreter in their organisation and be trained in how to work with interpreters effectively in order to communicate with their service users.**

Having been an asylum dispersal area for decades Liverpool has built up a supply of interpreters in the vast array of languages spoken by people seeking asylum and refugees. Working as an interpreter is a popular pathway for many refugees as they enter into employment. It is important that interpreting courses remain available to refugees, not only to improve the individuals’ employment prospects but to drive up standards in the sector.

**Health and Wellbeing**

People seeking asylum and refugees in Liverpool can face barriers in accessing health services for a range of reasons. Many present with physical and mental health problems resulting from the reasons that they have sought protection. Some have experienced trauma as a result of gender based violence, sexual violence, torture, degrading treatment and have been witness to unimaginable events. Added to this, the experience of seeking asylum itself and incidents of hostility or hate crime can exacerbate existing physical and mental health problems sometimes resulting in secondary trauma. Mersey Care Trust have developed a resource to inform their staff of the factors and impact of trauma [15].

Many refugees and people seeking asylum do not understand their health care rights and/or are unable to exercise them. It is feared that the recent change of legislation [16] regarding the entitlement to and charging of secondary health care for some migrants will exacerbate the barriers, creating confusion for healthcare professions and vulnerable migrant’s alike. It has been reported that some healthcare professionals in Liverpool disagree with charging for secondary healthcare. The costs of the healthcare surcharge may be prohibitive [17]. Those granted with less than 4 years Discretionary Leave to Remain may be required to pay £1,200 healthcare surcharge. Barriers to healthcare access for migrants may also be exacerbated by the Memorandum of Understanding between NHS Digital, Home Office and Department of Health Select Committee allowing NHS providers to issue personal details of patients to Home Office immigration. Despite the Health Select Committee [18] instructing NHS Digital to end the practice, there is anecdotal evidence that it continues.

Liverpool has a small amount of dedicated health resource for people seeking asylum and refugees, commissioned by a combination of national and local public sector organisations, which is delivered by multiple agencies. The complexity of the commissioning and delivery landscape has resulted in fragmentation across key service areas, while at the same time, health needs among refugees and people seeking asylum has increased, particularly mental health needs.

Liverpool benefits from a developed voluntary and community refugee sector, which offers specialised health and wellbeing support for people seeking asylum and refugees, such as counselling services for refugees with interpreters trained.
in working in therapeutic settings: art therapy; family counselling alongside horticulture and wellbeing/self-care sessions taught alongside ESOL classes. The school of Nursing and Midwifery at Liverpool John Moore’s University has developed an on-line Hub that informs frontline healthcare practitioners of the health and well-being services available to people seeking asylum and refugees in Liverpool.

Various challenges exist around the collection of reliable health data in migrant populations. In practice, ethnicity and country of birth data is rarely collected by frontline healthcare providers, making it difficult to establish health needs in this population. In September 2014 Liverpool Public Health conducted a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: Asylum Seekers and Refugees Health Needs Assessment, which was triggered by the concerns of organisations that the complex health needs of asylum seekers and refugees may not always be met and by the recognition from commissioners of their need to better understand the needs of asylum seekers. Liverpool Public Health upheld the recommendations made in the JSNA 2014:

- **Improve access to mental health services**
  Further consideration needs to be given to the accessibility and the cultural relevance of mental health services for refugees. Work is currently underway exploring alternative methods of delivering therapies to better suit the communities’ needs such as the use of lay therapist from the asylum seeker/refugee community.

- **Improve screening, testing and diagnosis of TB and HIV infection**
  As part of the health assessment, symptom screening for important communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV is undertaken. A protocol has been agreed to screen individuals for active TB. The JSNA 2014 found that screening for active TB is not carried out for everyone, but is instead targeted at individuals with risk factors such as Country of Origin and those presenting with signs and symptoms of concern. **However, the JSNA recommends systematic screening pathways for active TB.**

Liverpool is also a ‘fast-track’ city – a global network aiming to eradicate AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. Liverpool’s HIV rate is comparable with other core cities in the UK, however over half of people in Liverpool are diagnosed late which results in a delay in treatment and increases the risks of them becoming ill and developing AIDS. New migrants are at a particular risk of late diagnosis.

- **Improve equitable access to GP care and strengthening reporting of outcomes**
  Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants require support to access primary care services, especially people with irregular immigration status and those with significant health needs such as mental health difficulties, HIV and TB. Commissioners recognise the need for a sustainable, co-ordinated and proportionate primary health care response in order to better meet the needs of refugees and people seeking asylum. A specialist asylum and refugee public health nursing provision within Mersey Care Trust supports children under 16 years of age with health assessments, vaccinations and completes antenatal checks and follow up visits for families whilst in Initial Accommodation. Those dispersed to Liverpool are also supported with their registration into primary care. The Care Quality Commission recently noted the excellence of the vaccination programme. However, this service is not currently commissioned and there are concerns regarding to the capacity of the current service to meet the demand in the future.
“I have been really impressed with the five ways to well-being course. It has given clients an opportunity to spend time out of the safe house and to experience a group activity. Everybody enjoyed the ‘laughing yoga’ they learnt in the Be Active session. Interpreters have also shared that this course has been good for the clients’ well-being. I would recommend the sessions to other organisations”

Manager of the Medaille Trust, a service supporting victims of trafficking.

