Papers for

Refugee inclusion: a strategic approach to housing

A seminar
held at the House of Commons
on
21 November 2002

Organised by Praxis with Queen Mary University of London

Compile by Berhanu Kassie
Contents

Background
Overview - John Eversley
Housing and refugees in England by Berhanu Kassayie
Settlement of Refugees in Britain - a historical overview by Miguel Arnedo

Topic papers - Berhanu Kassayie
1. Refugees at the reception stage
2. Transition or move-on
3. Permanent homes
4. International perspectives - Richard Scrase
5. Criteria for evaluating schemes

Good practice
1. The Praxis Hosting Scheme - an evaluation
2. Cephas Street
3. International examples of projects and programmes

Fact sheets - Berhanu Kassayie
1. Legal policy context of asylum seekers and refugees
2. Refugees during the reception stage
3. Population trends, the economy, housing and refugees in England
4. Economic and social conditions in the regions
5. The impact of economic and social factors on refugees
6. Provision of housing association supported housing
7. Housing association scheme types
8. Refugees in housing association supported housing
9. Profile of location and previous housing
10. Australia
11. Northern and Western Europe
12. US and Canada
13. International experience – general resources
14. United Kingdom resources
15. Permanent homes - housing associations and demography
16. Permanent homes – homelessness and previous tenure
17. Permanent homes - tenancy and referral agencies
18. Permanent homes - regional distribution
19. Permanent homes - economic status
20. Voices of refugees
Refugees and housing – an overview

This overview summarises research carried out by Praxis under the supervision of the Public Policy Research Unit at Queen Mary University of London over the last year. The research programme has included research on earlier arrivals of refugees and contemporary international perspectives. It has also collected quantitative data that is reported in detail in a series of topic papers and fact sheets. The overview tries to draw out the implications of the data and draws on workshops that looked at what policies and practice might inform future work. The research also included a brief evaluation of Praxis’s hosting scheme.

All the papers form the background to a seminar at the House of Commons on 21 November 2002.
The background

Historical perspectives
We need to be wary about simplistic generalisations about the past and the present but even so there are some lessons to be learned from previous episodes of refugee entry to the UK. The Praxis research has looked at the arrival of the refugees from Nazism, Ugandan Asians, the Chileans and the Vietnamese.

- **The political background** to the coming of the refugees makes some difference to the numbers and their reception including emergency housing. However even when the British government is supposedly sympathetic, the housing arrangements leave much to be desired. For example, the British Government was sympathetic to the Vietnamese and Ugandan Asians but still dispersed the former to areas of low housing demand such as Northern Ireland and put the latter in resettlement camps – such as Greenham Common - in poor conditions.

- **The economic background** - both the state of the UK economy and the backgrounds of the refugees - has been very influential in where people live and settle. This includes the Nazi refugee women who worked as domestic servants and nurses or men and women on farms, and the Ugandan Asians going into the clothing industry in Leicester.

- **Non-governmental action** has been central to the positive reception of refugee arrivals. Jewish communal organisations, solidarity groups with Chile, and voluntary organisations for the Vietnamese have played major parts.

- **Forced or encouraged dispersal** does not work. Many of the Vietnamese sent to Northern Ireland returned to mainland Britain. Discouragement from going to Leicester had the opposite effect on the Ugandan Asians.

- **Institutional solutions** such as large camps create many problems. The internment of the refugees from Nazism and the reception camps for Ugandan Asians were physically and socially isolated and delayed use of and acquisition of new skills, and interaction with host communities.

International perspectives
The Praxis research has looked at several countries that have positively encouraged immigration – notably the USA, Canada and Australia. The arrangements for those deemed legal are generally among the best in the world, based on linking access to work, education and housing, for example. However, the treatment of people deemed illegal immigrants or whose status is unclear can be very harsh. Australia, for example, has a humanitarian quota who are relatively well treated but others are turned away even at sea or on the shore or are imprisoned in remote camps on arrival.
Within northern and western Europe, although immigration and asylum have been encouraged in the past, policies are generally restrictive but there are major differences in how refugees are treated in relation to housing:

- In Finland, Norway and the Netherlands there is no difference in the rights of citizens and refugees in relation to housing allowances or subsidies. The governments recognise that the costs of housing subsidies are less than the costs of reception centres.
- In the Netherlands there are incentives to the private sector, friends and relatives and local authorities to get people out of reception centres and into private homes as quickly as possible.
- In Sweden there is a dispersal policy that reflects concern about urbanisation and ethnic segregation. However, there are initiatives that mitigate the harmful effects of this such as the Stockholm Integration programme.
- In Belgium the system of reception centres and dispersal has collapsed because the reception centres are full and municipalities are not arranging enough move-on accommodation. There are individual initiatives such as rent guarantee schemes that appear to work well.
- In Luxembourg an NGO sublets subsidised homes.

All over the world non-governmental organisations play a very important role in the integrated initiatives. Perhaps as important as the physical and institutional arrangements are the discourses around immigration and asylum. The countries where there is a positive attitude – such as Canada’s ‘New Canadians’ - inclusion is made much easier than in Belgium where the political atmosphere is generally hostile.

The stages of inclusion in the UK

Reception accommodation

The total numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in emergency accommodation is small compared to the total population – half of one per cent - but the conditions they face are inhumane, unnecessary and undesirable from a wider social and economic perspective.

Despite the financial penalty for doing so (subsistence-only support) two out of five refugee households under the National Asylum Seekers Service choose not to go to dispersal areas. Even more striking is that half of families choose not to. This underlines that even in an emergency, housing is more than a roof over your head. The use of detention centres, police cells, hard-to-let and ‘surplus’ estates, bed and breakfast hotels and the planned reception centres are all in different ways unnecessarily harsh physical conditions. The data on the economic and social environments in the dispersal regions shows that they are also inimical to inclusion in local communities.

It has not been possible to collect data systematically (despite trying) on the availability of support services such as interpreting, English language classes, immigration advice, health, education and welfare services. However, there are many individual reports that they are not available.
The distribution of dispersed refugees does not reflect a coherent policy of situating refugees where economic, social and housing conditions are suitable. The policy only (and even then not completely consistently) moves people to areas of low demand for social housing. The North East, West Midlands and North West are getting a disproportionately large share of dispersed refugees; despite their better economic, social and housing environments, southern England (excluding London) and eastern England, a smaller share.

The results of this are that present methods of reception are:

- Expensive and poor value for money in narrow housing terms per week or month used;
- Used for unnecessarily long periods;
- A missed opportunity to assist in economic and social inclusion which would also have benefits to the economy and society;
- Incurring unnecessary costs in deteriorating health, education and well-being.

Transition stage

It is not possible to track all the places that refugees have temporary accommodation. However, supported housing provided by housing associations (not all of them registered social landlords) house a little over 1000 refugee households – about one per cent of supported housing places overall, but in London, the South East and the North West, about one in eight supported housing places go to refugees. 95% of refugees in supported housing are single adults. About 80% of all refugees are single adults. Nearly four out of ten are women. They are mostly living in shared houses or hostels. Over 40% are in medium- or short-term accommodation. Refugees living in supported housing are more likely not to be defined as statutorily homeless. They are much more likely to be self-referred or referred by ‘non-major’ referral agencies.

The implications of the information gathered are that:

- Housing associations provide a small but significant source of transitional housing mainly for single adults.
- Southern England (except London) and the east of England offer disproportionately few places.
- The kind of housing they are mostly occupying, generally provides less intensive support than sheltered housing or foyers.
- They have to find their own way into the system or are assisted (probably) by refugee community organisations (RCOs), refugee agencies, local advice agencies, colleges and informal networks.

Permanent homes

Even more than for other stages, there is an issue about the lack of data available. Once again the most comprehensive data is about housing associations.
Over the six years up to 2002 it looks as though just over one-third of one per cent of new tenancies are given to refugee households amounting to just under 7000 people living in a little under 3,400 units. 40% of lettings are to single adults.

The profile of new refugee tenants is distinctive:

- Nearly half of lettings are to refugees who are statutorily homeless as opposed to one in five of new lettings generally.
- Refugees were more likely to be referred by local authorities and other statutory agencies.
- Refugees are more likely to live in share accommodation than new tenants generally.
- The regions showing the biggest numbers and proportions of new refugee tenants are London, the South East, the North West and the West Midlands – generally areas of relatively high employment.
- The employment and incomes of new refugee tenants are even lower than for new tenants generally. However, the proportion not dependent on benefits is lower than for new tenants generally.

Implications overall

The most comprehensive data available covers housing provided by housing associations. Although this clearly leads to problems in comparing the roles of different sectors, it can be said with some certainty that housing refugees is not overwhelming the housing association sector. The overall proportion of residents and tenants and refugees is still very small.

The role of local authorities is clearly significant as conduits for funding and referrals but the overall scale of their involvement as landlords cannot be quantified.

The private sector clearly provides some accommodation at the emergency stage but it is unlikely that it is a significant player at the permanent stage.

Moving towards solutions

Philosophy

1. ‘Refugee housing’ should not be treated as a ‘stand alone’ issue.

2. Housing has to be part of creating communities that work on many levels:

   - The personal: personal identity, faith, feelings of safety and belonging and human relationships both with like and unalike people; being able to access jobs, education etc.
   - As groups including choices of being with or not being with other people with similar backgrounds.
   - Being part of the mainstream which includes being part of the mainstream economy, having the same choices of tenure as other people.
3. The movement from arrival to being part of a permanent community is not a linear one that is one-way with rigid stages. Being ‘in transition’ can be a positive opportunity or choice.

4. Addressing the housing circumstances of refugees is often bound up with ‘regeneration’. Regeneration needs to be about growth and healing not demolishing everything that is there, especially what people have created for themselves.

5. This is not simply about providing more public services – it is about reengineering the notion of public service, and, in particular, engaging refugees as actors or producers.

6. We need to focus on the mainstream supply of housing, skills etc. not on demand and marginal activities but solutions need to be local and flexible.

Reception
When people arrive they may be in many different places, for example:

- Accommodation centres;
- Reception centres;
- Bed and breakfast hotels;
- Friends’ floors;
- Faith centres such as mosques;
- Camps.

We would rather many of them were not used but if they are going to be used they should be:

- Open
- Urban
- Outward looking
- Structured in their use i.e. how long people are there for, what they are for (to get and give information, to have needs and rights assessed, for example)
- Based on bonds between people. e.g. refugees from a particular country or faith or age group
- Linked to a number of resources:
  1. The involvement of RCOs;
  2. Resources for people who are ill;
  3. Access to primary care;
  4. Communications with people outside the immediate place - phones and transport;
  5. Social opportunities;
  6. Dealing with hostility, harassment and demonstrating solidarity;
  7. The labour market;
  8. Key workers.
A possible model would be a ‘mother house’ that people could use while in emergency accommodation, but with move-on accommodation nearby so that there is still practical and social support when they are re-housed.

**Moving on**

Transitional accommodation could take many more forms than it currently does. A more comprehensive range would include:

- Women’s refuges or a similar model;
- Shared housing;
- Hosting schemes;
- Sheltered housing;
- Hostels;
- ‘Sympathetic’ landladies;
- ‘Controlled landlords’ (agreeing to a charter);
- Boarding;
- ‘Responsible’ tenants/tenant in charge.

Such provision could be encouraged by:

- Internet brokerage for house sharing etc;
- Use of the ‘room for rent’ tax allowance;
- Community networks;
- Places to come back to if plans don’t work out.

If transitional accommodation is not to be a warehouse (*sic*) the culture and ethos of this stage needs to change from one of refugees being passive consumers of service to one in which people get support to establish themselves as actors in change. There needs to be a much clearer process of becoming fully accepted members of the community (much wider than the legal interpretation of status and citizenship) There are many elements to this:

- Practical steps need to be taken in relation to resolving immigration status, having money, bank accounts, the means to work, accreditation of past and present education.
- Building hope, confidence and skills as individuals and groups for example by small grants, tastes of what opportunities to develop and use skills and knowledge etc, to be able to have possessions.
- Participation in at least the intermediate labour market such as by volunteering or work experience.
- Control by refugees of the delivery of services.
- Changing the perceptions of refugees themselves, government and the wider community by highlighting the value of diversity, the potential of refugees and being represented in civic life e.g. in the management of regeneration.
- Including the provision in the mainstream.
Long-term housing
Again there is potential for a much wider range of provision as well as the model of being producers not passive consumers:

- Mortgage guarantors to enable owner occupation;
- Rent deposit schemes;
- Local authority paid/guaranteed for a period;
- Key worker accommodation for refugee nurses etc;
- Creating more private lettings;
- Using vacant land such as MOD sites for self-, co-operative and partnership building schemes;
- Using low housing demand areas or sites for self-, co-operative and partnership building schemes;
- Making sure that renewed housing estates are accessible by involvement in decision-making and partnerships with RCOs;
- Housing in high labour demand areas;
- New models of social investment including mutual aid societies for finance and building;
- Refugee-led developments including design, building and maintenance companies;
- Partnership with existing building societies, builders and developers.

Achieving these requires:

- Getting involved with the big institutions: banks, building societies, developers, builders e.g. English Partnerships;
- Treating housing for refugees as an issue of good investment in the economy generally and specifically refugees as having great potential;
- Going to government as an underwriter not as a funder;
- Creating local and national political support using legislation, drawing on refugee heritages.

How is it all to be done?

- Refugees need to be involved in making policy and in ‘big’ plans and programmes, not getting bogged down in small-scale service provision. To facilitate this there need to be more discussions, opportunities to share experience and ideas like those promoted by Housing Associations Charitable Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

- Positive public relations or marketing to sell ideas and highlighting what does not work and is not right needs to be well thought out.

- Focused and strategic alliances between housing providers, social finance private and statutory sectors, and community based agencies.
Refugees and housing in England

Berhanu Kassayie

A WORKING PAPER FOR PRAXIS AND THE PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH UNIT OF QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, OCTOBER 2002
Introduction

To all humanity housing is a basic necessity and internationally it is now considered as a basic element of human rights. To refugees housing is more than an issue of having a roof over one’s head. It is fundamental to their right of protection and all round effective settlement (integration) into the host community. Availability of housing in terms of its physical quantity and access and in terms of its quality, i.e. its degree of suitability for an effective and all round refugee settlement are central issues when considering issues of refugee housing. These in their turn depend on the premise informing overall refugee protection policy, i.e. whether emphasis is laid on protection and hence on integration, or on controlling and deterring the flow of asylum seekers. Homelessness is a central focus in much of the debate on housing issues. To a large extent this is also true with regard to refugee housing but as the following analysis shows, refuges face other major housing problems too.

From the perspective of refugee settlement, refugee housing moves through three distinctive stages:

- Reception
- Transition
- Permanent settlement.

Reception
The first stage relates to refugees’ housing starting from the time asylum seekers arrive and apply for asylum in the UK. The psychological, social, economic insecurity of asylum seekers in this stage make this stage as a ‘critical’ stage in the process of refugee resettlement. The traumatic experiences of persecution from which they are fleeing are still fresh and many seek attention from specialised medical services. Considerable proportions also suffer from difficulties encountered while travelling, including the awesome ordeals in the hands of traffickers. Shock effects of coming into a new society and a new system and uncertainties regarding outcomes of asylum application also generate a sense of insecurity leading to great distress affecting the mental wellbeing of refugees. These all mean that the intensity and range of support and service needs of refugees at this stage are huge and are directly impacted by the type, quality and location of their housing.

In the UK the National Asylum Seekers Service (NASS) is now central to the experience of refugees at the reception stage.

Transition
The second stage of refugee settlement is the transition stage. Here asylum seekers are already legally accepted as bona fide refugees, and have a status of either Indefinite Leave to Remain or Exceptional Leave to Remain. This entitles them to housing and all other benefits enjoyed by all UK citizens. After 28 days following a positive decision (recently extended from 14 days), they are no more the responsibility of the NASS and are asked to vacate NASS accommodation and

\[\text{There are various alternative terms used to describe the reception stage including ‘emergency’ and ‘crisis’. In general, reception has been used though the alternative terms may be used in some of these papers.}\]
arrange to move on and access assistance from the local authorities. At this stage refugees get the right to be legally recognised as homeless and almost all join the homelessness queue.

Refugee housing at this stage is placement by housing authorities in what are customarily known as ‘move-on’ accommodation, i.e. Bed &Breakfast, shared accommodation and private placements though there are also some innovative projects run primarily by refugee agencies. Relieved by their acceptance as refugees, most see this as a certain and secure start for a new settled life.

Reflecting this, their primary needs/problems faced at this stage include permanent housing, education and training, employment, realising their potential and building recognition and acceptance within the host community. The role of housing and its location play a significant role to the materialisation of this dreams and effective integration in the UK public life.

Permanent settlement
The third stage starts from the time refugees have succeeded in securing permanent accommodation. For the majority this is tenancy in social or housing association dwellings. Building on what they have accomplished during the previous stage, at this stage refugees are looking to consolidate their settlement and find their position as equal and active citizens.

Implications
The timing and kind of settlement support and service provided at each stage of refugee settlement will largely determine the extent with which refugees will be integrated into the host community and realise their potential to meaningfully participate in its public life and in building greater community cohesion. This makes housing a primary issue of refugee protection and integration.

Where immigration policy emphasis is on protection and integration, a ‘housing plus’ strategy right at the beginning of the asylum process will be paramount. In the opposite case, i.e. control and deterrence as a primary policy concern, it is likely that there will not be a strategy for integration led refugee housing. These issues are explored further in relation to housing at each stage of refugee settlement and in what follows, we will first look into the regulatory environment for immigration and refugee housing.

The legal and policy environment
In the last decade a series of legislative changes have transformed the regulatory environment for housing asylum seekers and refugees. These are set out in Fact sheet 1: legal and policy context of housing for asylum seekers and refugees. In brief it shows a shift from inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the mainstream of housing rights in the UK to separation into different categories of restricted rights and segregation during the reception and transitional stages of housing. In general the role of local authorities has been reduced and under the Homelessness Act 2002, their responsibilities are discretionary rather than mandatory.
The latest set of changes set out in the Government White Paper: *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* are being implemented now.

**Accommodation and detention centres**

By the end of June 2002, there were 3,245 asylum seekers in reception accommodation and 1,440 in detention centres. The practice is to use prisons and police stations as detention centres in addition to purpose-commissioned sites like Harmondsworth and Campsfield. The largest accommodation centre, Oakington, also operates a ward for detention. Furthermore, notwithstanding lessons from the fire accident of the 900-bed Yarl’s Wood removal centre, the Home Office is planning to build a 500-bed similar centre at a cost of £100m in Great Dunmow, Essex.

