

CONTACTS

Scottish Refugee Council

5 Cadogan Square
170 Blythswood Court
Glasgow G2 7PH
T: 0141 248 9799
F: 0141 243 2499
www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Scottish Asylum Seekers Consortium

COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership
Cadell House, Suite 2/3
27 Waterloo Street
Glasgow G2 6BZ
www.migrationscotland.org.uk

Scottish Churches Housing Action

44 Hanover Street
Edinburgh EH2 2DR
T: 0131 477 4500
www.churches-housing.org

Refugee Council Online

T: 020 7820 3000
www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Student Action for Refugees (STAR)

Oxford House
Derbyshire Street
London E2 6HG
T: 020 7729 8880
www.star-network.org.uk

Refugee Survival Trust

The Melting Pot
5 Rose Street
Edinburgh EH2 2PR
T: 0131 243 2660
www.rst.org.uk

FAITH in ACTION

March



Asylum Seekers

contact:
churchrelations@scotland.anglican.org

Monthly leaflets downloadable from
www.scotland.anglican.org/index.php/church_in_society_committee/

Scottish Charity No SC015962

Before presenting some possible suggestions about how to help the plight of asylum seekers it is important to consider several popular myths found in the printed media. Many newspapers place particular rhetorical emphasis on the 'hordes' of people attempting to seek asylum in the 'soft touch' UK. However, the actual proportion of people applying for asylum to the UK is actually a minute percentage of the overall worldwide number of asylum seekers and the UNHCR calculates that the UK receives less than 0.5% of the total world population of refugees.

Another common view in the press is that asylum seekers drain the resources of local authorities which could have been spent on tax-paying citizens. However, this is again fallacious, since funding for asylum seekers comes from central Government, not local authorities' budgets. Finally it is vital to emphasise that despite media attempts to demonise asylum seekers, the vast majority of people seeking asylum are genuine, scared and desperate people who are seeking refuge often from countries where their basic human rights are not respected.

Of the thousands of people who apply for asylum, only a thousand or so come to Scotland each year. However, due to government re-organising, this number is set to rise over the next few years. So, what can we do? It is important to keep yourself informed and up to date with accurate statistics and information about asylum seekers. You can do this very easily by contacting and/or applying for a free e-mail newsletter from the Scottish Asylum Seekers Consortium which will give you accurate coverage of the state of affairs in Scotland.

You may wish to try the following:

- pray for asylum seekers
- become a member and support the work of the Scottish Refugee Council
- if a student get in touch with Student Action for Refugees
- donate clothes, blankets, baby clothes, toys and non-perishable foods to charities caring for refugees
- join the Scottish Detainee Visitors' Scheme and visit Dungavel detention centre and support those living there
- write to your MP and MSP regarding the plight of refugees in our country
- become a mentor to an approved refuge as he/she seeks employment

PRAYERS

Almighty God,

through your Son, Jesus Christ we are called to serve the marginalised and vulnerable within our society.

Give us Your gift of Grace that we might share in the plight of all asylum seekers and refugees and open our hearts to them, that Your love may be known:

through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

We remember that the Holy Family fled to find a place of safety.

We pray for all families who find themselves taking enormous risks in order to secure a safer future for their children.

Guide their decision making and their actions.

May they find for themselves the safety and security that St Joseph was able to find for his family.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

AMEN

We hold before you children throughout our world who are separated from their parents because of asylum issues.

We pray for children who find themselves in places where no-one understands their language or who are effectively imprisoned in a detention centre.

We pray that they will be able to reclaim their childhood rights and be enabled to grow in love for You as they grow in years

In Jesus' name.

AMEN

We remember all those who work with asylum seekers.

We pray that they will be helped to respect the humanity of each person they meet; that they will find ways to ensure that people are helped to express themselves and to be clear about their needs - physical, psychological and spiritual;

that they will recognise the risen Christ in each person they meet.

In His name.

AMEN