The well-being course delivered by Adult Learning Services is built around the government’s five ways to well-being guidance. It explores how themes such as being active, connect with others, and how continued learning can support well-being and be achieved in the local area. The course aims to raise awareness of mental health and well-being, identify positive coping strategies and build confidence in accessing services in the local area through signposting.
• Further assessment of intelligence for the quality of housing for dispersed people seeking asylum

There needs to be improved and continued co-ordination between the Council’s Public Health and Housing regulatory services to monitor and mitigate the impact that poor quality housing has on the health outcomes for people seeking asylum.

In addition to the JSNA (2014) recommendations, commissioners and lead healthcare providers have identified further areas of improvement to be implemented over the course of this Strategy:

• Workforce development

A communication strategy needs to be developed and delivered, to inform the Liverpool workforce as well as refugees and people seeking asylum of the entitlements to healthcare. This includes the roll out of the Safer Surgeries initiative, which aims to train GP practices in understanding the barriers migrants face in accessing healthcare, aiming to reduce the number of wrongly refused registrations. Building on the success of the on-line Hub it would be beneficial to have an integrated workforce development and training plan.

• Language and cultural relevance of support and health services:

Further consideration should be given to ensure primary care services including interpretation are culturally relevant for refugees and people seeking asylum. Services need to be aware that languages have different dialects, which can result in communication difficulties. There are confidentiality issues, some communities are small and people may not want to use an interpreter from their own community. Services can request interpreters from other communities who speak the same language, or from outside the area the person lives. Services should also be mindful of divisions and conflicts that exist within and between certain communities, to ensure this is not a barrier to communication.
Badir and Shavin arrived in Liverpool from Syria with their three children as part of the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. When they arrived, they knew nothing and no one.

Both Liverpool City Council and Refugee Action supported them, but perhaps the most important support they received, was from their new neighbours, especially their neighbour Doreen. The family met Doreen on their second day in Liverpool, when she popped in to say hello, and stayed to help them with their central heating. "We got to know each other from there, and she got to love us, and we got to love her". Other neighbours helped too, one giving them a TV and another a dolls house. Doreen taught the children how to celebrate Christmas and Easter; they made crafts and played computer games. The family love their area and say they have been blessed with good neighbours.

Doreen was even present for the birth of their fourth child, “I’ve never seen a baby being born before. I cried my eyes out. It was amazing what a privilege”. The family has named their new baby Doreen, after their neighbour that has done so much to welcome them.

For Doreen “they just fitted in, just like they’ve always been here".
Communities, Culture, Social Connections

Liverpool has a long standing history of welcoming migrants. Having been an asylum dispersal area since 2000 it is home to many ‘scouse’ refugees who bring many benefits to other refugees and the local community. Through the Our Liverpool programme and this Strategy, Liverpool have developed a welcoming narrative, which sets the tone for the city, however, this is not enough. Community cohesion is an ongoing task that requires focused community development work and resources.

People seeking asylum are often housed in deprived areas of the city, where local residents themselves face challenges of poverty and isolation. Generally local residents across the city have little or no understanding of the issues faced by refugees: why they may be forced to flee their country of origin, what they may have experienced on their journey and what claiming asylum in the UK entails. Many migrants experience hate crime and do not feel safe in their homes or neighbourhoods. Hate crime is under reported, for this particular client group it tends to be due to not knowing what they have experienced is a crime or a mistrust in the Police (based on their experience of the Police in their home countries and/or across Europe prior to claiming asylum). More work is needed to break down the barriers with the police and raise awareness of hate crime with the migrant community.

There needs to be focused community development work in the areas where people seeking asylum are placed, to understand how local residents are impacted, to raise awareness of the issues that people seeking asylum and refugees face and support community cohesion activities that bring communities together.

Groups and activities which enable relationships to be built and prevent isolation in local areas are crucial, especially in areas where a significant proportion of the population is transient. For this we need a strong, well-funded and accessible VCS in order to support safe and welcoming communities.

People seeking asylum and refugees have a right to engage with the cultural offer in the destination city they arrive in, and Liverpool has a rich cultural heritage that can help create a sense of place and belonging. Liverpool’s arts and culture organisations already work with refugees through a variety of theatre, music, dance, spoken word and art projects. Sola Arts host a unique festival around Refugee Week called FESTIVAL 31 to raise awareness of refugee issues and give a platform for refugee artists. This Strategy recognises the potential of refugees to support the creative growth of the city and supports community sports and arts organisations to deliver programmes which contribute to cohesion communities. National Museums Liverpool are a major asset to be utilised within this strategy, aims to support refugees and people seeking asylum through cultural activity, meaningful partnerships, activity and resource sharing with organisations working with them.
BRING YOUR HAPPINESS, BRING YOUR SADNESS TO OUR LIVERPOOL HOME, WHERE YOU AND I WILL NEVER WALK ALONE
In addition to the various statutory services that support people seeking asylum, refugees and vulnerable migrants Liverpool City Council has been awarded £2,448,658 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to undertake a programme of work from 2018 to 2020/21. The funding from the MHCLG will enable Liverpool City Council to improve and increase the capacity of services for people seeking asylum, refugees and vulnerable migrants to access the support they are entitled to live independent healthy lives and contribute to their communities. Certain elements of the programme will be delivered across or accessible to service users from across LCR, either by LCC alone or in collaboration with the other Local Authorities within LCR.