**Dispersal**

Dispersal as it is now is discussed extensively further below. However, following several critical reviews including one by the Home Office in October 2001, there are signs of improvement and local authorities, regional consortia and refugee agencies are coming together in providing service to dispersed asylum seekers. Some attempt at clustering asylum seekers by language categories is also underway to allow the formation of refugee communities in dispersal regions.

Nevertheless, even where there is a reasonable development in community support, for example in Newcastle, there are concerns about dispersal to areas of extreme deprivation and lack of regional co-ordination. Equally importantly, there is a danger of undermining these initiatives if the proposal for accommodation centres goes ahead. In addition to creating a focal point for racist groups, accommodation centres mean segregating asylum seekers from local communities and creating a stigma against those who may eventual succeed in their asylum application.

**Asylum seekers with children**

The Home Office’s proposal to house asylum seekers with children and provide secluded education in facilities within accommodation centres may go against the Children Act 1989 and hamper the prospects for social integration starting at a younger age.

All this may not only undermine the stated aim of the White Paper and the Bill for social integration and community cohesion, but also the dispersal system as its main principle. Isolation and distressful experiences while in accommodation centres will eventually drive asylum seekers with a positive decision on staying towards areas restricted by the dispersal system.
Settlement in Britain
- a historical overview

- Jewish Refugees from Nazi Germany
  - Ugandan Asian Refugees
  - Chilean Refugees
  - Vietnamese Refugees

Miguel Arnedo
Contents

1. The origins of the refugee crises and backgrounds of the refugees
   • Jewish refugees from Nazism 4
   • Ugandan Asians 4
   • Chileans 5
   • Vietnamese 6

2. The British response
   • Jewish refugees from Nazism 8
   • Ugandan Asians 10
   • Chileans 10
   • Vietnamese 11

3. Resettlement in Britain
   • Jewish refugees from Nazism 13
   • Ugandan Asians 16
   • Chileans 26
   • Vietnamese 28

Appendix One
Developments in housing policy affecting refugees in the 1970s 36

Appendix Two
Bibliography 39
Introduction

Consideration of earlier episodes of refugee entry to the UK needs to take into account:

- the political background of the refugee crises;
- the characteristics of the refugees – for example, their numbers, social and cultural background, professional backgrounds, education;
- how the government specifically responded to the refugees;
- the general policy context and background, notably in relation to housing and the economy and cultural cohesion and diversity (as they are currently called).
1. The origins of the refugee crises and backgrounds of the refugees

Jewish refugees from Nazism

Josephs *et al* provide a succinct outline of the rise of Nazism and the subsequent exodus from central Europe. These authors explain that anti-Semitism became particularly virulent in Germany after the First World War.

At this time the Jews began to be regarded as responsible for all of the nation’s problems. These included Germany’s defeat in the war, the stringent peace treaty and reparations forced upon Germany by the victors, and the hyperinflation of the early 1920s. The 1929 Wall Street crash and the high unemployment levels that resulted from it were also blamed on the Jews.

Soon after the Reichstag gave Hitler dictatorial powers in 1933, many public and private institutions were closed down or taken over by the Nazis. Opponents of the regime lost their jobs. Many were arrested and beaten up. A national boycott of Jewish businesses on 1 April 1933 was the beginning of the anti-Jewish campaign. Most ‘non-Aryans’ were then ousted from the Civil Service. Other professions – such as medicine - began to be similarly ‘purified’.

The exodus of Jews from Nazi Germany commenced in this same year. In Germany many more repressive laws were passed in the following years but many would-be refugees were unable to leave the country due to the fact that host countries were tightening their immigration controls.

In 1938 Austria was taken over by Germany and the result was a huge wave of dispossessed refugees. The real turning point, however, was the pogrom of November of the same year: the Kristallnacht, in which synagogues were burnt and thousands of Jewish men were taken to concentration camps. By this stage almost every Jew in Germany wanted to escape (Josephs *et al* 1988: 9-10). By the beginning of the Second World War around 350,000 refugees had fled Germany, Czechoslovakia and Austria trying to escape Nazi persecution (Kushner & Knox 1999: 126).

Both the persecution by the Nazis and the immigration policy and practice of the UK meant that people from a professional and business background were strongly represented among the émigrés (Niederland in Mosse, Ed (1991): pp 59-64) despite hostility to them from the professions in the UK (Kushner & Knox 1999: 162).

Ugandan Asians

On 4 August 1972, President Amin of Uganda ruled that the 52,000 Asians then resident in the country had to leave within 90 days (Bristow 1979: 203). 28,000...

---

1 Josephs *et al* also detail the experiences of Nazi persecution of people from various German regions (1988: 9-36).

2 A brief history of the development of anti-Jewish policies in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1937 can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 130-32.

3 On the political background to the crisis, see also Kushner & Knox 1999: 265-69.
Ugandan Asian refugees were allowed to settle in Britain (Bristow 1979: 203). This was only about half of the 50-60,000 refugees that were anticipated. Canada took around 6,000 and India 10,000 (Kushner & Knox 1999: 273).

One of the characteristics of the Ugandan Asian influx that distinguished it from previous refugee groups was the predominance of large families, with sometimes up to 6 children and several elderly dependants. However, this would also be a feature of the Vietnamese movement later (Kushner & Knox 1999: 273-74).

Their ability to integrate economically was helped by their backgrounds. The majority were office workers, shop workers, engineers, motor repairers, building craftsmen and small traders (Kushner & Knox 1999: 281).

According to Kushner & Knox, the Asians were ‘neither a small, nor an insignificant minority, they were the acknowledged mainstay of commercial Uganda’. They also argue that, contrary to what was commonly believed, most did not arrive with much wealth. Some had been able to send their assets to England but most had to leave everything behind and start from scratch in Britain. The fact that up to a quarter of them were self-employed also made adaptation difficult because they did not have the resources to set up new businesses in Britain (Kushner & Knox 1999: 281).

Chileans

In a violent coup led by General Augusto Pinochet on 11 September 1973 the left-wing coalition government of Salvador Allende was brought down. This was followed by severe persecution of various sectors of society. Pinochet proceeded to purge the civil service of Allende supporters, as well as other institutions. Other targets of the government’s repression were non-Chilean residents in the country (many of them refugees from other Latin-American countries), members of trade unions and left-wing political parties, and community workers.

Those arrested by the military were tortured and forced to denounce other suspected opponents of the new regime. Many people who were taken in the middle of the night disappeared forever. As a result of the repressive policies of the Pinochet government, by around 1987 there were around 200,000 Chileans scattered around the world (Kushner & Knox 1999: 289-90).

Kushner and Knox provide an outline of the social background of the Chilean refugees:

> It appears that a larger proportion of the exiles were from middle-class backgrounds, as these were the particular targets of Pinochet’s purge. The majority in a survey of 800 families in six countries (including Britain) established that the majority were from political parties that formed the Unidad Popular alliance and the Revolutionary Party, primarily from the Socialist Party. Some 53.6 per cent were university educated and only 22.7 per cent were skilled or unskilled manual workers. Such research has not been conducted in Britain, but it is known from World University Service reports that many came from a politically active and academic background. (Kushner & Knox 1999: 293-94)

---

4 For more information about the repression, see Kushner & Knox 1999: 290-91.
Vietnamese

Kushner and Knox provide a succinct outline of the background to the Vietnamese refugee crisis in the following passages:

The large-scale exodus began in 1975 when American troops were withdrawn from the country after the Vietnam War. Over 130,000 refugees were admitted to the United States in a matter of only two weeks, while France took in 9,500 and 9,000 already there were allowed to remain. The United Kingdom took only 32 refugees, although a further 300 within the country also stayed. In 1976-77 200 were admitted to Britain. But it was not until 1979 that international attention was fully aroused as hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese took to the seas risking drowning in shark-infested seas, or attack by pirates from Thailand. The enormity of the crisis was brought home to the world by media images of the ‘Boat people’. One of them described their drastic course of action: ‘what have we all got left? An old sailing boat, our only transport to combat the ocean. Our fear for our life was not all that great because we had a great hope of survival: let’s go to another part of the world, the world of freedom where we will be welcomed with love’.

The first refugees fled due to the changing political circumstances following the fall of Saigon government and the Communist take-over in 1975. In late 1976 a new exodus commenced, subsequently embracing people from South Vietnam, largely of ethnic Chinese origin, known as Hoa, who escaped overland into China or by sea into adjacent countries of Southeast Asia. (Kushner & Knox 1999: 306-07)

According to Kushner and Knox, although many Western countries subsequently accepted these refugees on the basis that their flight was from an undeniably repressive communist system, in a survey of Vietnamese refugees in Britain only 4 per cent gave communism as their reason for flight. These authors add that ‘several of those interviewed in Hampshire had family members who had been in the South Vietnamese army sent to new economic zones by the Communist government to redevelop the land, living barely at subsistence level and forced to undergo re-education’.

Nevertheless, they also explain that ‘for other refugees, flight was primarily from economic oppression. Esther Wong, of the World Health Organisation, argues that after 1975 the government control of the economy tightened after unification and the introduction of a single currency and high taxation made business difficult and life unbearable’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 307-08).

Many Vietnamese refugees were actually of Chinese origin and a small contingent of Laotians and Cambodians also reached Britain (Kushner & Knox 1999: 306). As Kushner and Knox explain, the first refugees who fled due to the changing political circumstances following the fall of Saigon government and the Communist take-over in 1975 were members of the South Vietnamese elite and their families. They were often fairly wealthy and came from professional managerial backgrounds. Most fled to the United States.

5 The testimony of a Vietnamese refugee is reproduced in Kushner & Knox 1999: 306.
Most of those interviewed in a British survey had been business or professional people who left because they lost property, money and position (Kushner & Knox 1999: 307-08). Kushner and Knox also explain that because many of them cited the worsening of their economic conditions rather than political persecution as reasons for their plight, there were criticisms that Vietnamese refugees did not fit convention definitions.

But an evaluation of Vietnamese reception in Britain in 1989 argued that some 80 per cent were ethnic Chinese people from North Vietnam. This was borne out by another survey that showed that 83 per cent of those interviewed were of Chinese origin. Many young men had left to avoid conscription. The Chinese nationals within Vietnam became a particular focus for persecution. Anne Ruffell suggests that many Vietnamese rejected their perceived clannishness and talent for trade, which made them prosperous middlemen, much like the Ugandan Asians (Kushner & Knox 1999: 308-9). Kushner and Knox also outline in detail the variety of social backgrounds of the refugees, as well as the percentages of men and women and their age groups (see Kushner & Knox 1999: 325-26).

The Joint Committee for Refugees from Vietnam (JCRV) described the difficulties posed by the lack of formal education of the Vietnamese and their lack of familiarity with British culture:

The Vietnamese were one of the most disadvantaged groups ever to come to Britain. Many lack marketable skills or even skills that can be easily adapted to our society. Many lack education and literacy even in their own language. Most, having come from North Vietnam, have had little contact with Western civilisation. For many, Britain was a last resort as a settlement country following refusals from the USA and other countries. Unlike other refugee and immigrant groups they had no established community in this country to receive them. (As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 326)

The following extract from a report from the Home Affairs Committee (session 1984-85) includes information relating to the number of Vietnamese in Britain by 1984, the period in which most of them arrived and their ethnic origins and age groups:

There are nearly 19,000 Vietnamese in Britain. About 11,450 have been admitted under two quotas, 3,150 as a result of ship rescues, and 3,850 as family reunion cases (half of these direct from Vietnam). The great majority arrived between 1979 and 1981, and so have already been in Britain at least three years. Ship rescues and family reunions are slowly increasing their number. About three quarters of those admitted are from North Vietnam. A similar proportion are ethnic Chinese, whose flight followed the 1979 China-Vietnam war. In October 1983 no fewer than 60 per cent were aged under 25.6 (Home Affairs Committee 1985a: xx).

---

6 A more detailed outline of the demographic characteristics of Vietnamese refugees in Britain can be found in Duke & Marshall 1995: 11-16. Those of the Vietnamese in London can be found in Tomlins et al 2000: 14-17.
2. The British response

This section deals with the British response to the crises. Special attention is paid to the Government’s policies of immigration and housing and their links to economic conditions in Britain at the time.

Jewish refugees from Nazism

In his book *Island Refuge. Britain and the Refugees from the Third Reich 1933-1939*, A.J. Sherman analyses the development of British Government refugee policy in the context of economic depression and impending war and concludes that Britain’s performance had been ‘comparatively passionate’ and ‘even generous’. Writing in the second edition of his work, Sherman explains, however, that after the publication of the first edition, a series of critics argued that not enough was done. They also condemned the Anglo-Jewish leadership for being excessively cautious, over-preoccupied with anti-Semitism and too eager to ‘accommodate majority prejudices and British Government priorities’ (Sherman 1995: 3).

In any case, there is no denying that in the months before September 1939 Britain was the main refuge for those seeking asylum from Nazi persecution. This was in great part thanks to the fact that its procedures for ‘alien entry’ were made easier and to the creation of rescue schemes at a moment in time when other nations were enforcing more restrictive immigration policies (Kushner & Knox 1999: 126).

In 1933 a refugee policy did not exist in Britain. All those escaping persecution and seeking political asylum were classified under the category of ‘alien immigration’. Humbert Wolfe of the Ministry of Labour argued that government practice consisted in not varying the ‘aliens’ administration’ (as cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 128).

According to Kushner & Knox, in the 1938 Evian conference convened by President Roosevelt, the representative of the British government Lord Winterton was reassured that Roosevelt did not expect major changes in immigration policies from those countries attending. Winterton argued that Britain could not absorb significant numbers of refugees because it was a highly industrialised country with a high population and unemployment. He also cited the danger of growing anti-Semitism.

It was probably this concern that lay behind the government’s policy, expressed shortly after the Evian conference, to let public opinion be a largely determining factor in deciding the number of refugees to be accepted. But at the end of November 1938, there was less concern about anti-Semitism in the House of Commons’ debate on refugees. It was argued that since the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 1938 in Germany, during which many 100 Jews were killed (over 100) or sent to concentration camps, public opinion had become more sympathetic towards the refugee cause.

This allowed MPs to demand a more generous refugee policy, to which the Home Secretary Sir Samuel Hoare countered that ‘Britain could not afford such humanitarianism because “there is the making of a definite anti-Jewish movement”’. Nevertheless, immigration procedures were eased, particularly in granting domestic permits. Furthermore, the scheme known as the Refugee Children’s Movement came into operation. As Kushner & Knox point out, in the House of Commons ‘granting asylum was presented as a matter of British pride’. The Home Secretary mentioned
that senior Jewish refugee workers had presented to him a proposal to re-house children. He explained that

They pointed back to the experience during the war, in which we gave homes here to many thousands of Belgian children, in which they were educated, and in which we played an invaluable part in maintaining the life of the Belgian nation. So also with these Jewish and non-Aryan children, I believe that we could find homes in this country without any harm to our own population. (As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 140)

They also referred to the recent aid provided for Spanish refugees and to the successful relocation of Russians and Armenians after 1918, avoiding to mention that Britain had played a very meagre role in the latter (Kushner & Knox 1999: 138, 139-141).

After German troops invaded the Czechoslovakian provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, in which there were large Jewish communities, the British government and the British public collaborated in setting up the British Committee for Refugees from Czechoslovakia. This committee, which would later become the Czech Refugee Trust Fund, managed to provide help in rescuing and resettling about 8,000 people, inside and outside Czechoslovakia.

Thanks in great part to pressure exerted by the British left, the government agreed to grant up to 350 block visas for Czechoslovakians who could be identified as being in danger of persecution. By 1939 about 5,000 Czechs had been granted asylum in Britain. Unfortunately, the Trust was the only refugee organisation that received government sponsorship during the thirties, and, in any case, its funds were not enough to cope with the refugee crisis that followed the German take-over of Prague on 15 March 1939 (Kushner & Knox 1999: 141).7

The British government again provided aid for refugees shortly after, when the luxury liner the St Louis, with its human cargo of 907 German Jewish Refugees, was refused entry by various Latin-American countries and the United States. Britain was one of the countries that helped to stop the ship being returned to Germany. Due in great part to the international attention it received, this case was given special treatment and the government agreed to admit a proportion of these refugees, although, as always, only on a temporary basis.

Another factor that determined this positive response was the fact that Holland had agreed to take 200 of the refugees. Britain’s liberal reputation would be jeopardised if its government did not match the Dutch gesture. Furthermore, Jewish organisations had promised the government that the refugees would not be a charge on the state (Kushner and Knox: 145). What still continued to influence all government decisions on asylum issues was the desire to avoid a mass influx of Jewish refugees, even if Britain was the most important centre of refuge in 1939.

As Kushner and Knox point out, Britain’s policies still discriminated against males, the less well off, and against those without any useful contacts. Not surprisingly, therefore, about fifty per cent of the Jews that were in the borders of the Reich before the war, and particularly the elderly, were left behind (Kushner & Knox 1999: 145).

---

7 A brief description of the stories of two particular Czechoslovakian families that were helped by the Czech Refugee Trust can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 142-43.
Leading figures of Jewish organisations in Britain, such as the Zionist Federation of Great Britain, felt they had to work hard to convince the British public of the injustices committed against European Jews and of the threat that Nazism posed to all humanity. It seems that, at least until 1938, many British people still partly blamed the Jews for what was happening to them (Kushner & Knox 1999: 145-46).

Although the Jewish Community in local areas did not want to attract public controversy, many of its members actively provided help for refugees passing through the port. This included helping with dock work, meeting ships, helping refugees to settle in the region and actively promoting their cause (Kushner & Knox 1999: 147).

One of the ways in which the British government tried to limit the flow of Jewish refugees coming to Britain was by re-directing them to far-flung parts of its empire, particularly East Africa. In the end only 650 refugees went to Kenya and by March 1939 in total only 2,000 refugees from the Reich had been admitted into colonial territories other than Palestine (Kushner & Knox 1999: 153).

Ugandan Asians

Kushner and Knox explain that the main burden of responsibility lay with Britain since over half of those leaving held British passports with rights of entry and abode. The Conservative government of Edward Heath was reluctant to take the Ugandan Asians, but agreed to do so in order to fulfil Britain’s legal and moral obligation to provide residence for British passport holders. The crisis occurred in the context of increasing hostility towards non-white immigrants and their descendants in Britain (Kushner 1999: 269-72).

According to Kushner and Knox, by September 1972, 2,000 places had been offered for the Ugandan Asians in British private homes. Politicians and religious leaders of different faiths were particularly prominent in offering their homes. The number of offered spaces eventually reached 5,000 (Kushner & Knox 1999: 273).