The programme will meet the following outcomes, according to the seven thematic areas of this Strategy [19]:

**Needs of people seeking asylum**
- 90 asylum seeker and refugee parents will have access to the services and support that they require to live safe and healthy lives with their children (LCC)
- Asylum seekers, refugees and the organisations that support them will report an improvement in access to the statutory services that they are entitled to (LCC)
- Asylum seekers and refugees will report an improvement in access to VCS services across LCR
- Key Local Authority staff will have an improved understanding of the needs and entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and other vulnerable migrants. (LCR)

**Employability and Welfare Benefits**
- 300 newly granted refugees per year will have timely access to the benefits they are entitled to reduce the risk of destitution (LCR)
- 150 refugees per year will understand the UK employment market and how to apply for employment (LCR)
- 75 refugees per year will have made steps to employment/ become work ready (LCR)
- 36 refugees per year will undertake work experience and/or volunteering opportunities (LCR)

**Housing**
- 300 newly granted refugees per year will apply for housing before their asylum accommodation ends (LCR)
- There will be a 20% reduction in the time spent in emergency accommodation from an average of 10 weeks to an average of 8 weeks for 150 newly granted refugees (LCC only)
- There will be a 20% increase in the use of private rented sector housing for newly granted refugees (LCC)
- 25 migrant rough sleepers per year (or those at risk of homelessness), will secure accommodation and avoid homelessness (LCC)
Education

- 432 migrant parents will be better equipped to support their children's education, contributing to improvements in attendance and attainment (LCR)
- 200 newly arrivals asylum seeking children will have access to education from 2 weeks after arrival until they are dispersed elsewhere and enrolled in a school. There will be a reduction in the number of children missing from education (LCC)
- Schools (from across the North West) accepting dispersed asylum seeking children will be able to plan for the child's individual needs, using the assessment provided (NW)
- Schools near to IA will see a reduction in the number of asylum seeking children (still in IA) registering with them and therefore a reduction in their turnover (LCC)

Language

- 40 refugee parents will improve their ability to mix with the local community, access services and improve their steps to employment (LCC)
- Children's Centres and other services will see a reduction in their interpreting costs, for the parents engaged in ESOL (LCC)

Health and Wellbeing

- 400 refugees per year will have reduced stigma of discussing and accessing mental health and wellbeing support, which reduces the risk of accessing services at crisis point (LCC)
- 400 refugees per year will develop confidence to access local cultural, fitness and leisure amenities in a preventative capacity, in order to reduce pressure on primary care services (LCC)
- 60 women asylum seekers and/or refugees with severe mental health needs will be able to live independently and engage in their own and children's lives (LCC)

Communities, Culture and Social Connections

- 50% Increase in the number of people reporting that they feel safe in their neighbourhood (LCR)
- 50% Increase in the number of people who report getting on well together with people from different backgrounds (LCR)

In addition to the above, the Our Liverpool Grants Programme is funded by both the MHCLG income and the income generated from the Refugee Resettlement programmes in Liverpool. The grants programme provides much needed resources to the VCS, enabling them to identify and achieve additional outcomes that will deliver on the aims and objectives of this strategy.

Liverpool has pledged to accept and support 169 resettled refugees from 2016 to 2020, generating a total expected income of approximately £2.9million which has been and will continue to be used to support the integration of the individual resettled refugees for five years. Resettled refugees are provided with 12 months intensive support (a requirement of the Home Office) with ESOL and Employment support continuing in Years 2 and 3.

The resettlement funding will also provide additional capacity and resources to services and communities that are impacted by supporting people seeking asylum, refugees and vulnerable migrants. Following a review of the MHCLG funded programme, a decision will be made to continue certain elements of the programme until 2022, to cover the duration of this Strategy.

The VCS provision will contribute to achieving the aims and objectives of this Strategy, much of this provision is based on short term funding and is yet unknown, so difficult to outline. However, the British Red Cross, Refugee Action and Asylum Link Merseyside will deliver a partnership programme SNAP Merseyside (Strategic National Asylum Programme) from 2018-2021 with £510,000 funding from the National Lottery Community Fund that will contribute to the aims and objectives of this Strategy.
IS THE SOUND OF THE MERSEY BEAT, REGGAE, SOUL, R&B, PUNK, HIGH LIFE, HIP HOP TO MAKE YOU MOVE YOUR FEET.

Our Liverpool (Scouser's delight) © Our Liverpool Project April 2019
Our Contribution to the City’s Transformation Plan

This Strategy will contribute to the Councils’ Transformation Plan in the following ways:

**The City Conversation – changing our relationship with individuals**
We need to explore what a new relationship with citizens will look like as a result of a radically reduced resource base, a rise in demand for services, and the increasing complexity of the social challenges we face. This will require a very different approach from the public sector and the wider community and the City Conversation is how we will seek to consult with a wide range of stakeholders about what being a good citizen means – given that being a citizen by definition implies a reciprocal relationship – ‘getting’ services, but also ‘giving’ back. Through this conversation we need to better understand what our citizens expect from us (the council and our partners), what they can do for themselves and what we can do together.

The New Relationship is built upon a series of principles including, adopting a strength-based approach to everything we do by focusing on community strengths, resources and capacities, rather than on its problems or deficits. It is about having a different (strength-based) conversation and making every contact with our citizens count. The City Conversation is underpinned by a detailed communication and engagement strategy and through this work we will ensure that the voices of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are included in the programme of consultation activities.

**Empowering residents and communities to play a more active role in improving their neighbourhoods and shaping their services.**
Through the Migrant Group we will enable participants and communities to be more resilient and have control of the things that impact on their quality of life.

**Working collaboratively with partner agencies to achieve our vision**
Key stakeholders in Liverpool have been included in the development of this Strategy and will continue to play a vital role in its implementation. We will also continue to work with key stakeholders across Liverpool City Region and this Strategy will be aligned with others under the new initiate ‘City Partnership Group’
Developing the Council’s workforce

Delivering a new relationship will require a massive cultural change programme not only for the City Council’s own staff but also those of our partners. This is not a quick fix, it is not an initiative or a pilot – it is a way of working, a way of seeing the city and its people. It will take time to embed and it will take significant investment in our workforce. People not structures make change happen and we need to equip our staff with the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to work in a strength-based way, where they co-produce outcomes with individuals, families and communities. We are currently developing a detailed workforce development strategy and competency framework – which sets out the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed from staff to deliver on our vision for a new relationship with citizens – and this will be underpinned by a bespoke programme of workforce development activity that will support all of our staff to play their part and to deliver our vision of thriving people and places. In addition, all Council staff will have access to an online training module that will improve their understanding of the needs, rights and entitlements of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCC Inclusive Growth Plan Aims and Priorities</th>
<th>Our Liverpool Aims</th>
<th>Our Liverpool Objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2  Empowering residents and communities to improve their local environment and services</td>
<td>1.2  Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td>1.2.1 People seeking asylum are supported to understand the asylum system, their rights and entitlements throughout the process and are able to make informed decisions and engage with services</td>
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<td>3.3  Improving health, wellbeing and prosperity in all neighbourhoods</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4  Maintaining community safety and cohesion</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5  Supporting residents in need and preventing and alleviating poverty</td>
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### Notes
- The numbering for the Inclusive Growth Plan is different to the numbering for the Our Liverpool Aims and objectives which relates to the particular theme, aim and objective. e.g. 1.21 relates to Theme 1, Aim 2, and Objective 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LCC Inclusive Growth Plan Aims and Priorities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.5</strong> Supporting residents in need and preventing and alleviating poverty</td>
<td><strong>2.2</strong> Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td><strong>2.2.1</strong> Refugees are supported to move on from asylum support within the 28 day move on period, by ensuring that benefits are in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1</strong> More businesses creating more and better quality jobs with fair pay and employment practices</td>
<td><strong>2.3</strong> Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs</td>
<td><strong>2.3.1</strong> Refugees can build their skills, secure employment and gain financial independence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.2</strong> A skilled resident workforce and a city skills offer that better meets the needs of businesses</td>
<td><strong>2.2.2</strong> Refugees are better able to understand and articulate their skills and competencies to support them to secure employment</td>
<td><strong>2.3.2</strong> Refugees and other vulnerable migrants (with permission to work) can access services designed to support entrepreneurialism and establish businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCC Inclusive Growth Plan Aims and Priorities</td>
<td>Our Liverpool Aims</td>
<td>Our Liverpool Objectives:</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1 Improving housing and neighbourhoods through targeted and coordinated actions with partner agencies</td>
<td>3.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to thrive in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections</td>
<td>3.1.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to fully access support to settle in their new home, and as a result are able to settle and integrate successfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Empowering residents and communities to improve their local environment and services</td>
<td>3.2 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td>3.2.1 A range of suitable housing options are available to refugees in Liverpool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Maintaining community safety and cohesion</td>
<td>3.3 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs</td>
<td>3.3.1 Refugees are supported to understand the full range of housing options available to them and as a result are able to make the best possible choice for themselves</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5 Supporting residents in need and preventing and alleviating poverty</td>
<td>3.5 Preventing and addressing homelessness</td>
<td>3.3.2 Refugees are able to fully access support to settle in their new home and as a result are able to settle and integrate successfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Preventing and addressing homelessness</td>
<td>3.4 Improving housing and neighbourhoods through targeted and coordinated actions with partner agencies</td>
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<td>3.6 Maintaining community safety and cohesion</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4  Children and young people are educated skilled and prepared for a successful adulthood</td>
<td>4.2 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td>4.2.1 Young refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants (and their parents/carers/guardians) are aware of and understand the options available to them, in terms of learning, education opportunities and funding support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6  Children and young people have equality of opportunity regardless of circumstances</td>
<td>4.3 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs</td>
<td>4.3.1 All staff within education and learning settings are able to effectively communicate with refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrant children and their parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4  Children and young people are educated skilled and prepared for a successful adulthood</td>
<td>4.2 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4 Maintaining community safety and cohesion</td>
<td>5.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to thrive in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections</td>
<td>5.1.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants have the opportunity to maintain their language and culture and share with their local communities</td>
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<td>4.1 More businesses creating more and better quality jobs with fair pay and employment practices</td>
<td>5.2 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td>5.2.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants have the opportunity to achieve the language and language qualifications they need to progress to further learning or employment</td>
</tr>
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<td>4.2 A skilled resident workforce and a city skills offer that better meets the needs of businesses</td>
<td>5.3 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs</td>
<td>5.3.1 Those working with refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants improve their understanding of the language barriers and how to overcome them</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4 Maintaining community safety and cohesion. 3.5 Supporting residents in need and preventing and alleviating poverty</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Supporting people to manage their own care and live safe, healthy and independent lives</td>
<td>6.2 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td>6.2.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to look after and improve their own health and well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Providing access to safe, sustainable and quality services for disabled and vulnerable residents and their carers</td>
<td>6.3 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well co-ordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs</td>
<td>6.3.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services and have their dignity respected</td>
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<td>6.3.2 Services are more responsive to the needs of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>3.2 Empowering residents and communities to improve their local environment and services</td>
<td>7.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to thrive in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections</td>
<td>7.1.1 Communities are aware of the needs of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrant communities and actively seek to involve them in community life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Maintaining community safety and cohesion</td>
<td>7.2 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives</td>
<td>7.1.2 Social isolation experienced by refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants is reduced as they become active in their local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 More businesses creating more and better quality jobs with fair pay and employment practices</td>
<td>7.3 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs</td>
<td>7.2.1 Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants engage in cultural, heritage and sport activities and celebrate their own culture, talents and contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 A skilled resident workforce and a city skills offer that better meets the needs of businesses</td>
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<td>3.4 Maintaining community safety and cohesion</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5 Supporting residents in need and preventing and alleviating poverty</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3.1 Local community groups and refugee, asylum seeker and vulnerable migrant led organisations play an active role in supporting integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This aims and objectives of this Strategy will be monitored via seven action plans, one for each thematic area. Detailed action plans will be developed by the thematic sub groups, identifying the specific actions required, who is responsible, the specific timeframes and the evidence of impact. A template action plan can be found in Appendix 2. Each sub group will be jointly led by a Liverpool City Council lead Officer (who sits on the LCC Steering Group) and a VCS or statutory partner (who sits on the Multi- Agency Forum) for that particular theme. Joint leads will be required to submit monitoring reports to the LCC Steering Group and Multi – Agency Forum. The Multi-Agency Forum will be chaired by an LCC Officer and co-chaired by a VCS representative. The LCC Officer and VCS representative will support the LCC and VCS joint sub group leads to collect and submit monitoring reports. The seven action plans will be updated each year to show the progress achieved each year for the duration of this Strategy.