Chileans

According to Kushner and Knox, it is believed that the reception of the Chileans differed from that of other groups, partly because it aroused more concern due to its political nature. It was bound up with the Chile Solidarity Movement in Britain, and hence involved the particular interest of the British Labour Movement. Kushner & Knox add the following:

*The ideological implications of the overthrow of the first democratically elected Marxist Government prompted a widespread reaction from the international labour movement. It was left-wing groups sympathetic to the cause of Allende who pioneered much of the support for Chilean dissidents to come to Britain and the election of the Labour government that precipitated a more favourable policy for them.* (Kushner & Knox 1999: 291)
Kushner and Knox describe the reaction on the part of the Conservative Edward Heath Government as rather negative. Still occupied with the Ugandan Asian crisis, the government did not want another influx of refugees. Furthermore, they recognised the new Chilean regime and continued selling arms to it. They also refused to offer protection to non-British asylum seekers from Chile. However, the election of the Labour government in 1974 initiated a more generous policy. For Labour the case of the Chileans was more appealing than that of the Ugandan Asians because the Latin-American refugees were predominantly of a left-wing political persuasion (See Kushner & Knox: 294-95).

According to Kushner and Knox, while the British governments were slow to react to the crisis and followed a policy of admission of immigrants reminiscent of the treatment of Jews fleeing Nazi Germany, there was much grassroots activity to help the beleaguered nation (Kushner & Knox 1999: 296).

**Vietnamese**

The Vietnamese arrived in Britain at a time of recession and high unemployment (over three million). There were acute housing shortages and local government cuts’. These conditions made the task of resettling the refugees particularly difficult (Duke & Marshall 1995: 25, Kushner & Knox 1999: 326, 327).

According to Kushner and Knox, the resettlement of the Vietnamese has received particular attention on the part of academics and service providers. This is due to the fact that ‘this government programme was of a nature and scope unique in the post-war period, dealing with a group of people whose everyday life was far removed from that of much of the British population’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 306).

The British became involved in the Vietnamese refugee crisis involuntarily when between February 1977 and October 1978 small numbers of refugees were rescued at sea by British ships and taken to Britain as other countries refused them entry (Kushner & Knox 1999: 309). As Kushner and Knox point out, ‘it was not until 1979 that the need arose for a formal policy of reception and resettlement, following a sudden increase in the number of arrivals needing help. Sea rescues by British ships increased reflecting the rising scale of movement from Vietnam’. (1999: 309).

Kushner and Knox outline the debate in the House of Lords regarding the plight of the Vietnamese. The tone of the debate indicated that, internationally, Britain’s contribution to the Vietnamese refugee crisis was not going to be a major one (Kushner & Knox 1999: 310-11).

The pressure on the Asian countries to which the refugees were fleeing led these countries to demand that international resettlement efforts be increased. Their demands, combined with extensive media coverage in Britain, led the recently elected Margaret Thatcher to call for an international conference that was held in Geneva in July of 1979 under the auspices of the UN (Kushner & Knox 1999: 311). According to Kushner and Knox:

> Thatcher’s government accepted to take in 10,000 Vietnamese from Hong Kong even before the conference and offered £5,000,000 to the UNHCR relief programme. It then sent officials to interview people in the camp to determine entry selection. Officially, selection was based
on 'humanitarian grounds' with no criteria other than 'the refugees being able to successfully resettle in this country'. [...] Selection was comparatively lax with 96 per cent of interviewees successful in gaining entry. The result was that those 10,000 accepted were not just the elite of society. Kushner & Knox 1999: 311-12).

Nevertheless, comparatively the British contribution was a minimal one (Kushner & Knox 1999: 312).
3. Settlement in Britain

This section analyses the British resettlement policies and resettlement programmes. Particular attention is paid to establishing whether the policies were housing-led or employment-led in each refugee crisis. The context of housing policy also needs to be taken into account. As this is complex and does not necessarily move in step with waves of refugee arrival, it is described separately in Appendix 1. This section on resettlement also aims to shed light on the political power of ethnic communities and on the role of non-governmental agencies.

Jewish refugees from Nazism

According to Kushner and Knox, pro-refugee campaigners and the Jewish community in Britain played a decisive role in the resettlement of Jewish refugees in Britain. In 1933, Otto Schiff, the President of an organisation called Jews’ Temporary Shelter, promised in association with other leading figures of British Jewry that ‘all expense, whether in respect of temporary or permanent accommodation or maintenance, will be borne by the Jewish community without ultimate charge to the state’ (as cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 128).

This guarantee, to which the Jewish community was held until the end of the Second World War, allowed tens of thousands to find protection from Nazism, as it became the main basis of British refugee policy. In return for this promise, the government was asked to accept all asylum seekers from Germany under temporary asylum. The idea on the part of the government and the leaders of the Jewish community was to hold the refugees until they could be permanently resettled in other countries with proper immigrant-receiving policies, like the United States or, in the case of the Jews, Palestine.

Nevertheless, their intention was also to invite more illustrious individuals, such as experienced engineers, scientists and industrialists, to stay permanently. Immigration patterns in the first two years of the Nazi regime met their expectations. Although by May 1934 about 3,500 refugees had come into Britain, more than 1,000 had left, and the following year the figures of refugees staying in Britain did not increase substantially (Kushner & Knox 1999: 128).

Until 1938 Britain remained primarily a place of temporary asylum for refugees from Nazism, although it was also responsible for the resettling of the Jews in Palestine.8 However, due to other nations’ restrictive immigration policies, it became increasingly difficult to move growing numbers of refugees at the outbreak of war. As a result of this, Britain was left with a refugee population of up to 65,000 people, a number that

---

8 Britain had been given the Mandate to Palestine in 1920 by the League of Nations and from then on had been forced to try to balance Zionist demands for the creation of a Jewish state with Arab protests against Jewish immigration to Palestine (Kushner & Knox 1999: 129). As Sherman explains, the numbers of Jewish immigrants to Palestine rose dramatically from the beginning of the Nazi regime. Authorised Jewish immigration increased from 9,553 in 1932 to 30,327 in 1933. It then reached 42,359 in 1934 and 61,854 in 1935. In April 1936, there was a general strike mounted by the Arab population of Palestine, eventually developing into guerrilla warfare that damaged or destroyed public and private property. British troops and officials, their Arab supporters and some Jews were also attacked. The aim of these protests and attacks was to bring about the prohibition of further Jewish immigration and the transfer of Arab lands to Jews. Also, to make the British Government set up a Palestine National Government (Sherman 1994: 75).
could not have been foreseen at the time when the Jewish guarantee was made (Kushner & Knox 1999: 128).

According to Josephs et al, refugee organisations and various individuals set up several hostels to cope with the stream of refugees arriving in England after 1940 (Josephs et al 1988: 77). These authors provide an outline of the hostels set up in Birmingham, focusing on the experiences and testimonies of the boys and girls who were housed there (Josephs et al 1988: 75-84).

As Kushner and Knox explain, the Refugee Children’s Movement (RCM) was founded in November 1938. Shortly after, a radio broadcast by the former Prime Minister Lord Baldwin raised £500,000. 166 local committees were then set up, mostly spontaneously. This made it imperative to try to set up an organisation that could co-ordinate the work of all these different committees. They were re-grouped into 12 regional committees that had to report to the central organisation.

Despite the fact that there were committees all over the UK, there was a tendency to place the children predominantly in the south east of England and in urban centres. These geographical disparities can be partly attributed to the fact that the children often arrived in southern ports, also to the fact that the RCM was based in London, and also to regional differences in wealth distribution.

The two key issues facing the national organisers were
a) how to choose from the more than 60,000 children seeking refuge, and
b) how to ascertain the suitability of those people who were offering to shelter the children in their homes.

The shortage of resources and the proportions of the crisis meant that many permits were granted arbitrarily. At first only those who were deemed as being exposed to the most danger were accepted, but as the situation of the Jews in Germany became more and more extreme, this criterion became meaningless. The scheme relied on a system of guarantees by which children could be brought to Britain only if a large enough cash deposit was made.

In addition, the would-be guarantor had to be financially stable and the proposed home had to be deemed to be suitable. Around two-thirds of 6,000 children came to Britain under these guarantees, but the RCM admitted that the scheme tended to favour the wealthier. It is also clear that a considerable minority of the people who were allowed to take in the children were highly unsuitable, as patent in the various cases of physical, sexual and economic exploitation (Kushner & Knox 1999: 155). 9

The experiences of some of the refugee children also bring to light the committees’ often patronising attitude and their attempts to control the children’s lives and futures, often limiting their educational and professional opportunities (see Kushner & Knox 1999: 156-57).

As Kushner and Knox point out, a comparable problem was that of refugee organisations who wanted to keep refugees in domestic service. For those who did

---

9 On the Refugee Children Movement’s treatment of the children coming to Britain, see Kushner & Knox 1999: 155.
not possess significant resources to bring out of Greater Germany, the only main route of escape was to obtain a work permit. To attain this, many who were still in Germany and others who were in Britain but were trying to bring over a relative, placed adverts in British newspapers offering their services as domestic workers. 20,000 found refuge in this way.

Placing refugee women in domestic occupations was a particularly attractive option to refugee organisations and the government. Because there was a shortage of labour in this occupation, they felt that refugee women could fill these positions without provoking complaints that the ‘aliens’ were stealing jobs from British workers. Another advantage, according to Kushner and Knox, is that these occupations kept the refugees out of the public gaze.

Furthermore, since there was a high demand for domestic servants throughout the UK, the refugees could be dispersed throughout Britain and kept below stairs. Despite the fact that not many of the refugees, who were often from middle-class backgrounds, particularly desired to work very long hours in remote parts of the British countryside, during 1938 and 1939 the refugee organisations obstinately tried to keep refugee women employed as domestic workers and scattered across Britain (Kushner & Knox 1999: 158).

According to Kushner & Knox, for many single refugee women with no family ties, domestic work constituted a badly paid and tiring existence. Isolation in the countryside and long working hours also made it more difficult to access positions of power in urban centres, particularly London, from which they could help their children and other relatives who were abroad. Aware of these disadvantages many domestics in London refused to work in the provinces, as reported by the German Jewish Aid Committee.

The Central Refugee Co-ordinating Committee was asked not to support such refugees, which evinces the financial power that the refugee bodies exercised. This stopped many of the women from being able to claim state benefits for relief, thus forcing them back into domestic service (Kushner & Knox 1999: 158).

Kushner and Knox point out that nursing was another route into Britain. However, it was more difficult to find out about positions available and more skills were required in this occupation than in domestic service. As with domestic service there was a shortage of nurses in Britain, which is unsurprising in view of the fact that the profession entailed poor wages, long working days and not much trade union representation (Kushner & Knox 1999: 160).

Adult male refugees found it even harder to obtain work. Because the British government believed that this type of immigrant would give rise to the most opposition amongst the British working population, its policies were focused on retraining them, especially in agriculture, so that they could find work in other countries (Kushner & Knox 1999: 160).

This kind of approach was supported by Zionist bodies, which wanted to prepare the Jewish refugees for life in Palestine by engaging them in land work. The German Jewish Aid Committee convinced the British Government and the National Union of Agricultural Workers to grant 1,000 permits to Jewish farm workers so that they could work in agriculture in regions where no English agricultural workers were registered as unemployed. This scheme cost the refugee organisations £200,000 and it helped
1,350 German and Austrian Jews to come to Britain. It was a vital scheme for men whose release from concentration camps after ‘Kristallnacht’ was conditional on receiving a visa (Kushner & Knox 1999: 160-61).\(^{10}\)

Outside these schemes for children, domestic servants, nurses and agricultural workers, there were few other opportunities to gain entry into Britain. In particularly, the many Jewish refugees who were professionals in their countries of origin found great opposition from British professional bodies. Only the academic world was a little more receptive to Jewish academics (Kushner & Knox 1999: 161).\(^{11}\)

**Ugandan Asians**

In a 1975 article Bristow et al compared the resettlement difficulties experienced by Ugandan Asian refugees in Britain, Canada and India. They concluded that those in the UK would probably be at a considerable disadvantage, which was in turn exacerbated by the British Government’s limited efforts to facilitate their resettlement. The misconceived assumption behind the Government’s approach was ‘that these people would be a self-sustaining part of British society within a short period of time’ (as cited in Bristow 1980: 79).

The most important body in the resettlement of the Ugandan Asians was the Ugandan Resettlement Board (URB). 28,165 people from Uganda passed through the Board’s reception facilities. Sir Charles Cunningham, Permanent Secretary to the Home Office chaired the Board (Kushner & Knox 1999: 274).\(^{12}\)

According to Kushner & Knox, the URB’s interim report laid out the government’s agenda, which was ‘to minimise friction between host and immigrant communities by directing the Asians in their resettlement. These authors argue that the URB knew that many of the refugees planned to settle in areas where the housing, educational and social services were under severe pressure, so they tried to dissuade the Ugandan Asians from migrating to these areas. In the passage below Kushner and Knox put forward some general characteristics of the dispersal policy that the government adopted to deal with this issue:

> The URB policy of dispersal denoted red ‘no go’ areas and green areas of favourable settlement for the Asians. Such a directed settlement policy was a new concept in dealing with refugees, and although it was argued that this was to ensure they had the best opportunities, it was affected by fears that providing homes for thousands of coloured people would create racism. The Asians were directed to areas where there was an absence of a large ethnic minority presence. […]

\(^{10}\) On policies of employment for Jewish refugees from the Second World War in Britain, see also Kapp & Mynatt 1997: 28-30.

\(^{11}\) An outline of the different professional backgrounds of the Jewish refugees in Britain and an analysis of how different professionals fared in Britain can be found in Berghahn 1988: 77-113. The professions listed by this author are academics, doctors, lawyers, artists and business people. More details on positions filled by Jewish academics can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 161-64. See these pages also for details about the medical profession’s opposition to Jewish doctors. It appears that ‘the British Medical Association, and particularly its virulently anti-alien trade union wing, the Medical Practitioners’ Union (MPU), ensured that almost no refugee doctors would be allowed to practice in Britain before the Second World War’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 162).

\(^{12}\) An outline of agencies, boards and commissions involved in resettlement of the Ugandan Asians can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 274.
Leicester, which suffered only limited housing problems but which had a large pre-existing Asian community, became a red area.¹³ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 274-75)

As documented in Sandiford 1997, Leicester City Council actually tried to dissuade Ugandan Asians from coming to this city by placing an advertisement in the newspaper the *Ugandan Argus* telling Ugandan Asians not to come to this city because its services were over-stretched.¹⁴ Ironically, the ad had the opposite effect because it brought the Ugandan Asians’ attention to the fact that there was already an established Ugandan Asian community in Leicester (Sandiford 1997).

In point of fact, the whole policy of dispersal was a failure, according to Kushner & Knox. Only 38 per cent of Asians passing through it eventually found homes in green areas. This has been attributed to the dearth of housing offers, which prompted the Asians to seek accommodation themselves. The URB admitted in its final report that ‘it is evident that our policy of dispersal would have had greater success had we been able to offer the Ugandan Asians, immediately or soon after their arrival, housing accommodation outside the areas of stress’.

The lack of obligation for local authorities led to only limited offers, due to existing housing shortage and fears of a white backlash (Kushner & Knox 1999: 275). Kushner & Knox also add the following:

> Dispersal could not be enforced and preference for settling in areas with an established Asian community drew incomers to red areas and encouraged secondary migration across the country, especially to London and the Midlands. There was some reluctance to go to remoter areas. Scotland was not favoured because of its distance, colder climates, unfamiliarity, a response also noted amongst Chilean refugees.¹⁵ (1999: 275)

The 1997 BBC documentary ‘Remember the Ugandan Asians’ also contains evidence that illustrates the inadequacy of the dispersal policy in the case of the Ugandan Asians.¹⁶ In this documentary successful Ugandan Asians explain that the way to generate most business was by catering for the Asian communities, an argument that clearly supports the idea of settling refugees within established

---

¹³ Bristow mentions that the four social and economic conditions of an area that were considered in order to ascertain whether it should be designated red were housing, schools, social services and employment. ‘Severe difficulties with regard to two or more of these conditions’, he explains, ‘accounted for a red label, but while the list included everywhere the Government thought had an Asian population, it included neither Glasgow nor Liverpool, nor any towns in the North East’. Bristow also points out that ‘the red list included Inner London boroughs, areas in the Midlands and West Riding textile towns’ (Bristow 1980: 85).

¹⁴ On the advertisement by Leicester City Council, see also Marett 1989: 53-54.

¹⁵ A testimony that supports the refugees’ reluctance to travel to remote areas can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 275-76. More on the dispersal of Ugandan Asians can be found in Kuepper 1975: 74-84.

¹⁶ ‘Remember the Ugandan Asians’ gives a general overview of the Ugandan Asian refugee crisis and the experiences of the refugees in Britain. It provides a brief history of British colonial exploitation of Uganda and it documents anti-immigration political discourses and popular resentment in Britain at the time of the refugees’ arrival. It also looks at the reasons for the Ugandans’ success in this country. The programme includes interviews with successful Ugandan Asians like Mahebub Ladha, Manzoor Moghar, Inder Panesar and Yasmin Alibhai Brown (Sandiford 1997).
It is also made evident in this documentary that the Ugandan Asians who were forced to work in remote areas amongst white British workers were victims of racial abuse (Sandiford 1997).

Regarding the life in Britain of the Ugandan Asians, Kushner and Knox point out that their resettlement was coloured by shortages in housing and employment that set the community against the host population (1999: 281). They add the following:

The propitious economic and political climate that the Hungarians had experienced had given way to a far harsher climate, worsened by overt racism. As the Hungarians resident in Hampshire found, employment was often the key to rebuilding a future. At the time of their arrival it was possible to leave a job one week and find a new one the next. Finding work allowed for financial independence and integration with the host community. The Ugandan Asians faced bleaker economic prospects.

The lack of attention given to the employment prospects in the government resettlement programme did little to assist the Asians’ transition to a new life. Sir Charles Cunningham described employment prospects as the URB’s third objective after housing and directing people to settle ‘outside areas which are known to be already under stress because of the number of people from other parts of the Commonwealth who are living there. The Asians had to rely on the Department of Employment to find work. No particular provisions were made to prevent any subsequent social and economic problems. Special treatment was ruled out because of the economic stresses being endured by the wider community. And typically, local authority housing offers did not coincide with job prospects: ‘Many local authorities were only able to offer accommodation because the indigenous population had already decided that the local economy offered few opportunities and had, therefore, left the area.

The Community Relations Commission carried out two studies into Ugandan Asian resettlement. Its first report noted that professionals such as teachers and accountants unable to gain recognition of their qualifications had to take lower-skilled jobs like clerical work. Some of the Asians found their skills were not easily transferable to Britain. There were for instance no jobs for tea plantation managers. A survey suggests that the highest unemployment was among professionals and skilled workers (who needed retraining) and businessmen (who lacked opportunity). Of those Asians who found employment in Britain, 69 percent were found to be downwardly mobile, 7 upwardly mobile and 24 per cent stayed at the same level.