A Migrant Group will be supported to advise on and monitor the work of each sub group, thus ensuring that the needs and experiences of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are represented in this Strategy. The Terms of References for the various groups outlined in Figure 2 can be found in Appendix 3.

In terms of leadership the LCC Steering Group will report to Liverpool City Council’s Management Team and Cabinet twice a year and to the Local Strategic Partnership once a year. Liverpool works collectively with the other Liverpool City Region Local Authorities and the North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership (RSMP). Issues raised in both the LCC Steering Group and Multi- Agency Forum are taken to the LCR Officers Group on Asylum Seekers and refugees, which in turn feeds into the RSMP structure see Appendix 4.
Liverpool City Council
Directors to provide oversight and strategic direction. Reports to LCC Cabinet twice a year.

The LCC Steering Group and Multi-Agency Forum to collectively monitor the action plans, promote collaboration and avoid duplication between the themed groups, both meet quarterly.

Themed sub-groups to be co-led by a Liverpool City Council staff member and a representative from a relevant external organisation.

A representative from The Migrant Group should also be included in each thematic sub-group.
STEVE BIKO HOUSING IS THE PLACE TO BE
WHERE WE CELEBRATE
STEVE BIKO’S LEGACY
WELCOMING HOMES IN THE COMMUNITY
WHERE YOU WILL FIND DIVERSITY, TRANQUILITY AND UNITY

Our Liverpool (Scouser's delight)
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Appendices
### Appendix 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigration status</th>
<th>Finance/Welfare</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asylum Seeker</strong></td>
<td>If destitute an individual will be eligible for Asylum Support which includes financial support of £37.75 per week, paid for by the Home Office. Individuals will not usually be allowed to work while their asylum application is being considered.</td>
<td>If destitute an individual will be eligible for Asylum Support which can include accommodation if they would otherwise be homeless. SERCO is responsible for providing this accommodation on behalf of the Home Office. If the individual has somewhere they can live they can apply for subsistence-only support.</td>
<td>Everyone in England can access NHS primary care for free. An individual who is seeking asylum is also eligible for free secondary care, and if they are receiving Asylum Support they should receive a HC2 certificate which entitles them to other NHS services free of charge (including prescriptions).</td>
<td>An adult who has lived in the UK for six months or longer while waiting for a decision on their asylum application is eligible to attend courses funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (e.g., ESOL through Adult Learning Centres). All school age children have the right to access education in the UK. Children ages 2 and 3, whose family are receiving Asylum Support are also eligible for free early learning in some OFSTED registered nurseries and playgroups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigration status</td>
<td>Finance/Welfare</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Refused Asylum Seeker</strong></td>
<td>Asylum Support will usually stop, unless an individual has a dependent child.</td>
<td>Asylum Support will usually stop, and the individual will be given 21 days to leave their SERCO accommodation, unless the individual has a dependent child. The individual may be eligible for Section 4 support if they are destitute and meet the criteria. This includes £35.39 a week on a pre-paid card. If an individual has a child, and does not meet the eligibility for Section 4 support, they may qualify for support from the Local Authority, known as Section 17 support. If an adult has care and support needs that are related to a physical or mental health issue, illness or disability, they may be eligible for Local Authority support.</td>
<td>Everyone in England can access NHS primary care for free. A lack of ID or proof of address should not prevent registration at a GP. For secondary care they can continue, free of charge, with any course of treatment already underway before their application was refused. For new courses of treatment, individuals may face charges, often at 150% of the actual cost. Treatment that clinicians consider is needed immediately or urgently will be provided even if payment is not made in advance. Some services remain free for all (e.g. treatment for a condition caused by torture). If the individual is receiving Home Office Support (e.g. Section 4) they will still be eligible for secondary care.</td>
<td>If the individual is receiving Section 4 support or has been waiting for a decision on their appeal for over 6 months they are eligible to attend courses funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (e.g. ESOL through Adult Learning Centres). All school age children have the right to access education in the UK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration status</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Refugee</strong></td>
<td>Eligible to apply for welfare benefits as a UK born citizen and has the right to work. An individual with Discretionary Leave will normally have NRPF*.</td>
<td>Eligible to apply for public housing as a UK born citizen. An individual with Discretionary Leave will normally have NRPF*.</td>
<td>Eligible to access health services as a UK born citizen. An individual with discretionary leave will be required to pay the NHS surcharge of £400 per year.</td>
<td>Eligible for education provision as a UK born citizen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanitarian Protection</strong></td>
<td>A person who has been accepted by the UK government as meeting the criteria set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention and thus granted refugee status.</td>
<td>An individual may be granted Humanitarian Protection if they are at risk of serious harm if they return to their country of origin but are not recognised as a refugee because the risk is not of persecution for a reason covered by the Refugee Convention</td>
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<td><strong>Discretionary Leave</strong></td>
<td>An individual may be granted Discretionary Leave if they do not meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules, but there are nonetheless exceptional and/or compassionate reasons for allowing them to remain here.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigration status</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Irregular migrant</strong></td>
<td>Usually the individual will be ineligible for welfare benefits as they are NRPF*.</td>
<td>Usually the individual will be ineligible for public housing as they are NRPF*.</td>
<td>Everyone in England can access NHS primary care for free. A lack of ID or proof of address should not prevent registration at a GP. For secondary care individuals may face charges. Treatment that clinicians consider is needed immediately or urgently will be provided even if payment is not made in advance. Some services remain free for all (e.g. treatment for a condition caused by torture).</td>
<td>All school age children have the right to access education in the UK, regardless of their immigration status. Irregular migrants are not eligible to attend courses funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (e.g. ESOL through Adult Learning Centres).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU/ EEA Migrants</strong></td>
<td>An individual may be able to apply for welfare benefits if they can prove that they have the 'right to reside' and are 'habitually resident'.</td>
<td>The individual may be able to apply for public housing if they can prove that they have the 'right to reside' and are 'habitually resident'.</td>
<td>Everyone in England can access NHS primary care for free. An EU/ EEA migrant is eligible for free secondary care.</td>
<td>The individual is eligible to attend courses funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (e.g. ESOL through Adult Learning Centres).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)</strong></td>
<td>An individual will not be able to access welfare benefits. However, if an individual is an adult with care and support needs, has a dependent child in need, or is a young person formerly looked after by the Local Authority they may be eligible for Local Authority support.</td>
<td>An individual will not be able to access public housing. However, if an individual is an adult with care and support needs, has a dependent child in need, or is a young person formerly looked after by the Local Authority they may be eligible for Local Authority support.</td>
<td>Everyone in England can access NHS primary care for free. A lack of ID or proof of address should not prevent registration at a GP. For secondary care individuals may face charges. Treatment that clinicians consider is needed immediately or urgently will be provided even if payment is not made in advance. Some services remain free for all (e.g. treatment for a condition caused by torture).</td>
<td>Education is not a public fund, and so NRPF does not affect the individual's ability to access courses funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (e.g. ESOL through Adult Learning Centres). All school age children have the right to access education in the UK regardless of their immigration status.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)*
No recourse to public funds (NRPF) is a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status. It means that they are prohibited from accessing specified welfare benefits and public housing. It may be possible for an individual to appeal the NRPF condition.

Information correct as of 30th April 2019.
Appendix 2

Refugee, People Seeking Asylum and Vulnerable Migrant Strategy 2019 -2021

Action Plan – Monitoring Form

Themed sub-group title: ................................................................................................................................................................................................................

Date of last update: ........................................................................................................................................................................................................................

The purpose of this form is to monitor progress on the actions of the themed sub-group and their contribution to the aims and objectives of the Our Liverpool Refugee, People Seeing Asylum and Vulnerable Migrant Strategy.

The Co-Chairs of each of the themed sub-group are responsible for updating the monitoring form ahead of the relevant LCC Steering Group and Multi-Agency Forum meeting. This will enable the LCC Steering Group and Multi-Agency Forum to monitor progress, co-ordinate the effort to achieve the Our Liverpool overarching aims and produce an annual report.

Co-chairs may choose to update the form at any time as the actions are progressed. The form can also be used as structure for meetings and be used as a meeting record in the place of taking minutes.

Co-Chairs Contact details:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Email</th>
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Current Group Membership (excluding Co-Chairs)

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<th>Name</th>
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Action Monitoring

Please use the traffic light system to complete a short update on progress of actions:

**GREEN** to indicate you are content with the current status and on track

**AMBER** to flag any potential delays in achieving agreed actions

**RED** to highlight any significant difficulties that may result in failure

**OVERARCHING AIM 1:**
Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to thrive in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities and are able to build diverse relationships and connections.

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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Date added</th>
<th>Lead organisation</th>
<th>Update on progress</th>
<th>Evidence of impact</th>
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**OVERARCHING AIM 2:**
Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and are able to exercise them to pursue full and independent lives.

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<th>Objective</th>
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**OVERARCHING AIM 3:**
Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are able to access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs.

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**OVERARCHING AIM 4:**
Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants will inform local policy, strategic planning and Liverpool's influencing to central government.

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SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT

The guiding principles clearly set out the importance of active participation of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants in the implementation of the strategy. Please record details of how the Migrant Group or other refugees, people seeking asylum or vulnerable migrants are involved or informing your theme.

Informing

How is the lived experience of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants informing the work of the themed group?

Involved

Please detail how refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants are involved in the delivery of actions for the work of the themed group. This should be current and include a description of their involvement with reference to specific actions.
AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Please note any issues the sub group has become aware of which should be monitored and may require further action. This can include ‘hot topics’ or other issues raised in meeting discussions which are not covered by existing actions.