17 In the memorandum on Vietnamese refugees in Britain submitted to the Home Affairs Committee (session 1984-85), Refugee Action brought attention to the importance of existing ethnic communities in providing employment for refugees: ‘Experiences of the settlement of other refugee groups and ethnic minorities suggest that successful solutions in the field of employment sometimes come from within that community, in the form of self-employment and small business. Examples of these are catering, restaurant and supermarkets of the Hong Kong Chinese in the UK; the corner supermarkets and newsagents of the Ugandan Asian community’ (Home Affairs Committee 1985b: 185). This notion is also supported by the survey conducted in a 1995 Home Office Research Study, which found that the vast majority of informants had found employment through family or friends (Duke & Marshall 1995: 27).
The CRC report, a year after the refugees’ arrival, suggested that, contrary to public perceptions “in their eagerness to avoid “being a burden on the state”, refugees had taken whatever job was initially offered, regardless of whether it made full use of their abilities. After the immediate aim of avoiding unemployment came the search for higher wages, again often regardless of whether the job was appropriate’. A study in 1976 reiterated the point that the Ugandan Asians were flexible because of their desire to rebuild their futures. Many women took employment, contrary to traditional practice in Uganda, to make ends meet, particularly important as many older men who had been the former family breadwinners had problems finding work.

Housing and employment problems were exacerbated by the propensity for large families. A considerable number of sick or disabled people added to these problems, with residence and National Insurance contribution requirements restricting access to certain benefits. The CRC argued that ‘it is only in the education of children where the ground has been particularly smooth, with there being few difficulties with school placements and indications that the children were settling in very well in school’. The perception that all Ugandan Asians spoke English did not match reality, as the older spoke little or none. Lack of English, health problems and age were the major reasons for non-participation in the labour force in Britain among the Ugandan Asians. (Kushner & Knox 1999: 281-83)

The resettlement camps for the Ugandan Asians
According to Kuepper et al, the resettlement camps were originally intended as one or two-day transit stops before the Ugandan Asians entered the British communities. Nevertheless, the centres had to provide accommodation for a much longer period of time, as many of the refugees had no contacts that could help them to settle in the UK.

Most of the refugees were housed on old military installations. These were scattered around the country and were often in very isolated locations. By October 1 1972, almost 3,000 out of the 4,000 refugees who had come were in transit camps. The Resettlement Board became concerned about the fact that such a large percentage of the refugees were still in that situation and could not understand why they were leaving at such a slow rate. Part of the reason was that the refugees coming as a result of forced migration tended to come in families.

By contrast an earlier wave of immigrants had time to send one member of the family first who would then be able to accommodate other members of the family as they arrived afterwards. The reason why the refugees were leaving the centres so slowly was partly a result of the policy adopted by the Department of Employment and Productivity that finding employment was the highest priority for refugees. It became evident that this approach would not work and the Board abandoned the initial policy of matching jobs with homes and began focusing instead on finding homes for the Ugandan Asians.

Other reception centres were opened. Particularly useful and versatile was the United States standby base at Greenham Common. Apart from serving as a transit centre from which the refugees were moved to other camps, this camp set up an
active resettlement programme for its occupiers. One family of Ugandan Asians declared that they found comfort in being part of the community of Ugandan Asian refugees in Greenham Common, which somewhat compensated for their understandable anxieties about the future.

At the same time they were worried because they had not come into contact with the British way of life. But other families in camps that were much further from London than Greenham Common were even more divorced from British mainstream life. The isolation of the centre at Tonfanau, for instance, was impressive.

Lord Hawke speaking at the House of Lords criticised the Board for housing the refugees in such remote centres and argued that if they were placed near where the jobs were, they would soon be employed. Many Ugandans shared this conviction. In point of fact the Ugandan Ismailis were advised by their leaders in the UK not to accept accommodation that was more than 60 miles from London (Kuepper et al 1975: 62-65).

It is not known whether there was a preconceived strategy to disperse the refugees in camps across the UK. Government officials denied that there were and claimed that the choice of bases was generally determined by practical considerations. If such a strategy did exist, it was certainly a complete failure (Kuepper et al 1975: 65).

As Kuepper et al point out, more than half of the Ugandan Asians still in the centres in January 1973 totally relied on the resettlement office for relocation in Britain. Resettlement officers were concentrating on this group, but many of the families presented severe problems because they had special needs arising from separation from the head of household, illness, schooling requirements and, often, sheer size. Particular attention was paid to such cases in order to avoid creating centres occupied almost exclusively by ‘hard care’ problem cases (Kuepper et al 1975: 65).

As many Ugandan Asians stayed in the camps longer than anticipated some of those involved in the running of the camps argued that the Ugandan Asians were becoming reluctant to leave the relative comfort and security of the camps. Nevertheless, the staff at Greenham Common disagreed and claimed that the vast majority of the refugees realised that the best thing they could do was to get out into Britain (Kuepper et al 1975: 66).

As Kuepper et al explain, the Ugandan Resettlement Board was the statutory body responsible for the Asians on their arrival in Britain. And yet the Board did not have much contact with the refugees. A good deal of the work of receiving the Asians was in fact done by voluntary organisations over which the Board did not have any jurisdiction (Kuepper et al 1975: 66). Kuepper et al briefly describe the structure of the board in the following extract:

*The Director of the Board was in charge of its day-to-day operations, and bearing the brunt of the Board’s work were its Divisions Three and Four. Division Three was responsible for the administration of resettlement centres, while Four was responsible for the resettlement teams at those centres. This dichotomy was retained at the individual centre level where it was to create some difficulties resulting from philosophical differences over the centres’ functions. (Kuepper et al 1975: 66-67)*
There seems to have been disagreements or conflicts between some of the organisations of the Co-ordinating Committee and the camp administration. Kuepper *et al* describe some of these in the following extract:

> The organisations of the Co-ordinating Committee concerned with [...] social well being, education [and] entertainment were in some cases at odds with the centre administration. This appeared to be particularly true of the organisations that had young volunteers. The enthusiastic workers interpreted centre administration’s conservatism regarding the provision of certain types of camp facilities as a sign of disinterest in the plight of the refugees. A minor controversy, for example, had arisen at Doniford centre, regarding the establishment of a shop to sell sundries to the refugees.

> Young volunteers ran foul of the regulations and found themselves in sharp disagreement with the camp administrators. Some of the volunteers accused the Government of providing nothing at the centre beyond quarters and food service. While this charge, undoubtedly spurred by the degree of frustration felt by the volunteers, was not true, their concern about the lack of recreational facilities was a valid one, and not only at Doniford. The nature of the activities of the volunteer organisations, particularly those of the Co-ordinating Committee, and disagreements over what facilities the government should provide, point up the not-always-happy relationship the volunteers had with camp administrators.

> A number of administrators pointed to problems they were having with the Co-ordinating Committee people. Some suggested that they had to guard against the Committees taking over responsibilities and authority that were clearly in the purview of the statutory bodies. It is difficult to evaluate the effects these disagreements had on the functioning of the centres, but it certainly created difficulties for the administrators and disillusionment among some of the volunteers. (Kuepper *et al* 1975: 68)

Nevertheless, on the whole it seems that relations between camp administrators and the Asians in the camps were quite good. Similarly, there were not many serious conflicts between the different ethnic groups cohabiting in the camp (Kuepper *et al* 1975: 69).

**The Ugandan Asians’ transition from camp to community**

After the initial emphasis on matching job and accommodation, the URB decided to prioritise the location of residences for families. This decision responded to the increasing urgency of finding housing for the refugees and to the fact that previous East African Asian immigrants had been able to find work even in areas of high unemployment. In the end, as opposed to the expectations of the URB, finding employment was actually one of the most difficult aspects of the resettlement experience of many Ugandan Asians (Kuepper *et al* 1975: 68-69).

According to Kuepper *et al*, this problem could have been foreseen because in the early stages of the crisis the High Commission in Uganda had informed Britain of the high rate of self-employment amongst the Ugandan Asians. False expectations about the capacity of the refugees to find work were also fuelled by the propaganda of Asian leaders in Britain.
In an attempt to counteract widespread opposition to the arrival of the Ugandan Asians they had promoted the false impression that the refugees were all well educated and competent in English. Resettlement workers soon realised that, whereas the younger refugees fitted this description, those from the older generations spoke little or no English. This problem worsened with the second wave of refugees. This would create serious difficulties in terms of finding employment. According to Department of Employment figures, as to 1 January 1973, 20-25 per cent of those refugees looking for work needed English language tuition. Providing language tuition became one of the main priorities of the volunteer refugee agencies that helped the Ugandan Asians with finding work after they were relocated (Kuepper et al 1975: 70).

According to Kuepper et al another problem was that the Ugandan Asians’ previous occupations were not often matched by the jobs suggested by the Department of Employment. However, it would be wrong to assume that they were all unemployable. Kuepper et al argue that many of those looking for work were not willing to immediately accept jobs for which they were well over qualified. As the Board increased pressure on the resettlement officers to expedite the refugees from the camps, the Ugandan Asian heads-of-household were increasingly forced to accept offers of job/or housing. Many of the officers were accused of exerting excessive pressure and of being more interested in good departure statistics than in good resettlement.

The procedure was the following. If a head-of-household was offered a job, he/she was encouraged to accept it and to find temporary accommodation in the community. If necessary, he/she would leave the family behind in the camp until more suitable and permanent accommodation was found. The idea, according to the resettlement officers, was that once he was earning money in the community, the head-of-household would be in a good position to help with relocating the family.

Nevertheless, the refugees often refused to accept a job offer if it implied leaving the family behind and the Department of Employment was in no position to force them. If resettlement officers found housing they tried to convince families to accept it. They believed that once properly housed in the community, families could maintain themselves by claiming social security benefits, even if the head-of-household was unemployed. Like the Department of employment they could not force them to accept housing offers, but they were very insistent. Kuepper et al argue that ‘both approaches appeared to be logical ones’.

Once in the community, these authors argue, a wage earner would be in a better position to find appropriate housing for the rest of his family. Furthermore, if a house was found in a town or city where there seemed to be no job offers, there was no reason to assume that once settled in the community the Ugandan Asians would be in a better position to find employment. In fact, according to Kuepper et al, it is estimated that only one fifth of all job vacancies were officially listed (Kuepper et al 1975: 71-72).

In her 1989 book on the Ugandan Asian refugees Immigrants Settling in the City, Valerie Marett writes about the housing problems in the resettlement operation. She points out that the Board did receive offers of help from some private landlords, but the accommodation they offered tended to be temporary. Employers who advertised vacancies in Britain in Ugandan newspapers were also unable to offer accommodation for refugee employees.
A major source of worry for Leicester's city officials and councillors was whether the city’s existing housing stock was sufficient to cope with the unpredictable numbers of refugees who would arrive from Uganda. After trying to discourage the refugees from coming to Leicester, they decided that only those Ugandan Asians who could be classified as ‘temporarily homeless’ would qualify for council-owned accommodation. Social Services and the local Shelter group argued that this approach would not solve anything because the existing facilities could not accommodate more than 30 people. There seemed to be two main official policies. One was to try and encourage ‘people of good will’ to offer accommodation. The other proposed policy was to set up special reception centres of temporary accommodation that would be run by the British Asian Welfare Society for Ugandan Refugees (BAWS) (Marett 1989: 137).

As Marett explains, the housing provision system of Leicester City Council was in serious trouble. The city was building around 1,000 houses per year, but there were 10,000 people in the waiting list and the average waiting time was of 15 months. Since 1964 Leicester had planned to improve its inner city area. There had been a large-scale clearance in the five years before the Ugandan Asians arrived in which 4,000 homes had been demolished but only 3,000 had been rebuilt.

Consequently, by the time of the Ugandan Asian refugee crisis, there was little that the council could provide in terms of housing without any government help. Alderman S. Bridges claimed that if they council had had government co-operation at the time, they would have been able to house up to 20,000. This would have been the best alternative, he argued, because trying to prevent them from coming to Leicester was ‘like spitting against the wind’.

In the circumstances the council decided to stringently enforce the policy that only those who had resided in the city for one year would be eligible for a council house. Besides, it was assumed that the Ugandan Asians would prefer to enter the private housing sector, like previous Asian immigrants, like the Kenyan Asians, had done. The BAWS clearly believed that this was what would happen, and no one from the Asian community spoke against this presumption either. Nevertheless, serious overcrowding in Ugandan Asian houses was reported in September 1973 (Marett 1989: 137).

According to Marett, another unforeseen factor had been a housing shortage and sudden escalation of house prices in 1971-73 that affected the East Midlands region, which had been traditionally an area of cheap housing. The government procedure for housing development was too sluggish to cope with the looming housing crisis (Marett 1989: 138).

Severe shortages in housing were no doubt part of the reason why, as Bristow explains, out of the 21,987 Ugandan Asian refugees who were accommodated in the resettlement centres 39 per cent eventually had to make their own settlement arrangements while resident in the camps. The URB found housing only for 38 per cent (Bristow 1980: 88). The URB explained this shortcoming in the following way:

*It inevitably took time to build up a stock of houses and we were able to draw on it only as accommodation became vacant. In the meantime some families grew tired of waiting and decided to settle themselves, aided by established Asian community networks, in areas where a large*
A number of Asian families were already living. (As cited in Bristow 1980: 88-89)

Nevertheless, Bristow argues that part of the blame rested with the government’s soft approach with local authorities:

Careful consideration of the URB Interim and Final Reports indicates that had they not ‘grown tired’, many Ugandan Asians might still be waiting. The government did not make it obligatory for local authorities to make property available to the URB, but requested that accommodation be offered if possible.¹⁸ (Bristow 1980: 89)

The Ugandan Asians’ perception of resettlement
The Ugandan Asians’ negative perception of the racist and paternalistic treatment on the part of the camp authorities and their mistrust of the Uganda Resettlement Board are outlined in Kushner & Knox 1999: 275.

According to Kushner and Knox, the Ugandan Asians’ own view of their adaptation shows that resettlement was difficult. They point out that ‘while varying age and ability to speak English had an impact on the process, the Asians reflect that their colour and background distinguished them from other refugees coming to Britain’. These authors conclude that ‘in their resettlement, they fell pray most to the colour barrier’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 283).

Kushner and Knox quote the testimony of one of the Ugandan refugees who stayed in reception camps under the government resettlement programme. It illustrates how feelings of dependency gradually affected the refugees staying at the camp in Kensington in particular:

Gradually we began to acquire habits that people usually associate with the lower classes: in Uganda with the African domestic servants. Every Friday, we received our £2.10 social security. By Sunday, it was all gone … One’s position in the social hierarchy, and its vast influence on the shaping of individual or group life, was gradually becoming clear to us. (As quoted in Kushner & Knox 1999: 283-84)

According to these authors, ‘the camp in Kensington became a nightmare in totally controlled living, with an absence of personal life’. They argue that ‘the camp administration was particularly oppressive, representing “the familiarity the master has with the affairs of the servant; not the familiarity a member of a family has of another”’. As they also explain, this became particularly obvious on New Years’ Eve when, according to one of the refugees staying at the camp, a party was organised only for the staff of the student centre and the camp administration. Music blared while wine and champagne flowed. Guests came and went in formal attire. In the next room were the camp residents, some watching television, others playing darts, and the rest writing letters. For us it was just another evening. (As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 284)

¹⁸ See Bristow 1980: 89-93 for further discussion of local authorities’ success at providing accommodation and for an analysis of the reasons why Ugandan Asians were attracted to red areas based on interviews conducted with Ugandan Asian refugees in Britain. In a 1979 article Bristow also analyses the specific housing conditions, preferences and aspirations of Ugandan Refugees settled in Manchester and Birmingham (Bristow 1979).
According to another refugee in the Kensington camp, the administration ‘had sole control over resources: possible job and accommodation opportunities’. ‘These opportunities’, he also argued, ‘were never advertised on the camp bulletin boards’. To make matters worse, Kushner and Knox indicate that the lack of welcome was also evident in a board displaying the message ‘HAVE YOU CONSIDERED EMIGRATING?’. These circumstances, combined with a system of patronage and favouritism in operation, gradually gave rise to a ‘most unhealthy environment’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 284).

Once outside the camps the adaptation of the Ugandan Asians depended on the place where they had been resettled and the racism that they encountered. In the following passage, Kushner and Knox detail some of the most significant experiences of the Ugandan Asians:

The CRC’s report on Ugandan adaptation a year after arrival stated that two thirds of the families resettled through the resettlement board liked their neighbourhoods. Those most satisfied lived in towns like Northampton and Peterborough where they had good housing, work was available and Asian community links existed, or in expanding towns where they were part of a larger group of refugee families.

By 1976 the CRC concluded that Asians had adapted more successfully in Leicester, where they had community ties with other east African Asians, and better chances to improve living conditions, than in Ealing which did not have such opportunities. A quarter of the families interviewed in 1974 who were resettled by the Board disliked their neighbourhoods because the areas were tough and isolated and there was hostility from the local people. ‘This hostility had taken the form of demonstrations, letters in the press, and, for one family, bricks thrown through their windows on two occasions’.

Such incidents were not isolated and continued long after the initial reception of the Asians. In 1985, years after settling in the Conservative middle-class suburb of Bromley, one family reported a tide of racist abuse; their windows were smashed, car tyres slashed, and most of their seven girls were hurt in physical attacks alongside repeated torments of being ‘Paki scum’. Another family whom they had met in a reception camp were burnt to death in an arson attack on their home in Ilford in Essex. Eight out of 49 families questioned about the Race Relations Act in the first CRC survey said that they would have liked to use it to combat discrimination. (Kushner & Knox 1999: 286)

Another revealing account of the resettling experience is that by Mr Jaffer Kapasi OBE, a successful Ugandan-Asian businessman in Leicester. Mr Kapasi and his family (seven children and two parents) were welcomed at Stansted airport and taken to a camp in Surrey (ex-army barracks). They were put up there for a while and then

---

19 More details on the camps and testimonies of some of the refugees who stayed in them can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 284-86.

20 Mr Kapasi was already interviewed about his experience in the 1997 BBC programme ‘Remember the Ugandan Asians’ (Sandiford 1997). The account described above, however, is based on a telephone interview I conducted with him on 12-9-2002.
they were transferred to one camp in Wales, and then to another one, probably because they needed to accommodate new incomers.

At the camps, Mr Kapasi remembers that they used to get help from local NGOs with things like learning to get by with shopping and so on. They also got some pocket money.