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<th>Issue</th>
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UPDATE ON ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN PREVIOUS REPORT

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LINKS IDENTIFIED TO OTHER THEMES

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<th>Existing action or issue identified</th>
<th>Other theme that should be aware/could co-ordinate with</th>
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ENSURING EQUAL ACCESS

Our Liverpool is embedded in equality legislation, and policy and actions should recognise the needs of all those who have a protected characteristic or specific vulnerabilities. The particular needs of four groups of refugees and people seeking asylum were highlighted in the strategy and should be taken into account when planning and implementing actions.

Please record any:

- Engagement undertaken to ensure that planned actions will meet the needs of everyone who should benefit from them.
- Adjustment made to actions to meet the needs of particular groups.
- Specific steps taken to address the needs of particular groups.

Where applicable please record the action which the work recorded specifically relates to:

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Terms of Reference
‘Our Liverpool’ LCC Steering Group

1. Introduction
The Our Liverpool Steering Group is an internal Liverpool City Council group which will focus on strategy and policy issues relating to people seeking asylum, refugees and vulnerable migrants.

2. Purpose
The purpose of the group is to:
• Provide colleagues with a comprehensive overview of the current asylum dispersal and refugee resettlement situation in Liverpool
• Monitor any emerging or ongoing issues regarding asylum seekers and refugees and escalate to appropriate regional and national bodies
• Monitor ongoing resource commitments to manage identified issues
• Provide policy guidance and direction to senior management and political leads on relevant issues
• Provide an internal network to share information and highlight best practice or other learning
• Receive presentations from appropriate persons on relevant topics e.g. No Recourse to Public Funds, changes to Immigration Bill
• Monitor progress on the city’s work on the “Inclusive Cities” programme
• Monitor the action plans for the ‘Our Liverpool’ Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Vulnerable Migrant Strategy
• Monitor the Our Liverpool programme of work.

3. Members
Membership of the group is expected from council officers working in the following areas:
• Community Services
  Safer & Stronger Communities/ Refugee Resettlement / Landlord Licensing (SERCO relationship)
• Adult Services
  Homelessness/Social Care/Housing Options
• Adult Learning Services
  ESOL provision/ Employment support
• Childrens Services
  Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children/ School Improvement Service/ Admissions/ Children’s Centres
• Legal
  NRPF cohort
• Public Health
• Revenues and Benefits
Members bring with them expertise, knowledge and experience based on their work with asylum seekers and refugees.
4. Chair
The Group will be chaired by Julie Kashirahamwe, Refugee Programme Manager and sponsored by Ron Odunaiya, Director of Community Services.

The role of the Chair includes chairing and overseeing the Group meetings giving direction to its work and ensuring they are conducted in line with its purposes.

The Chair works with Group members making sure that the business is dealt with efficiently, all members have a chance to have a say and the actions are carried out. The Chair delegates tasks to officers as appropriate and acts as a spokesperson for the Group.

The sponsor represents and promotes the work of the Group to LCC Chief Executive Management Team and Cabinet.

5. Frequency of meetings
The Group will meet quarterly.

Members should make every effort to attend meetings with apologies given where appropriate.

6. Governance
The group will report to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Regulatory Services.

Every member of the group has an equal right to place items on each meeting’s agenda. The Chair must receive these items no later than two weeks before the date of the next meeting.

Actions arising from meetings will be undertaken by the designated party.

7. Equality Statement
Members of the group are fully committed to eliminating discrimination and actively promoting equality of opportunity for all.
All individuals will be treated in a fair and equal manner and in accordance with the law regardless of gender, gender identity, marital status, race, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation.

1. Introduction
The Liverpool Multi-Agency Asylum Seekers & Refugees Group is a multi-agency platform for representatives of services providing support to those groups, to raise understanding of their needs and discuss issues that affect them.

2. Purpose
The purpose of Asylum Seekers & Refugees Group is to:

- Provide agencies with a comprehensive overview of the current asylum dispersal and refugee resettlement situation in Liverpool
- Monitor any emerging or ongoing issues regarding asylum seekers and refugees and escalate to appropriate city and regional bodies
- Monitor ongoing resource commitments to manage identified issues
- Provide a platform for statutory and non-statutory organisations to engage meaningfully
- Provide a network to share information and highlight best practice or other learning
- Receive presentations from appropriate persons on relevant topics
- Monitor the action plans for the ‘Our Liverpool’ Asylum Seeker, Refugee and Vulnerable Migrant Strategy
- Update the group on the Our Liverpool programme of work.

3. Members
Membership of the Group is open to elected members, council officers, representative of the local services that work with Asylum Seekers and Refugees, Home Office, Voluntary and Community organisations supporting Asylum Seekers and Refugees, North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership and SERCO.

Members bring with them expertise, knowledge and experience based on their work with asylum seekers and refugees. Member organisations will consider the advice and recommendations given by the group to improve the service provision in relation to community safety and cohesion and share them within their service area.

4. Chair
Chair of Asylum Seekers & Refugees Group is elected annually from members of the Group.

The role of the Chair includes chairing and overseeing the Group meetings giving direction to its work and ensuring they are conducted in line with its purposes. The Chair works with Group members making sure that the business is dealt with efficiently, all members have a chance to have a say and the actions are carried out. The Chair delegates tasks to officers as appropriate and acts as a spokesperson for the Group.
5. Frequency of meetings

The Group will meet quarterly.
Members should make every effort to attend meetings with apologies given where appropriate.

6. Governance

The Our Liverpool Multi Agency group will report to the LCC Steering Group, LCC Neighbourhoods Select Committee and the LCR Officers Asylum Seeker and Refugee Group that feeds into the Regional Strategic Migration Partnership structure.

The Safer and Stronger Communities Team will arrange appropriate venues and service the Group meetings.

Every member of the group has an equal right to place items on each meeting’s agenda. The Safer and Stronger Communities Team must receive these items no later than two weeks before the date of the next meeting.

Actions arising from meetings will be undertaken by the designated party.

Notice of the upcoming Asylum Seekers & Refugee Group meeting will be sent to the members through the mailing list.

7. Equality Statement

Members of Asylum Seekers & Refugees Group are fully committed to eliminating discrimination and actively promoting equality of opportunity for all.

All individuals will be treated in a fair and equal manner and in accordance with the law regardless of gender, gender identity, marital status, race, religion, colour, age, disability or sexual orientation.
Terms of Reference
‘Our Liverpool’ Migrant Group

This is a working document which will change and develop according to the wishes of the membership.

1. Purpose

• To inform the work of the Our Liverpool Community Development Team.
• To support community cohesion in Liverpool
• To create a strong migrant voice within the council.
• To showcase the contributions and positive impact made by refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants in Liverpool.
• To ensure the Our Liverpool Refugee, People Seeking Asylum and Vulnerable Migrant strategy and its action plans, face scrutiny from those with recent experience of the asylum process, getting refugee status and being a vulnerable migrant in Liverpool.

2. Activities

• Contribute to the scrutiny and monitoring of the Our Liverpool Refugee, People Seeking Asylum and Vulnerable Migrant strategy and its action plans, face scrutiny from those with recent experience of the asylum process, getting refugee status and being a vulnerable migrant in Liverpool.

3. Membership

Members are individuals who have agreed to take part in the Our Liverpool Migrant Group, they should:

• Have lived experience of the asylum process, getting refugee status or being a migrant new to Liverpool.
• Be over 16 years of age (Children aged 16-17 years should be accompanied by a support worker)

Membership will aim to be representative of the diversity of migrants in Liverpool.

Members will serve a maximum membership of two years (8 meetings), so that new people can become members.

Members will:
• Be informed of meetings in advance of the proposed dates.
• Receive information about the meeting to help them prepare
• Have the opportunity to attend 6 meetings per year.
• Be given the opportunity and support to attend other LCC meetings and trainings.
• Be paid any incurred expenses by a partner organisation or LCC.
• Represent the interests of new communities in Liverpool.
• Disseminate information from the group to migrants living in Liverpool.
4. Partners
Partner organisations are refugee and migrant organisations in LCC who have agreed to support the Our Liverpool Migrant Group. They will help promote the group, and identify and support members.
Partner organisations will:
Support the group and members by: Promoting the group; Identifying members; Reimbursing incurred travel expenses of up to £5 per day directly to members (LCC can be invoiced for these costs).
Receive updates from the group.

5. LCC Our Liverpool Community Development Team will:
- Reimburse partner organisations for members' incurred expenses.
- Reimburse incurred travel expenses of any members unaffiliated with a partner organisation.
- Organise meetings in appropriate locations
- Provide interpreters if needed
- Provide members and partners with meeting agendas and notes.
- Promote and disseminate information, feedback and learning from the group to relevant LCC departments and partners.
- Try and remove barriers to participation in the group.

6. Frequency
The Our Liverpool Group will meet a minimum of 6 times per year. Meetings will aim to inform LCC and the group have no budgetary power. Core LCC values must be adhered to in meeting.
Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group
Attendees: Regional political leads / Immigration Minister / HO & LGAs officer support
Purpose: Political overview of asylum and refugee issues.

Home Office and Local Government Chief Executive Group
Attendees: LA Chief Executives / HO / LGAs
Purpose: National strategic overview of how dispersal is working across the UK.

RSMP Executive Board / Regional Partnership Board
Attendees: HO, Serco, Migrant Help Local Authority Chief Executives, Health, Police, VCS
Purpose: Regional strategic oversight of asylum dispersal

Resettlement Strategic Engagement Group
UASC Governance Board

RSMP Resettlement Forum
UASC Leads Group
RSMP Asylum Group
NRPF Network
RSMP Voluntary Sector Forum

GM Asylum, Refugee and Migration Group
LCR Officers Group
Asylum Seekers and Refugees
Lancashire Refugee Steering Group
Cumbria Strategic Refugee Group

Local Authority Multi Agency Forums

NATIONAL
REGIONAL
SUB-REGIONAL
LOCAL
Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following organisations for their engagement in the stakeholder consultations and valuable contributions to the various drafts, without which the development of this Strategy would not have been possible.

• Asylum Link Merseyside
• Asylum Matters
• British Red Cross
• Citizens Advice Liverpool
• Family Refugee Support Project
• Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit
• Job Centre Plus/Department of Work and Pensions
• Liverpool City Council
• Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group
• Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
• Migrant Help
• Mersey Care
• Merseyside Fire and Rescue
• Merseyside Police
• Merseyside Refugee Support Network
• National Museums Liverpool
• North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership
• Right to Remain
• Refugee Action
• Refugee Women Connect
• Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital Trust: Discharge Team
• Serco
• School Improvement Liverpool: Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service
• South Liverpool Homes

And lastly special thanks goes to Levi Tafari and Nina Edge for their collaboration with community groups across Liverpool to create the Our Liverpool poem and artwork.

Footnotes

[3] The overall framework for our Strategy has been adopted from the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2018-2022
[16] NHS Charging Regulations (makes some groups ineligible for secondary level care and places statutory duty on NHS secondary care providers to recover costs).
[17] https://www.immigration-health-surcharge.service.gov.uk/checker/Type
[18] Health Select Committee instructing NHS Digital to end the practice,
[19] Some outcomes are relevant to other thematic areas.