For Mr Kapasi, dispersal does not work because everybody comes back eventually to the cities where there are established communities. This is understandable considering that they face the problem of integrating in an alien country with an alien religion. He explains that it takes a long time to feel settled because everything is so different, from the way you do business to shopping. The climate is cold, the rooms in houses are small, and the pace of life is very fast. But even in these circumstances Mr Kapasi and his family wanted to maintain their identity. This entailed having to reconcile two completely different cultures in their everyday life.

He remembers that they got no help with finding accommodation outside the camps. They left by looking for contacts living in cities, like Leicester. When Mr Kapasi and his family finally found somewhere, they informed the camp managers that they wanted to move and these inspected the property. Mr Kapasi thinks that this may not have been only to ensure that the refugees lived in acceptable conditions, but also to avoid excessively high concentrations of Ugandan Asians in one street or neighbourhood, which may have provoked a negative reaction from the local residents.

Although they rented from a local British family, there was widespread reluctance to rent to black people. The immediate neighbours of Mr Kapasi’s family were British whites and they were somewhat hostile. For example, they used to complain about the smells produced by their cooking.

Mr Kapasi himself did not find it hard to get work after he got his further education degree in accountancy. His father was not so fortunate, however. This was mainly due to his poor English. He went to a number of interviews but was never accepted.21

### The Chileans

Kushner and Knox explain that ‘the first organised resettlement programme for Chilean refugees was prepared in June 1974 by the World University Service (WUS), and was linked with its own international scholarship programme for academics and students’. They point out that this organisation ‘had earlier undertaken campaigns to help Hungarians in 1956 and over 200 Czech refugees in 1968’, but that ‘its programme for Chileans did not anticipate that so many refugees needed help or that the crisis would last so long’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 296).22

According to Kushner and Knox, in the case of the Chilean refugees, the need for more resources to organise a large-scale response soon became clear, but the government preferred to let voluntary organisations tackle the problem. These organisations provided a grant to set up the Joint Working Group for Refugees from

---

21 The difficulties of the older generations of Ugandan Asians adapting to British life are also explored in Sandiford 1997.

22 More details on the WUS resettlement programme can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 297.
Chile (JWG), whose role was to direct the reception and resettlement of the refugees. Amongst its members were representatives of organisations with experience in refugee work, like the British Council for Aid to Refugees (BCAR), Ockenden Venture, the World University Service (WUS), Christian Aid, the Standing Conference on Refugees, the Chile Committee for Human Rights and the Chile Solidarity Group.

Although the government did provide some funding for the JWG, the organisation was never sure of its finance, which made it extremely difficult to plan long-term policies properly. Because the JWG was a temporary and *ad hoc* organisation, it could only provide a minimal service for the refugees (Kushner & Knox 1999: 297-98).23

After the announcement of the Foreign Secretary in March 1974 that applications from Chilean Refugees would be viewed sympathetically, the WUS prepared the first programme of resettlement in June. This programme was a test scheme and it aimed to meet what the WUS considered were the most urgent needs of the refugees, that is, temporary accommodation and intensive courses in English.

A project to receive 120 refugees was set up at Southampton University during the summer holidays. The idea was to make use of the empty student hall and the language teaching facilities. In the end only 32 refugees arrived in time to take part. In six weeks the local authority housed the families and local residents gave single individuals accommodation. According to the interim report of the JWG:

> It was not originally intended that the group received at Southampton would necessarily be resettled there, but the response from the trade unions, local authority, academics and numerous individuals was so tremendous that all the refugees who arrived in Southampton were resettled in the area. (As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 298)

The JWG also set up reception centres in London and Birmingham. Bed and breakfast lodgings were also used later. These were often in a bad state of disrepair, but the refugees were never housed in them for that long. Local committees (often made up of members of local Chile Solidarity or Human Rights Committees) helped to relocate Chileans around the country. These workers were an essential component of the reception process, as they were in charge of organising housing and language courses, and of finding accommodation. Because of their local basis they were able to secure housing an employment by directly contacting local councils and the trade union movement (Kushner & Knox 1999: 298).

Kushner and Knox argue that on the whole, there was a ‘lack of central direction in the British resettlement procedure for the Chileans’. Because of this ‘there were variations in provisions made for the refugees and these had to be negotiated in every locality’. Kushner and Knox also add that ‘priority was given to finding accommodation first, employment second, which would cause discrepancies as the two needs did not always coincide, as noted in the experiences of many other refugees’.24

---

23 More details of these bodies and agencies can be found on pages 297-98 of Kushner & Knox 1999.

24 Kushner and Knox explain that ‘due to the dissipated nature of the Chilean arrivals, the recovery of their experiences in Britain is largely dependent on oral history’ (Kushner & Knox 1999: 302). According to Kushner and Knox, this is particularly well illustrated in Diana Kay’s *Chileans in Exile: Private Struggles, Public Lives* (Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan, 1987). Kushner and Knox describe this study as an ‘important history of
According to Clare Mar-Molinero, who was involved in the language teaching of refugees at Southampton, about 70 per cent of the early Chilean arrivals were manual workers or came from low-skilled occupations. This characteristic set them apart from the overall trend because most of the Chilean refugees who came to Britain tended to be from a professional background. Clare Mar-Molinero recalls how this initial group of low-skilled workers dissipated into the local community as they found employment:

The first one to get a job did so in a hospital in Southampton … the only one to get a job straight away … The Council allowed some housing after the first period (when the Chileans stayed at Glen Eyre Hall) and we continued some further education. That took us up to Christmas and then most of the others from the early groups began to get jobs, mainly in factories. (As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 301)

To find housing the Chileans often had to rely on sympathetic local housing authorities and housing associations. Because of this, their success depended on the political leanings of those in powerful positions.

Vietnamese

According to Kushner and Knox, the aims of the Conservative government after accepting the quota of Vietnamese refugees were, a) to reduce immigration, b) to cut state intervention to a minimum, c) to lower government expenditure, and e) to persuade individuals to be responsible for their own welfare and destiny. Their policy towards the Vietnamese is often described as taking the form of ‘front end loading’, because it concentrated all the resources on the initial phase of reception (1999: 313).

Not enough efforts were made to try and differentiate between refugee incomers and immigrants. In addition, resettlement was based on the assumption that, after the help provided at the first stage, existing services would be adequate for coping with the needs of the refugees. As opposed to the case of the resettlement of the Hungarians and the Poles, in which the emphasis was on finding jobs, the resettlement of the Vietnamese was housing-led rather than employment-led.

Social Security provided economic assistance. In addition, local government facilities were available for assisting refugees with language classes and with finding work. The resettlement process was heavily reliant upon voluntary services. Another important characteristic was that, like the Ugandan Asians, the Vietnamese underwent government enforced regional dispersal, the purpose of which was to spread the ‘financial and human cost of resettling the refugees’, thereby minimising negative political repercussions (Kushner & Knox 1999: 313).
The policy of deploying all the available resources in the first stage was inadequate because it underestimated the vast cultural gulf that the Vietnamese would have to cross before they could adapt to British mainstream life. There was also not enough guidance as to what skills were necessary for adaptation or any retraining to furnish the refugees with such skills.

The policy of dispersing the Vietnamese, which demonstrated that the government had not learnt anything from the failure of the enforced dispersal of the Ugandan Asians, was inadequate for the needs of the refugees. As Kushner and Knox also point, the dispersal policy was ‘out of touch’ ‘with new notions of cultural pluralism, which favoured ethnic concentration to provide community support and help the refugees’ reorientation (Kushner & Knox 1999: 313).

Kushner and Knox outline the organisations involved in the Joint Committee for Refugees from Vietnam (1999: 314-15). According to them, because each agency had its own approach and its own reception centres, the refugees had very different experiences of resettlement and there were some procedural conflicts. Difficulties arose when the refugee aid agencies established networks of member groups in the zones of other agencies. There were also problems over housing when local authorities bypassed the agency in their area.

Another problem according to these authors was that the Vietnamese sometimes had to spend an extended period of time in the reception camps, which encouraged dependency and malaise (Kushner & Knox 1999: 315).

The major reception centres for the Vietnamese were Sopley, on the border of Dorset and Hampshire, and Thorney Island at Emsworth in Hampshire. The Refugee Council ran both. These centres and other smaller ones also run by this organisation were tightly regulated (Kushner & Knox 1999: 315). More organised services were available at the larger centres but, according to Kushner and Knox, these camps could become ‘ethnic enclaves’ by discouraging interaction with the host community. One serious problem, according to the Refugee Council’s own evaluation, was that ‘staff structures were confused’. Other problems were the anxiety created by the uncertainty over the camp’s future and lack of qualified personnel and training (1999: 315).

Kushner and Knox argue that the success of RAF Sopley can be attributed to the fact that, as had been the case with the Ukrainian transmigrants at Atlantic Park over fifty years earlier, the local state showed flexibility and imagination dealing with the presence of refugees. In this case in particular, a careful record was kept of all County Council expenditure on the resettlement project and Central Government was asked to meet the costs.

In the first stages, the County Chief Executive had called a conference of officers representing all local government interests. Its objective was to organise a co-ordination machinery and to try to anticipate all the problems that might arise. Kushner and Knox explain that at Sopley the Education Service provided teaching facilities for around 200 children and 300 adults. Other services are outlined in the following extract from the Hampshire County Council’s account of the provisions made for the 600 Vietnamese refugees at Sopley:

---

27 The political reasons behind the dispersal are outlined in Kushner & Knox 1999: 313-14.
Schoolrooms have been equipped and appointments have been made of a head-teacher, nine teachers, three nursery staff and an adult education organiser. In addition, sufficient part-time adult education tutors have been appointed to enable groups of ten to fifteen adults to receive daily lessons from the same tutor ... The school opened on 3d July and the primary task of the staff is to impart an understanding of the English language to both children and adults [as well as] instruction ... in health and hygiene ... [There should be considerable social training in preparation for the assimilation of the refugees into the community ... Recreational facilities are being provided in conjunction with the County Recreation Officer, the County librarian and the New Forest District Council. (Kushner & Knox 1999: 316)

Because the camp was only temporary, it was asked of local authorities throughout Britain to consider finding housing for the refugees only when employment opportunities were available in the area. Hampshire was particularly serious about this policy. It liaised with the Social Services Departments and acknowledged that once dispersed from the camps, the refugees would face social isolation. It warned that the County Council would have to look after those refugees who found it difficult to settle (Kushner & Knox 1999: 316).

The reception facilities of the Ockenden Venture were run in an entirely different way. This organisation made use of small reception centres characterised by a family approach and volunteer staff. The emphasis was on settling small groups of refugees and encouraging them to interact with the local community. Underlying their approach was the concept that refugees were not problem people. Instead, they were considered able and resourceful individuals who were in need of temporary assistance until they established themselves in a new social context.

However, the Refugee Council argued that the Ockenden Venture had gained a reputation for paternalism, authoritarianism and inflexibility. For Kushner and Knox, such criticism is a reflection of the differences in the philosophies of the different charities, which resulted in competition in the resettlement process. They argue that, by contrast, other people suggested that the smaller centres of the Ockenden Venture facilitated closer ties between staff and residents, thus making the transition to outside life easier (Kushner & Knox 1999: 316).

Kushner and Knox's describe the process of housing specific Vietnamese refugees in Southampton. Their description provides an idea of the procedures that characterised the resettlement of the Vietnamese. They explain that in February 1979 the Association of District Councils informed the Policy and Resources Committee of Southampton City Council that the government had allowed entrance to an extra 1,500 Vietnamese and that it needed authorities to provide as much help as possible with housing. Two months later, they continue:

Ockenden Venture requested that six Vietnamese families be re-housed locally. Detailed information was provided and a representative of the Social Services Department 'indicated that his department could give support to the Vietnamese families should housing be made available to them'. It was also noted that 'other voluntary bodies had offered to assist, and that the Education Department did not envisage problems in settling the children in schools'. Agreement was made to house the six families but that 'the Ockenden Venture be informed that,
while acceding to their request, this authority consider this to be the extent of their commitment in the foreseeable future’.

Revealing the tendency towards secondary migration, of the six families accepted, four moved to Birmingham. Although the council was willing for four replacement families to be housed, it decided that an appeal from Ockenden Venture for further accommodation, ‘in view of this authority’s shortage of council housing’, should be passed on to other local housing authorities ‘in anticipation of an equitable allocation of housing accommodation, for these refugees, throughout Hampshire’.

But the campaigners were persistent and brought in clergy from the Southampton Council of Churches to inform the council members ‘of the plight of the refugees and their resettlement needs’. A compromise was reached: housing associations in the city were encouraged to provide assistance and four properties awaiting improvement were made available. (1999: 317-18)

Another important organisation in the resettlement of the Vietnamese was Save the Children Fund (SFC). It was based on control-decentralised small centres of less than 90 refugees. Nevertheless, because of the volume of work it became necessary to create a new organisation called Refugee Action to deal specifically with the Vietnamese programme. Their reception centres were in the community in which the refugees were placed.

Workers lived in and were expected to get to know the refugees. Refugee Action was widely considered as having the most open and flexible leadership and as successfully delegating many decisions to centres. Its major weakness was its lack of means and experience to provide support for the refugees after the centres closed down (Kushner & Knox 1999: 318).

After the stage of reception, the resettlement of the Vietnamese was based on a policy of forming clusters of refugees, ‘accommodating between four and ten families within the area of each housing authority’. The idea was to spread the refugees over the UK in an attempt to avoid creating ghettos whilst allowing for some community support. In 1979, the Home Office appealed to local authorities for help with housing. It also asked for help from housing associations.

After a positive initial response, offers dropped off by January 1980. The reason for this was partly attributed to the fact that ‘local authorities used the Vietnamese programme as a political football in their defence against the introduction of government restrictions on their autonomy and expenditure’ (the Refugee Council as cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 318). The policy of dispersal failed, as it had previously done in the case of the Ugandan Asians. One major problem was that the patterns of geographic resettlement depended upon the availability of housing in different areas. Another problem was the large size of many of the Vietnamese families. The testimony of one refugee clearly shows the problems that this entailed:

At first they say we got very big family we want to live all together and they say in England they don’t have any houses for nine people. You got to split into two families, you cannot live together. You know most Vietnamese families, were nine, or ten, and they say you wait one year,

28 Vietnamese accounts of resettlement and reception camps can be found in Kushner & Knox 1999: 320-23.
two years, better for you to split. But in the end they offer us a house with three bedrooms and we accept it. The house is damp and they move us to another house, kept moving again and again. (As quoted in Kushner & Knox 1999: 318)

There was unwillingness among the refugees to move to remote areas. Richard Barnett from the City of Southampton Housing Department reported that dispersal had not been successful at all. He recommended that in future it would be advisable to consult the refugees before introducing carefully planned schemes (as cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 318).

Dispersal was finally reviewed after the drop in housing offers made it necessary to accept accommodation regardless of quality of location. Because of this, many Vietnamese finally moved into metropolitan centres with high ethnic concentrations. More than a third of refugees reported faults with their first house, for example, severe damp. The refugees tended to move to areas like the South East, the North West and the West Midlands (particularly Birmingham). In contrast, East Anglia, West Wales and Cumbria did not attract as many. 8,000 of the Vietnamese refugees had moved to London by 1986 due to the attractions of the metropolis and its large Chinese community (Kushner & Knox 1999: 318-10).

The following extract from the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee suggests that the government would have been wiser to subsidise housing for the Vietnamese than to adopt the policy of dispersal:

It is hard to think of any problem facing the Vietnamese which would not have been less severe or difficult to resolve if the disastrous policy of dispersal had not been adopted. In the long term it might well have been cheaper for the government to subsidise housing so that the Vietnamese were housed in larger groups than to try to deal with the problem of scattered populations. (As quoted in Kushner & Knox 1999: 319)

Also relevant are the comments by Truc Long Pham at a 1986 seminar held in Southampton:

The South of England is still an example of this, with many Vietnamese in small places. The idea by central government was that if you settled people in small amounts in different areas they would be less of a draw on services. Also that if there were less people of their own culture, then the Vietnamese would have to settle more quickly into British culture. The mistaken thinking behind this is that you can take people and shape them into any culture you want, as if they were made of clay. (As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 319)

According to him, because dispersal actually made difficult to ascertain what the overall needs of the refugees were, ‘the Vietnamese Programme has become an attempt to cope with the problems of dispersal [and] assist the Vietnamese community towards their own community development’. A particularly interesting notion was his argument that refugees’ concentration was actually a sign of integration:
The Vietnamese are coming together not to escape from the realities of British society – in fact just the opposite. Like any community the Vietnamese feel that they can take a part in the mainstream of society with strength and effectiveness if they have the security of their traditions and family values as a base.

He added that this should be recognised by local authorities who should also give the Vietnamese ‘the support we need to become active members of British society’ (as cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 319).

In terms of the help provided by the government to find employment for the Vietnamese, Kushner and Knox mention that there were some attempts to help teachers and other professions re-qualify. Furthermore there were some schemes to provide work for the refugees in Hampshire and West Sussex, for example, the New Homeland Crafts Project. However, these were only local schemes rather than a part of a larger national-wide programme.

To make matters worse, 21 per cent of the Vietnamese refugees were resettled in the north-west, where there was a very high level of male unemployment (Kushner & Knox 1999: 327). The following passage summarises the findings of reports looking into the degree of success of the Vietnamese in terms of finding employment:

By 1980, the JCRV found that only a third of adult wage earners had jobs, slightly higher than a Home Office study which found as little as 16 per cent of all Vietnamese refugees employed, 20.4 per cent men and 10.2 per cent women. Regional variations were distinct with the Vietnamese having more success in the south than the north. Both reports suggested that most of those gaining employment did so not through job centres but by direct negotiation between agency staff/support group members and employers or through their own initiative. The work was largely of an unskilled nature, even for former skilled white-collar workers. Esther Wong suggests that some 20 per cent of breadwinners were able to establish private businesses like restaurants, market stalls and tailoring industries and about 40 per cent found satisfactory employment as mechanics, carpenters, or in catering, transport, tailoring, brick-making, forestry and the building trades. Some jobs were found through the Chinese community.29

In the conclusion to their analysis of Vietnamese refugee resettlement in the UK, Kushner and Knox conclude that the Vietnamese programme ‘amplified many inherent weaknesses in refugee policy’. The approaches adopted did not take the backgrounds and needs of the refugees sufficiently into account. Not enough attention was paid to the state of the British economic and social scene either. The resettlement programme also failed because it relied on the traditional assumption

29 In *Vietnamese Refugees in Britain*, a study published by the Commission for Racial Equality, Felicity Edholm, Helen Roberts and Judith Sayer argue that the reaction to the Vietnamese on the part of the nearly 60,000 Chinese people in large British cities was cautious. They explain that there was some resentment of the privileged treatment the Vietnamese had received, in particular in terms of housing and furnishings. They concluded that ‘slowly they have become more positive but tensions still exist between the Chinese from Hong Kong and the Vietnamese (as cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 319-20). In an unpublished paper made available to Kushner and Knox by Ockenden Venture, Esther Wong points out that the Vietnamese found some jobs through the Chinese community (as cited in Kushner and Knox 1999: 327).
that refugees should become rapidly self-sufficient, that they would make use of existing welfare mechanisms and that they should be dispersed in small clusters so as to avoid a serious political backlash.

Although, as many experts agree, employment should be the key to refugee settlement, not enough was done to help the Vietnamese to employ their skills or to adapt them to the new environment. Paul Rushton, who worked in reception in Portsmouth, makes an important point that explains why the resettlement of the Vietnamese refugees could not be employment led:

\[\text{It was a choice very often between employment and housing, and I think some of the secondary movements have shown the refugees themselves place a different priority than ourselves on it. There was an ulterior motive for us because once they were moved on from reception centres they were no longer being cared for and looked after by specific agencies, they were just out there somewhere … it just seemed like a fatal move really to try to take it on as a priority because there’s so many people unemployed anyway and most of the employment initiatives were around the idea of training, and that’s served up in the local community.} \]

(As cited in Kushner & Knox 1999: 331)

As Kushner and Knox point out, on the whole one of the greatest problems was that ‘like other refugee groups coming to the UK in the 1970s, the Vietnamese found resettlement was housing-led and once accommodation had been found, there was little assistance for them to adapt and settle’ (1999: 331).

In an article published in 1989, Joly and Cohen explain that dispersal policy was abandoned because it was a failure, and that this was now recognised by the government and all the agencies involved in resettlement. Those families that were settled in small towns or villages eventually moved down to London or Birmingham, despite the fact that often they ended up paying very high rents to private landlords and living in overcrowded accommodation. The housing officers of Ockenden Venture realised that if the families were dispersed they would leave their first place of settlement and would then require more assistance with housing in the area of their choice. The policy was not abandoned until 1984, even when the JCRV had been against it since 1982 (Joly & Cohen 1989b: 81). In the following extract these authors also describe some of the features of the approaches adopted subsequently:

Since then the housing officer, who interviews people in the reception centres, has been giving the Vietnamese far more choice in the decision about where they will eventually settle. If they know anything about Britain, their first choice is generally London and their second choice Birmingham. If they do not know Britain at all, they ask for a big town with a large Vietnamese community, which again points to London, Birmingham, or Manchester. The

\[\text{30 As Carey-Wood \textit{et al} explain, employment was identified as the most important element in refugee resettlement by the participants of the 1988 Surrey Conference on Training and Employment Provision for Refugees in Europe. Employment, argue Carey-Wood \textit{et al}, ‘enhances the resettlement process by providing refugees with important benefits such as the chance to improve language skills and to learn and understand the culture of the receiving country’. These authors also cite academic research that demonstrates that working benefits refugees psychologically by rebuilding their confidence (Carey-Wood \textit{et al} 1995: 29, see also Duke & Marshall 1995: 25).}\]
trend is thus for the grouping of Vietnamese populations in a few large centres.\(^{31}\) (Joly & Cohen 1989b: 81)

\(^{31}\) Robinson 1989 reports on research in progress at the time he was writing that assessed the policy of dispersal against two different criteria. Firstly whether dispersal was ever achieved in practice. And secondly whether Vietnamese refugees regarded dispersal as desirable or whether they sought to reverse it by voluntary secondary migration into areas of nascent concentration (1989: 332). On both counts Robinson also reaches the conclusion that dispersal was a failure. One of the conclusions to a study conducted by the Home Office in 1995 also points to the disadvantages of policies of refugee dispersal: ‘A major mediating role is played by community groups that provide a link between their members (especially the newer arrivals) and the wider society. Without these groups it is difficult to see how many of the newcomers would have been able to survive. The groups also represent a reservoir of voluntary work by refugees themselves that constitutes a hidden (and unremunerated) resource that should be more widely recognised and supported. The community groups should be recognised as a major channel for providing support and assistance, and their current activities might be usefully expanded, although there must still be concern for the needs of those who do not have access to such groups (e.g. living away from major areas of settlement’). In line with this reasoning the authors propose the following for future policies: ‘Policy must be compatible with the growth of concentrations of sufficient strength in particular areas to allow a thriving community of cultural expression and mutual support to survive. Where the size of a particular group warrants it, several such concentrations might be encouraged in order to lessen the resource demands on any one local authority, but a policy of individual dispersal would plainly be inhumane, given the strong needs of newer arrivals in particular for emotional and social support in a context of familiar language and custom’ (Carey-Wood et al 1995: 109-10).
Appendix One

Developments in housing policy affecting refugees in the 1970s

Carey-Wood et al outline some of the key features of the British housing policy context from the 1970s onwards that affected refugees trying to find housing at this time. The most important of these was a sharp decrease of rented accommodation since the early seventies, and a parallel increase in owner occupation. The decreasing ability of local authorities to build new homes, and legislation transferring housing stock from the public sector to the owner occupied and Housing association sectors also contributed to the decline of local authority housing (Carey-Wood et al 1995: 62).

This process has resulted in what Malpass and Murie describe as a ‘residualisation’, in other words, the transformation of council housing into the tenure of the least well off (Malpass & Murie 1999: 17-18). These authors also provide an overview of the development of the government’s housing policy from the last phase of what they term ‘the period of high output policy’ (1964-1968), to the abandonment of high output policy in the 1970s.

In the third and last phase of the high-output period the Wilson government aimed to be building half a million houses per year by 1970. The intention was to reach this level of production by expanding the public sector, but, as Malpass and Murie explain, ‘only to a situation of broad parity of output with the private sector’. Total output did increase for a short period (it exceeded 400,000 in 1967 and 1968), but the government decided to cut back the building programme and other public expenditure after the devaluation of sterling in November 1967.

Completions in the public sector decreased dramatically after 1968, and by 1973 they were as low as 88,000. This was paralleled by a decline in slum-clearance activity. From roughly 1969 onwards, the emphasis was instead on rehabilitation of existing dwellings. This was presented as a switch of resources but it was actually a way of reducing public investment in housing over the next five years.

The abandonment of high-output policy in this period and the retreat from the aspirations of 1965 is closely linked to wider economic problems, but a ‘genuine easing of the overall shortage’ facilitated the policy change. As Malpass and Murie argue ‘the total numbers of dwellings was broadly equivalent to the total number of households by the late 1960s, and ministers were able to present the national housing shortage as over; what remained was a series of “local shortages”’ (1999: 58).

Two other factors made the slowing down in public housing production a safe political move, according to Malpass and Murie. Firstly, widespread popular resentment against the negative effects of large-scale redevelopment on settled urban communities. Secondly, increasing awareness of the fact that the new high-rise industrialised housing was expensive, unpopular and unsatisfactory.

A revival of public sector building occurred during 1974 and 1976, but since then completions have decreased to the levels of the 1920s. During the 1970s issues of finance took precedence over production in the politics of housing. This was mainly due to the impact of inflation and rising interest rates on government help with
housing costs, both in the public and owner-occupied sectors (Malpass and Murie 199: 58).

As Malpass and Murie explain, ‘the level of subsidy on new council houses had been raised in 1967, and in the owner-occupied category, assistance in the form of tax relief on mortgage interest tended to rise as a result of growing numbers of mortgagees’. But even more crucial was the increased cost in tax relief brought about by the unprecedented escalation of house prices in 1972 and 1973 and the rise of the mortgage interest rate from 8 per cent in 1971 to 11 per cent in 1973. Mainly due to this, between 1967 to 1977 there was a 146 per cent increase in total relief to mortgagees (in real terms). Subsidies in the public sector also rose by 107 per cent. Malpass and Murie point out that ‘these increases, which took place against the background of falling completions of new houses, not surprisingly raised questions about the wisdom of the Exchequer paying out larger and larger sums on what was seen as unproductive expenditure’ (1999: 58-59).

The Housing Finance Act of 1972 was an attempt to solve the problems of public sector subsidies. Nevertheless, assistance to owner-occupiers was not modified at all. Labour repealed the act upon their return to power in 1974. Nevertheless, a housing finance review, later broadened into a housing policy review, was set up in response to the need to reform housing finance. The Green Paper on housing policy that resulted from this review on June 1977 is considered to be a bland document that partly reflected the government’s weak parliamentary position at the time. In the following extract, Malpass and Murie outline the main problems with the White Paper:

\[
\text{The nettle of thorough going reform of housing finance was not grasped; no major changes were proposed for the private sector, although a new system of council house subsidies was outlined and included in the Housing Bill which fell with the Labour Government in May 1979. (Malpass & Murie 1999: 59)}
\]

Malpass and Murie argue that one of the main reasons why subsidies to owner-occupiers are not often cut by the British government is fear of the electoral consequences, since more than 50 per cent of households are now in this form of tenure. This percentage is a sign of the restructuring of the tenure system of the 1920s that has been taking place since 1945 (1999: 59).

Indeed, a clear consequence of this restructuring has been a secular decline of the private rented sector. The redevelopment and sale for owner occupation has continued unabated despite efforts to revive investment by progressive rent decontrol, like the 1957 Rent Act. Malpass and Murie explain that ‘the public sector just about doubled as a proportion of the total stock in the period 1945 to 1956’. However, they add, ‘its rate of growth has been much lower since then, and council house sales now exceed new completions, causing a net loss to the sector as a whole’ (Malpass & Murie 1999: 59).

Over the years, government policy has encouraged and supported owner-occupation. This has been done primarily by offering forms of cutting the cost of home ownership for low-income families. Examples are the option mortgage introduced in 1967, the savings-bonus-and-loans scheme in 1978 and the ‘right to buy’ for council tenants in 1980. Furthermore, owning a home has been presented as a ‘normal’, ‘natural’ and ‘deeply satisfying’ thing. At the same time, council housing has been turned by government policies into a service that plays primarily a residual
role. More specifically, this has been a consequence of measures designed to restrict investment and to focus on those groups that are excluded from the private sector. Other factors contributing to the residualisation process have been rising rents and inducements to buy (Malpass & Murie 1999: 60).

Since 1974 an interesting aspect of the development of the tenure system has been the new role of housing associations as a third alternative for those people who cannot make use of the private-rent sector. In was in this year that the Housing Corporation was enlarged and given more funds with which to finance its activities. Housing associations expanded at considerable speed for several years and they provided new and renovated accommodation at reasonable rates. There was a rise in completions of new dwellings, from 8,800 in 1973 to 25,000 in 1977. Nevertheless, they fell again by 1979 (Malpass and Murie 1999: 60).

The trends in housing policy since the 1970s detailed by Malpass and Murie are clearly one of the main causes of the housing problems that refugees continue to face in today’s Britain. Writing in 1995 Carey-Wood et al describe the situation in the following way:

*Rented accommodation in Britain now accounts for only about 30 per cent of the housing stock and much of it is not available to refugees because of restricted access on the basis of definitions of accepted housing need (in the council and housing association sector) or entry costs (in the private rented sector).* (Carey-Wood et al 1995: 62)

In their conclusion to their study these authors remark that ‘the lack of sufficient public rental housing is a major problem’ and that ‘many families are still living in unsuitable accommodation’ (Carey-Wood et al 1995: 108). The importance of rented accommodation for refugees is brought to light in the 2000 study commissioned by the An Viet Housing Association. In its analysis of the household and housing characteristics of Vietnamese refugees in London it concludes that Vietnamese communities are ‘highly dependent upon social rented housing; less than a fifth of the population live in owner-occupied accommodation’ (Tomlins et al 2000: 19).
Appendix Two

Bibliography


Marett, Valerie, 1989. Immigrants Settling in the City (Leicester: Leicester University Press).


Sandiford, Rebecca, ‘Remember the Ugandan Asians’, *Timewatch* Series (UK: BBC/A&E Network).


Good practice 1: The Praxis Hosting Scheme - an evaluation

Berhanu Kassayie
Michel Ngue
Raphael Murera
Sarah Coombes
Mark Coombes
John Eversley

Public Policy Research Unit
Queen Mary University of London

November 2002
Background

Origins
The Praxis Hosting Scheme was designed to ease pressure on local authorities asylum teams by accommodating single adults who are not eligible for welfare benefits except where covered by the National Assistance Act.

Asylum seekers without benefits have been pushed into extreme poverty. In terms of accommodation, they were put in badly managed and expensive hostels/hotels isolated from their communities.

The regulations have placed an added financial burden on friends and hosts who are accommodating the asylum seekers, many of whom subsist on benefits themselves.

Main aims and objectives
The original objectives were to:

1. To contribute to the well being of asylum seekers:
   a. By securing them culturally appropriate accommodation. This benefit them by allowing them access to a placement with their own culture, languages or religious group.
   b. By providing them further support, guidance and advice (Education, Immigration, cultural support, training, housing, employment.)

2. To help hosts:
   By securing them with financial support for providing accommodation to asylum seekers covered by the National Assistance Act.

In April 2000, when the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 come into force, the support for asylum seekers under the National Assistance Act was abolished. Asylum seekers initial eligibility to be supported by Local Authorities has been transferred to the National Asylum Support Service and displaced outside London. As a consequence the pressure on local authorities to provide accommodation ceased. Meantime some local authorities found the Scheme to be suitable to accommodate 16-17 year olds if it was modified.

From December 2001, Praxis started to develop the scheme to accommodate 16-17 year olds asylum seekers/ refugees supported under Children Act and 18-21 supported under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.

Methods
The Scheme:
- Has a matching and monitoring process to smooth hosting arrangements.
- Has host interview and property assessment procedures.
- Works closely with Refugee Community Organisations in recruiting hosts.
- Has a continuous support system for guests in placement.
- Provide regular information about clients in placement to their referral local authorities.
Self-assessment by Praxis hosting team

**Strengths:**
The Praxis hosting scheme has been able to achieve successfully its aims and objectives

**Weaknesses:**
- Difficulties in recruiting host from different communities
- Lack of enough referral rights to housing associations and other housing providers for clients who move out of the Scheme.

**Opportunities:**
- The Scheme’s popularity will make it the model of accommodating unaccompanied minors (16-17 years old).

**Threats:**
- The Scheme might not be able to find enough hosts for all referred clients.
- Local authority resistance to using alternative means of accommodating asylum seekers.
- Changing government policy regarding unaccompanied minors including recent proposals to move them out of London.

**Quality of accommodation**
Clients are accommodated with hosts whose properties have scored enough points on assessment of the following:

- Fitness
- Repair
- Safety
- Sanitary arrangements
- Access
- Ventilation
- Cleanliness
- Local area
  - Safety
  - Amenities
  - Transport

**Privacy and communication**
All clients in the hosting Scheme have their own room and hosts are expected to respect their privacy. Clients can use the host’s phone only to contact Praxis and their referral bodies. They can use Host telephone to receive phone calls. Hosting Scheme guests have opportunities to interact with established communities.

**Support services**
The Praxis Hosting scheme has been assessed on criteria that can be used to evaluate other schemes.

Assistance with obtaining housing/accommodation  **YES**
Advice on housing or accommodation issues YES
Financial advice YES
Welfare rights/Benefits advice YES
Assistance in accessing healthcare services YES
Language/interpreting support/provision YES
Outreach support services YES
Domiciliary support services YES
Resettlement services YES
General advice/guidance/support YES
Representation or advocacy services YES
Employment/training/education advice YES
Advice in accessing community support and cultural needs YES
How many residents per support worker? 20 residences per one support worker

**Issues of concern to Praxis for good practice in refugee housing**
- Not enough housing associations targeting refugees
- Being a refugee is not a priority in housing and homelessness law
- The shortfall in Housing Benefit provided to refugees to enable private landlords to take them on
- The tendency to ‘dump’ asylum seekers, a non-unified group with little means of protesting, in the worst housing stock.

**Numbers**
Between starting in June 1997 and October 2002, the Praxis Hosting Scheme has hosted 35 guests with 35 different hosts.

**Hosts and guests**
The hosts have many different origins and backgrounds and agreed to host guests for different reasons. For some hosts the main reason for hosting asylum seekers was to get some money from renting their rooms out. For others, it was the satisfaction of helping someone to be integrated. In any case, most of the guests felt a certain degree of satisfaction and integration because they built up a degree of relationship with their host and household.

Generally, all the placements went smoothly. However, relationships between one host and all his guests broke down. According to the records, the same host hosted four guests and the relationship was not good with all the four guests.

For all the other placements it appears that both parties generally considered the placements good. The hosts reported that the guests were generally co-operative and respectful concerning their rules, for example.

The guests reported that they found the hosting scheme flexible and generally did the best to get their guests satisfaction. Hosts have tried to get most of the guests close to their friends and relatives; to find appropriate hosts where the guest desired to live and moved them close to the colleges where they are studying.

Generally the placements have demonstrated stability. The majority of guests stayed with the same host for their entire placement with Praxis or have moved just once either for educational reasons or because their host moved with them to another address or because the room was needed for another purpose by the host.
Quantitative data

The figures are as follows for 35 guests:
- 13 guests haven’t moved at all, this means they stayed with their host for their entire placement or are still in their first host’s placement until present.
- 8 people moved once
- 5 people moved twice
- 6 people moved three times
- One person moved four times
- Two people moved 5 times.

Below is a table on the movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of guests</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>37.14%</td>
<td>22.85%</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
<td>17.14%</td>
<td>2.85%</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nearly four out of every ten guests stayed with their first host until the end of their placement or are still living with their first host now.

Less than a quarter moved just once and mostly because of the distance between them and their colleges. About one in six moved two or three times usually because the host wanted the room for another purpose. A few moved because they made friends and wanted to move closer to them and I person had problems with the host and moved.

In total the Hosting Scheme has registered 39 movements that can be classified in the following categories.

- One case of an allegation of fraud (but this guest did not change address)
- One case where the referring body ceased the contract because the guest was working,
- One guest became pregnant and moved into a bigger house, one host’s house was damaged (by accident)
- One host moved to a different address and moved with his guest,
- Five cases where the host family increased in size,
- Three cases where the host wanted a room for another purpose, four people were granted ILR/ELR while they were still at their first accommodation.
- Five people had a breakdown relationship with their host. All these people lived with the same host. It seems reasonable to conclude that there were problems with the host.
Thirteen people never moved because everything was good, the Hosting Scheme managed to find eight hosts near the guest’s colleges. Five people were placed near their friends or family. Generally the Hosting Scheme showed good concern about guests’ needs and managed to place them where they would be happy.

Qualitative research

The evaluation interviewed six guests individually – five men and one woman. Their age ranged between 20 and 40. They have been living in the UK from two years to 4 and half years. Four hosts took part in a focus group. Six male guests took part in a focus group too. Their ages ranged from 25 – 45 and they came from Africa, Iran and Eastern Europe. The participants included present and past guests.

Issues arising from interviews and focus groups

Hearing about the scheme

Guests said that they had been referred to Praxis hosting scheme by the social services. A friend told one guest about the scheme.

One host found out through a friend who was already a host themselves. This friend then informed Praxis that they knew someone who wanted to be involved. This person then approached Praxis and subsequently began the interviewing process. They said they were given all the information they needed, for example what was expected of them as a host.

One host had a friend in a very difficult and stressful situation in their country of origin. This person approached their local authority to find out about ways in which they could assist their friend to come to the UK. The local authority referred this person to Praxis. Another host had a friend who was homeless. This person knew someone that works at Praxis and so asked for their help and advice in the case of their homeless friend. Praxis informed them of this scheme.

One person is a volunteer at Praxis and so was aware of the scheme through their volunteer work. This person had a spare room in their house and thought it could be put to good use by housing a guest.

Why hosts take part

One person said that financial support was definitely an issue/incentive, although they thought the money was not much. They also said that it can be very helpful to someone else, that you can pay back the help given to you by others, when they themselves were in a less fortunate position (hosts), by helping others when you are now in a position to do so.

One said they achieved a degree of moral satisfaction by helping someone who is suffering. Most said that they were once in a similar situation and know how it feels to come to a country where you don’t know anyone, and have recently come from a traumatic situation.
For one of the participants money was not an issue at all. They said it was about helping people, that if someone needs help their door is open, and that their home becomes the guest’s home. Others said money was an incentive but was by no means the main incentive. One person said that regardless of money talking to people is very important.

It was commented that this scheme is a more formalised way of doing what has been going on within communities for a long time. However, because it has become formalised and because the host receives financial assistance, guests do not feel as if it is charity and that this is a positive aspect to the scheme.

One said that they always help people in such difficult situations and felt more useful offering their spare room in this more formalised way.

It was commented that it is emotionally positive for both the host and guest – that they understand each other having been through similar experiences.

Matching and mutual gain
All the hosts agreed that the matching process was thorough. They said that Praxis do not expect a simple relationship like that of tenant and landlord. They expect hosts and guests to have an emotional relationship. Praxis expects hosts to give guests moral as well as practical support, to help the guest overcome their difficulties and stress. Praxis wants the guests to feel at home and this is why they need help from the hosts.

There was a general feeling among guests that the process by which they were matched with a host was a successful one that did its best to match guests with an appropriate host. This was combined with a high level of transparency concerning characteristics of both guest and host. The members of the group did not feel they were obliged to take up particular offers but did feel that Praxis had - to the best of its knowledge - selected good quality hosts. Despite the quality of the matching it did not prepare the guests in adapting to “house rules”

‘I visited the house and was shown my room. I went back to Praxis with the staff and then I accepted the room. I found it difficult to adapt to the house rules but after some time I found out that the host was good and friendly’

Examples of ‘house rules’ were:

Do not smoke, do not come very late….’

Some hosts had guests that were from the same country of origin as the host, others did not. The hosts were from Africa and the Middle East and had/have guests from these places as well as Eastern Europe.

One of hosts said that the scheme is about support, not just social security, not support in a monetary sense, as money isn’t everything. They said that there is a dual expectation, in that the guest is part of the family; they are not tenants and that the scheme is about the harmony of living together. They said that Praxis wants guests to be made to feel part of the family. Some of the hosts and guests cook together, others don’t – it depends on the family.
One host has an eight-year old child. They said that they consulted the child about the guest living there. They feel it has been a good experience for the child, particularly in that the child is given a sense of responsibility for the guest as well. They said that when the guest left the child really felt it, they were sad to see the guest go.

This person also said that they were there for each other (host and guest), that the guest felt part of the family and that they saw them as part of the family. This person said that it was a good experience for both of them. They listened to each other and shared each other’s problems. They gave each other hope and courage. This person also said it helps the guest with picking up English.

One participant has two young children. They felt that when communication was in English, particularly when the mother tongue of the guest is different from the host, this was both beneficial to the guest and the children. Furthermore they felt that being able to speak English helps the guest to participate in a wider community.

One participant has a child in their 20s living at home. This child and the guest have a very good relationship. For example, the child is helping the guest to look for work so they can get into the employment market.

One of the hosts said the guests are good for the children in that the children feel they have someone to talk to other than their parent.

The hosts in the focus group thought that as a rule it was probably better if Praxis matched people who speak the same language. The hosts felt that this helped to make the guest feel at home and create a closer relationship between them.

**Benefits of the scheme to guests perceived by hosts**

One host said that guests do not feel so alone through being part of this scheme. They said that this is a great feeling. They said that guests also have money, and that this gives them some sort of independence. One participant said that if you want to look at it from a government perspective, this scheme is a benefit to the country. For example it reduces the depression that people experience when moving to another country, particularly when they may have had little choice in moving away from their family and friends and their home, and may have suffered terrible things, for example torture in the country they have come from. They said that it is good for the guest’s general health but particularly for their mental health.

One host said the scheme provides much more stability for the guests than the alternatives: the guests have a resource, they have a home, and they have a family. They said that for the first and second years of settling in somewhere new to have these things is very important, particularly for their mental health. They said they believe this to be the case for single people, those that are married, those with children, and that this is true for people of any nationality. They feel that it is important to help people to stand on their own two feet and that the hosting scheme, by proving this stability and set of resources, assists in this goal.
Another commented that life in Africa it very different, that there is community support, unlike in this country where the lifestyle is more individualistic. Due to this difference they said it is easy to get depressed because you cannot talk to anyone.

Information, and access to it, was raised as an important issue. They said because the guest has a host, information is not only accessible it is quickly accessible. For example, as a host you can assist the guests with the legal issues. One commented that as a host you are more patient than other ‘traditional’ channels of information gathering/assistance. You are more patient because of the relationship, because they are not your ‘patient’. All agreed that the guests ‘improve’ quicker through being part of this scheme.

Other features mentioned by hosts were

‘It’s like caring for children, that it is like a very good nursery. Praxis is very kind and giving, that Praxis has so much love, and that this is a gift.’

One person said:

‘People are not forced into anything, that there are no secrets, and that is why the relationship is harmonious with Praxis’.

‘In British Society it is difficult to make friends – that this scheme allows people to make friends with the hosts’.

The hosts felt that people should really take advantage of this project – that it is an open door they did not have. One said it is about acceptance, that the scheme is especially good for people who have just left home, that it is like adoption. They felt that these people (the guests) need reassurance and the hosting scheme is a very good way of providing this.

One person commented they could guide the guest into doing things they wish they had done or had done differently. They feel that the scheme really helps the guests to settle and improve a lot quicker. That such a scheme is more helpful for the country than mainstream methods – that this way, particularly looking at it from a government perspective, refugees and asylum seekers do not become a burden on the state. It also helps them learn English faster.

One person commented that if they had had the opportunity of being part of this scheme (as a guest) they could have been ‘much better’; they would be years ahead of where they are now, and would speak English better.

**Guests perception of what hosts offer**

Guests felt the hosts offered good facilities. All the guests had their own bedrooms. They were happy with the facilities provided by the host and some developed a friendly relationship with the hosts.

‘She provides everything…computer, telephone, fax, Internet, washing and cooking facilities…’
Good practice 1: Praxis Hosting Scheme - an evaluation

The hosts made the guests feel that they were part of a family group, which in turn gave them much needed practical and emotional support. Often facilities such as computers, satellite TV and the phone was made available to the guests while the hosts were also willing to offer advice and help with personal problems. The participant’s felt that in many cases they were formed a lasting friendship with the host.

‘He is kind and gives you the opportunity to feel free. I have the family support. They care about you and help resolve your problems’

‘My host used to give me all I needed and washed my clothes

‘With the host you feel free and responsible. You get the support you need, you can get a computer, get help with English, watch Sky programmes on the television. The host can help you fill in the asylum and other application forms and gives you the support when you are depressed or have other problems. You cannot get this in a Hostel or a Hotel with Bed and Breakfast’

The guests felt that the programme ensured that they weren’t cut off from society in that they had access to media, information technology and home based advice on a wide range of emotional and practical issues from the host. The freedom of movement created by living in a house also allowed wider interaction with the community and the facility to maintain and develop friendships.

‘I can go out anytime and come back anytime providing I don’t disturb them in the morning. I can bring over friends. Obviously I cannot bring four or five friends over because they can make noise’

‘My friends can visit me and I feel like I am in my own house’

‘You feel loved and cared for’

‘You are part of a family. The host gives you not only shelter but also the moral and mental support, a network of friends and relatives’

The feeling of the guest focus group was that the support given by the host and Praxis was beyond what they had been expecting. The practical side of living in a house and having more freedom with day-to-day life such as cooking was complemented by other less quantifiable outcomes like the feeling of being part of a family, which was not initially an expectation.

One of the focus group members said:

‘[The hosting scheme] helps us get out of the stress and anxiety that we come with when we claimed asylum. We do not have family members; the host’s family and relatives become part of your family and environment. They help you cope with the stress of life and you can share your joys and your pains with them’.

When asked if they would prefer to have their rent paid in a flat staying with other members of the programme with no host the response was that this missed the point
of the programme: it was not just a roof over your head but a valuable system of support.

‘We do not need our own rooms with a landlord who is not part of your culture. We need the help and support of Praxis and the host’

Guests contrasted the hosting scheme with living in Bed and Breakfast hotels and hostels:

‘When you are on bed and breakfast, what you eat today is what you will eat every day and you become bored with food. If the hotel serves breakfast at 8am and you go there at 10am, there is no food for you. If the dinner is at 8pm and you are not there or you forget, you have to wait until the following morning’

Having the capacity to buy your own food not only provides a more practical solution but also has emotional benefits as well:

‘You cannot choose the food you eat and you have to stick on time to have food at all. With the host it is different. You can eat anytime you want and eat the food you want. You feel free’

Guests also said that in the hostels there was a sense of isolation from the community and that this wasn’t the case in the hosting scheme.

Most of the interviewees were living in hotels or hostels, on full board or on Bed and Breakfast outside London before joining the hosting scheme. They felt lonely and distressed and reported their cases to the social services that referred them to Praxis.

‘I was living in a nice hotel, on full board. I had breakfast, lunch and dinner. Every two weeks, I was given £10 to buy a BT phone card and £5 for my haircut. I had no money and felt like a child cared for. I had no freedom, and felt lonely and depressed. I complained to the social services and they transferred me to Praxis.’

‘Before moving to the hosting scheme, I was in a hotel. It was not good because I felt like living in a prison. If you miss you lunchtime, you have to wait for the dinner. Anybody could go in your room. I felt insecure. I moved and started living with a friend. After some time, the house was overcrowded. A friend told me about the hosting scheme. I came to Praxis and my problem was sorted out. Now I feel a different man.’

‘I was living in Kent. I felt lonely. The room was very nice with TV, but I had no money, nobody to share your happiness or hardship. I asked the social services to be moved. I was referred to Praxis. I am now living with a host who helps and support me. I have some Somali friends and we eat together during the Ramadan.’

‘I was living in a Hotel. When my brother joined me, they had no place for him. We wanted to live together. The Police was called to force us out of the hotel. We went to stay with our uncle, but the house was overcrowded. We were advised to go to the Council. They phoned the hosting scheme and we were
given accommodation. We are now living together as a family, we prepare our food together and feel great’.

‘I was living in Kent in a Hotel. I was given English food every time and I did not like it. I had stomach ache every time. I could not cook for myself, could not socialise and had no money. I informed the social services that I was lonely and depressed, they referred me to Praxis and within 3 days the accommodation was ready. Praxis provided me with everything I need. They look well after people’.

Some of the hosts have been in hostels, one said:

‘It was hell, that they are terrible places, that there is no privacy. They said that in hostels there are a lot of restrictions such as eating hours, visiting hours, the types of food you can eat, signing in and other issues’.

The hosts said that hostels are not a solution because they are expensive and guests do not have the sort of human interaction/relationship that is provided by the hosting scheme. They thought that the hosting scheme provides a human touch. One said that guests come into your house, you trust them and it works. That it is not like a hostel, with all their restrictions, that hostels are definitely not a good place for someone who has come from a traumatic situation. One said that in particular it is teenagers in hostels that get very depressed.

Problems
The guests in the focus group were very unwilling to criticise their hosts. However, some of the group had had a negative experience with their hosts. The problems centred on the quality of the accommodation, allocation of the £30 pounds allowance and issues of privacy.

‘One day I had to call my host to get my money because he did not give me my allowance for one month. He was not even in London’

‘For me the house was not heated so I had to move’

‘Sometimes the host can make you unhappy and exaggerate things. You do not have enough privacy. The host would like to know what you are doing and violate your privacy’

When problems did arise the guests did not see it as an insurmountable problem largely because of the support given to them at Praxis. The guests felt that the support given in these situations was excellent; their grievances were dealt with thoughtfully, fairly and resolved quickly.

‘My host had some emotional problems and we had to call the fire brigade twice because she was practising black magic. I informed Praxis and they placed me with another host’

The guests interviewed reported some incidents where the relationship between the host and the guest was not good. The guests contacted the Praxis link worker who dealt with the problem diligently.
‘My host used to fight with his wife and I felt uncomfortable and decided to move. I called [the Praxis Link worker] and said that I could not stay with them any longer. He found me another host. The current host in not bad, but he likes money too much. Everything is very old (blankets, bed and bed linen)’.

Others said:

‘My current host is generally good but she does not pay my food allowance on time. I talked to him and informed [the link worker].

‘Some times the toilet is not clean. The bed is getting old and the duvet is not good’.

‘My host is not paying my food allowance on time. I have to call him every time. At time he spend more than two weeks before giving me the money. I reported the case to [the link worker] and the matter was resolved. I was re-housed’.

Only one person in the host focus group said they had experienced a problem. This was that in the first week they said the money could have come through quicker. This person said that this was the only problem they could think of and could understand that in the initial stages such things were likely to occur. Even after probing this was the only problem that came up within the whole group.

The group were asked what problems they thought other hosts may have experienced or what types of problems may arise in such a scheme on a general basis. They said that as a rule it could be difficult to live with people, that it is not that easy to share your home and your life with others. That said that living with someone else, sharing your private space, is a sacrifice but one that is worth making. One person, in order to avert such problems said they adapt themselves to the situation, but that both parties have to understand people’s need for privacy, that they should respect and understand each other.

The hosts felt it was important to tackle problems in a positive and sensitive manner. One said it was important to try and resolve any issues together (host and guest) without having to go straight to Praxis. They acknowledged that there could definitely be problems with such a scheme but that the matching process by Praxis is so good that problems are unlikely to occur.

**The role of Praxis**

The guests interviewed praised the Praxis link worker highly for the services he provides. ‘He is friendly, careful and supportive’. 5 out of 6 guests said that he is very helpful and nice. The sixth said that he was helpful and nice.

The hosts mentioned Praxis holding meetings and discussions, visiting properties, the guest seeing the property, meeting the guest, and moving the guest in, contracts or agreements and so forth. They said that Praxis discussed with them clearly and openly what was expected of them and issues that are of significant importance. For example behavioural issues, e.g. smoking etc, also about the type of people that they wanted or didn’t want, say in terms of age.
They said that when the guest has moved to the house, Praxis always visit, and give them continuing support through regular visits, phone calls, letters and newsletters. They said that Praxis always keep them informed about events and organise lunches with them. One person compared Praxis to:

‘A nurse who is always there for a child.

They said Praxis is very open, that themselves as hosts as well as the guests are able to discuss any issues with Praxis. They said Praxis come and visit, not just once, that they listen to both sides, which they felt is very important.

The role of Praxis perceived by guests

Praxis were praised for the jobs they were doing by guests

‘Praxis has done wonderfully well’

‘Praxis has done everything to make us happy’

‘Thank you for helping us Praxis, You offer good services and have made a haven for us in London’

The guest focus group stressed that any comments they made were not criticisms but ways in which a good programme could be improved. The allowance illustrated this well. The group were aware that this was better than not having one but that

‘…£30 is not enough. Well we are happy with it because we know how to live with small money, but when you have to buy food for the week, pay the transport, you remain with nothing’

‘[The schemes is] perfect but if Praxis could increase the money allocated to the host, we can in return get an increase. The hosts do not get enough money’

One of the members actually received £45 from his host. Transport costs were mentioned by the group as a major and unexpected drain on resources. When asked if Praxis could help with the managing of the allowance the response of the group was that it was the difficulty of having a small amount not the actual managing of it.

‘Praxis training on managing money would not help me. I drink beer. I know how to manage my £30. We are not minors we know how to spend our money’

It was felt by the group that Praxis only targeted certain skills for training

‘… We need technical skills to live in London. Most of us are technicians. Praxis has only been helping people with office jobs. I wish they could use our technical skills and pay us some money or train us in different areas of our skills’

‘If Praxis wants to be perfect then it can help us have a trade and give us the support we need so that we can get jobs as plumbers, electricians and mechanics’
Also the participants felt the skills they already possessed were not being utilised and this could provide a solution to getting extra money.

‘We need money for the weekend…. We have untapped skills that can be used’

The guest focus group felt that Praxis could facilitate this process by providing venues for the participants to meet and exchange ideas.

The host focus group suggested that a focus group bringing together hosts and guests would be good – to broaden the discussion and for both hosts and guests to hear each others points of view, share ideas and so forth.

Other services provided by Praxis
Despite the awareness of the hosting scheme most guests had limited awareness of specific responses or knowledge of individual programmes outside it. Some of the participants played in the football team, had received small grants from charities and received help in registering at college for English lessons.

It was felt that Praxis could not help with immigration and asylum claims and was not a place to come to with legal problems.

‘We know they cannot help us with our immigration matters though it is one area that is worrying us very much’

The group felt that Praxis was their provider of accommodation. It did not appear that the participants were using Praxis as a first stop resource to getting advice and information outside the confines of the hosting scheme.

The guests interviewed were in a similar situation: One client did not know about the move-on service when he was granted leave to enter (ILR). They said that they did not have enough information about other alternatives to the scheme and had not received an in-depth housing advice. The interviewees said that they had accessed other Praxis services. The services mentioned were the football club, social events and cultural events.

The hosts were also not generally aware of the other services provided by Praxis. One said they are aware of some of the services through the newsletter, another said they knew about some things as they read the newsletter, another because they are a volunteer, one was not aware, they said that they probably do receive the newsletter but do not read it, they do not attend meeting either. Only one could actually pinpoint specific services that Praxis provide. These were information about college, legal advice via Praxis and getting money to help with education.

During the focus group, Praxis activities were described. For all but one it was the first time that they had heard anything about them. They were all very interested to find out more and were not sure why they hadn’t been informed before. However they said that perhaps they did not know as, as yet, their guest has not needed such services urgently.
They would like more information particularly on how the guests can earn money, or at least start getting into the employment market. They would also like more information on how Praxis can assist with education and language skills. They felt language skills to be particularly important, as they felt that not being able to speak English leads to isolation. One said that it is important to mix with ‘English’ people – that the language allows people to participate in the community as a whole.

**Guests expectations of the scheme**
The main expectation was a place to stay in a more supportive and culturally sensitive environment. The guests were aware that being honest about themselves was an integral part of the hosting process.

**Improving, extending and sustaining the hosting scheme**
Some hosts thought the important issue expansion and sustainability was the kinds or types of people targeted as opposed to the geographical area. That interest and acceptance of the scheme would depend on the individual people, not whether the scheme was based in a ‘cosmopolitan’ area such as London, Birmingham, Manchester and so forth which are seen as more ‘tolerant’.

Others thought that the geographical location would be important, in the sense that larger cities are multi-ethnic, multi-religious and therefore more ‘tolerant’. Some thought London was a good place to be. Others thought it more isolating than other parts of the country. Hosts thought this scheme both could and should be spread across the country. They thought the scheme should be made much bigger. They thought that it would work especially well with single parents, throughout the UK, for both emotional and financial benefits – one said you become a family with the guest there, that you can make your home a family.

The host focus group felt that finances are a big issue in relation to expansion. They felt that the government as funders should be grateful for this scheme in that it reduces medical costs for them in terms of mental health and saves them money on hostels in that the hosting scheme is much cheaper than a hostel.

The hosts recommended that the government support this scheme at Praxis. They felt that the benefit to people’s mental health is immense. Praxis helps people settle and integrate into a society and contribute to the national economy. By placing people with hosts they understand the system much quicker, and learn English faster enabling them to gain employment, and therefore contributing to the economy.
Good practice 2: Cephas Street

Brief scheme profile

History - how it started

• The scheme is a 5-bed space hostel (shared housing) owned by Refugee Housing Association in East London. It had a major refurbishment and re-opened in May 2000. Before refurbishment it was managed as a shared housing scheme.

Main objectives

• To provide temporary accommodation with support for single refugees who are victim of torture or who have mental health needs arising from torture or trauma as a consequence of being a refugee.
• Provide advice and support relevant to their specific needs
• Support them to move on successfully to independent living accommodation

Changes since launch

• The scheme accommodates mainly refugees with immigration status and not asylum seekers since the government’s dispersal policy was introduced.

Strengths and weaknesses

Staff at the hostel assess the scheme as follows:

Strengths

• It is purpose-built for shared housing.
• It includes one self-contained bedsit.
• Receives Supported Housing Management Grant, (in future Supporting People grant).
• Has limited move-on nomination rights from London borough of Tower Hamlets.
• Good links with agencies and Tower Hamlets.
• Supported housing officer attached to the scheme.
• Located in a borough with diverse ethnic groups.
• Good public transport in the area.

Weaknesses

• Lack of sufficient move-on
• Silting up of the scheme

Opportunities

• New funding under Supporting People

Threats

• Ever-changing government legislation.
State of provision

The following describes the state and condition of the scheme’s accommodation.

Safety
• The scheme has fire alarm, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers. All serviced regularly.
• Health and safety check carried out weekly
• Risk assessment carried out annually.

Sanitary
• The scheme is supplied with water, gas and electricity. They are centrally heated. There are 3 shower/toilets and 1 separate toilet. There is a washing machine and a dryer.

Type and size
• There are 4 single rooms and 1 self-contained bedsit. There is a communal sitting room, kitchen, laundrette and an office

State of repair
• It is in good condition (refurbished in May 2000). It was externally decorated in early 2002. Communal areas are cleaned by contractors every fortnight.

Proximity to transport, amenities, shops, services, cultural centres
• Underground stations: Bethnal Green, Stepney Green and Whitechapel. All 10 minutes walk. Good bus transport. Ten minutes walk to bus stations.

Security and protection from hostility
• Emergency guide and contacts displayed on noticeboard of the scheme.
• Secure premises.

Privacy
• Staff have no access to residents’ rooms unless there is emergency.
• There is an office for meeting residents.
• Residents are aware of the confidentiality policy.

Opportunities to communicate with other people
• There is a cardphone at the scheme.

Opportunities to interact with established communities
• Most residents have good contact with Praxis.
• Good contacts with refugee community organisations and Tower Hamlets.
Support services

Cephas provision
Assistance with obtaining housing/accommodation
Advice on housing or accommodation issues
Financial advice
Welfare rights/Benefits advice
Assistance in accessing healthcare services
Language/interpreting support/provision
Outreach support services

Resettlement services
General advice/guidance/support
Representation or advocacy services
Employment/training/education advice
Advice in accessing community support and cultural needs
Residents per support worker? 15:1

(Domiciliary support services are not provided at Cephas Street).

Cephas concerns for good practice in refugee housing

- To revise some of the policies and procedures in the light of Supporting people.
- To do more work to raise residents’ awareness on housing needs and expectations.
- To do more work on resident participation in the management of the scheme.
Good practice 3:
International examples

Housing-only examples
In Finland, refugees have full access to rent subsidies.

The Flemish Centre for the Integration of Refugees runs a rent guarantee scheme

A Luxembourg NGO rents and then sublets subsidised homes.

Integrating housing with other support

Tür an Tür, Ausberg, Germany
The Tür an Tür advice office assists refugees in finding housing. It offers advice, free mediation and consultation. Refugees are encouraged to carry out activities themselves in order to find housing, if necessary assisted by interpreters (provided by Tür an Tür). The centre also provides guidance after the tenancy lease is signed, e.g. if there are problems between tenants and landlords that cannot be solved without mediation.

The work is facilitated by the maintenance of a database containing the names of landlords willing to let to refugees. The advice centre issues a guide for newcomers to Augsburg, containing information about the legal rights of refugees and addresses of the several agencies and advice services for every aspect of integration.

Other activities include general social counselling and counselling focused on education. The latter includes looking for adequate education, providing language courses, involving refugees in formulating and carrying out their action plan; and public awareness raising activities.

The project acknowledges that assisting people to find a house is not the only thing required. The advice service also offers counselling after the tenancy lease is signed, which helps refugees to overcome the first difficulties they encounter after having obtained a home. Because the advice service is not limited to housing issues and but general counselling as well, this enables it to tackle multidimensional problems in a more effective way.
The project is continuously engaged in informing landlords about refugee issues and identifying ‘refugee-friendly’ landlords. Most importantly refugees have a very active role in the activities and this enhances their self-esteem.

Integrationhaus, Vienna, Austria
The Integrationshaus serves as ‘in-between’ accommodation between reception centre and permanent accommodation. The stay in the integration house is limited to a maximum of two years. There is room for 107 people, living in units that range from one to three rooms. The units are furnished, sanitary facilities are shared.

An advice and mediation team assists all residents in all aspects of their life and helps them with psychosocial, judicial, employment and housing problems. The search for permanent accommodation starts immediately after arrival. Consultancy services and support are also available to local residents. Through various side projects within the Integrationshaus the project tries to involve neighbourhood residents. Projects include a multilingual Kindergarten, after-school assistance for children, language courses and vocational training.

The project has very good results. During the second year of the project 51 people moved to permanent accommodation.

Unió Pobles Solidaris, Valencia, Spain
Unió Pobles Solidaris (UPS) rents accommodation in the region of Valencia and furnishes it, after which the accommodation is sub-let to individual refugees and families. This is done by means of a network of families and individuals, located in different municipalities. The programme is linked to the community social work, coordinating with the social services and the municipal health services.

Refugees are helped to access leisure and culture activities. Psychological support is provided to help solve problems. Legal support is used to accelerate the process of ‘regularisation’. There is also vocational training and help in the search for employment, language courses in Castilian and social skills training. Through public awareness raising activities in neighbourhoods, UPS tries to combat prejudices among the local population.

The project is highly dependent on European funding.

Dobro Dosli, Volkshilfe Oesterreich, Vienna, Austria
‘Dobro Dosli’ (‘Welcome’) is a comprehensive integration project for Bosnian refugees in Vienna, including legal advice, social guidance, labour market orientation, information on housing, language courses, information on vocational training and a project to improve contacts between Bosnian refugees and Austrian citizens.

As far as housing is concerned:
• The project mediates between refugees and (private) landlords for permanent accommodation
• Information is given about the possibilities on the housing market in general and about access to cooperative housing.
• Social workers provide assistance in finding housing and signing of long-term tenancy agreements.

Out of 80 families that Volkshilfe Österreich supported since 1994, some 60 families have been able to leave the project to move to permanent accommodation. Landlords are quite satisfied about letting accommodation to clients of the Volkshilfe and are willing to let more property to refugees. Houses are now offered to former clients of the Dobro Dosli project without the intervention of the Volkshilfe. In 1997 a general accord was signed with landlords, to enable more advanced planning in housing refugees in renovated property.

Taakstellingen huisvesting statushouders, Netherlands
Although there are other countries that have a governmental allocation programme for refugees, the Dutch system is a special case. The Dutch government is the only European government that obliges municipalities to house a quota of refugees.

Since 1993 the Dutch government has been using the principle of ‘target setting’. Every six months the government sets a target for municipalities to house a given number of refugees with status. The total number is based on an estimate of refugee statuses that will be granted. The specific number of refugees assigned to a municipality is based on the number of inhabitants in the municipality.

The law also obliges every refugee to follow an integration programme in the municipality where he/she is accommodated. Municipalities receive money for each refugee involved. Part of this money is used to subsidise local volunteer groups of the Dutch Refugee Council who assist refugees.

Every refugee is entitled to accommodation. This policy is an important tool to overcome the barriers refugees face in accessing housing. It removes financial access barriers and also circumvents the discrimination barrier.
The refugee population during the reception stage

Immigration of refugees to the UK for the last decade is equal to about one-fifth of annual deaths and outward migration together. Furthermore, the refugees and asylum seekers are overwhelmingly of working age countering the trend towards an ageing population. The figures are set out in Fact sheet 2: Refugees during the reception stage.

The evidence is that numbers of refugees and asylum seekers reflect international conflict and economic conditions rather than UK control and deterrence.

There is no clear trend in permissions to stay in the UK over the last decade. It varies from less than one in six (1995) to more than two out of every three claims being approved (1992).

Since the National Asylum Seekers Service was set up in 2000, half of asylum seekers dispersed have been families. Although most refugee households get the accommodation plus subsistence package, nearly 4 in 10 do not with half of families with children on subsistence only packages. Most people on subsistence-only packages are in London. The implication is that the opportunities or the meeting of needs that London offers outweighs the very considerable cost to families of staying there.

The use of detention centres is increasing. Although the use of prisons is being reduced, capacity is increased with the establishment of more detention centres and the use of police cells.

Housing and dispersal

The conditions under which refugees and asylum seekers generally live during the reception stage are inimical to economic and social inclusion.

Asylum seekers are prohibited from moving outside their dispersal area and access housing and other assistance even if they have with viable alternatives and legitimate reasons, such as placement in an area with sufficient support services or escaping racial harassment.
In many cases asylum seekers are housed in dispersal regions in difficult-to-let and surplus estates. These properties are either peripheral or with limited access to support services. Many are occupied by fragile and fragmented communities and many of the properties are also scheduled for demolition as part of wider regeneration initiatives. Asylum seekers are exposed to social tensions and racial harassment due to worsening social exclusion in these estates caused by additional pressure imposed on an already stretched educational, health and other services.

The dispersal policy was launched with little or no account whether selected dispersal areas are likely to provide asylum seekers with sufficient community support, legal advice or sizeable ethnic minority population to lean on. At the beginning of 2000, most local authorities have limited or no support service suitable for asylum seekers and refugees. In the past this void in services, isolation and subjection to racial harassment has meant that the Vietnamese and Chilean refugees of the 1970s and 1980s and the Iraqi refugees of the 1990s were forced to drift back to London.

Asylum seekers often have nothing and need help with basic things like clothing, furniture, cooking facilities, etc. There is also a need for legal advice, teaching English language, translation service, introducing to educational, health and social service systems, employment training and funding voluntary and community groups working with asylum seekers. On the one hand, this requires a reasonable size in a given dispersal area to make it economically feasible and this is not the case especially in dispersal districts on the outskirts of towns and cities. On the other hand, these support services cost local authorities significant sums. Some local authorities have had to depend on charities for funding practical help to asylum seekers. Restrictions of housing rights to asylum seekers contained in housing legislation and the IAA have also created cost pressures on social service departments.

Refugees have not had access to the kind of 'settling in package' provided by central government to help local authorities for the resettlement of, for instance, people fleeing the volcano in Montserrat to alleviate the cost pressure on UK authorities.

The centralised nature of the dispersal system leaves little room for flexibility and discretion to local authorities in dispersal regions to account for local issues and sensitivities regard housing asylum seekers. NASS and the IND operate from London and this hampers their potential to understand regional differences and build partnership with local agencies. There are proposals to regionalise the two agencies. Provided that the emphasis is not on efficiency of controlling role, there might be a chance to improve conditions for asylum seekers and enhance social integration.

NASS is responsible for setting and maintaining quality standards, however, monitoring seems to be beyond the physical capacity of the organisation and some of its standards remain variable across regions and some private providers with relatively high standard, e.g. Rose Lodge, find NASS standards too low (Housing Associations Charitable Trust).

NASS originally envisaged a third of provision being contracted equally to the private sector, local authorities and RSLs. However, its procurement strategy has set RSLs in direct competition with the private sector with very different types pf contracts involving higher rents and, in some cases, less support. Furthermore, unwelcome experiences of
bureaucratic obstacles in negotiations for contact and in collecting arrears has made some RSLs to see housing asylum seekers as an inherently risky business. This leaves the private sector as the largest contractor of dispersal accommodation. By July 2002 NASS was contracting over 65,000 bed spaces, primarily from the private sector. For example, by March 2002 nine private providers were contracted to provide up to 52,678 bed spaces when the public sector was contracted to provide 28,843 bed spaces (Housing Associations Charitable Trust).

Approximately 65% percent of the 82,895 asylum seekers live in B&B and private annexes, often with substandard accommodation and appalling living conditions. These people are caught in a downward spiral of homelessness, existing in the margins of society without legal rights or the personal means of escaping their situation. In the words of Ashley Horsey, the Head of the Bed and Breakfast Unit, ODPM, Dec. 2001:

‘The use of B&Bs … is immensely damaging, morally, socially and financially. … Too many broken lives’.

Furthermore, ignored concerns about the potential damage to the welfare and development of refugee children did not take to long to prove. Doctors were baffled by the inability of an 18-month-old baby from an asylum seeking family in east London to crawl, until they discovered that the family was living in one room of a B&B that was virtually filled by the double bed and the baby had no space to crawl [British Medical Association].

According to estimates made by the Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS), in September 2002 bed and breakfast accommodation cost on average £276.92 per unit per week. Only in London, this means a weekly bill of £554,117. During 2000-01, the average weekly rent in the Council sector was £60, in the Registered Social Landlord sector £75 and in the private sector £138 (OPDM, English Housing Survey, 2000.01).

The number of asylum seekers opting for the NASS’s ‘subsistence only’ package has been increasing rapidly in the last year and over 70% of them are in London. There is a proposal to withdraw the ‘subsistence only’ provision and encourage dispersal out of London. This may exacerbate the destitution of asylum seekers remaining in London. Nationally, hidden homelessness is the only choice facing the 33,800 who are on ‘subsistence only’ support by June 2002 and the 14,00 reported as ‘absconded’ in 2001.

Cost and shortages of temporary accommodation have led London local authorities to disperse asylum seekers through placements in areas of low demand and with surplus B&Bs, like Portsmouth, and/or HMO accommodation. By the end of June 2002, there were around 48,000 asylum seeker households in London, 48% of which were families with children. London local authorities placed 39% of asylum seeker households out of their borough of which 17% were outside London. In all areas over 90% of placements were in the private sector of which bed and breakfast account for around 30% of placements including over 2000 asylum seeker families with children.

Thus, asylum seekers on interim arrangement or have exceptional reason to remain in London have no choice but to settle for a rundown bed and breakfast accommodation, emergency private shelters, hostels, friends and relatives and out of London placement.
Dispersal and refugee settlement
The driver behind the housing-led dispersal policy of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 is to relieve Greater London and the South East from pressures caused on housing and other social services due to the concentration of refugees and asylum seekers. In addition to this, dispersal is believed to control asylum seekers in the asylum system and send a ‘clear message’ of deterrence to refugees who may intend to come to the UK for protection. In the latter case, comfort may be drawn from an annual 11% decline of asylum applications in 2001. However, it should be noted that this is achieved at the cost of denying the international human right of protection for many people fleeing persecution.

In relation to the first argument for dispersal the success of dispersal may be measured either in terms of stated objectives of relieving pressure from London and South East, or in terms of the prospects for effective settlement and integration of asylum seekers. The first measure is a short-term one while the second emphasises a long-term perspective taking account of the protection and integration needs of refugees and equally importantly, to the benefits that may accrue to UK community and economy. These issues are examined in the following section starting with an analysis at the level of England and then by assessing the regional specific environments alongside the extent of dispersal made during 2001.

England
Fact sheet 3: Population trends, the economy, housing and refugees in England shows that in 2001 England was looking at:

- A potential refugee settlement demand equivalent to 0.5% population or 0.05 refugees per 1000 of its citizens.
- Based UN estimates that required an annual six fold migration to maintain a reasonable population support ratio; it was facing a deficit of 56,000.
- A 0.07% rise in unemployment and a 0.007% decline in unfilled vacant positions per unemployed person due to the 39 thousand refugees that may settle
- A 0.04% rise in the Black and Minority Ethnic population
- A demand for housing that can easily meet the numbers of all homeless households from existing vacant stock...if it is managed properly

These estimates clearly question the drive for control and deterrence led proposals for legislative change and the unfounded hysteria about asylum in the UK.

Regional distribution
Fact Sheet 4: Economic and social conditions in the regions looks at population density, economic conditions, social and housing conditions in each of the eight standard regions. It shows that the pattern of dispersal is not rational for any one of the factors taken by in isolation.

The pattern is no more rational when the different factors are balanced against each other described in detail in Fact Sheet 5: The impact of economic and social factors on refugees. “Bull’s Eye” diagrams reflect how each region scores in relation to the four factors taken together.
The analysis demonstrates the extent with which the NASS-led 2001 dispersal of asylum seekers reflects the various factors forming the specific settlement environment of each region in England. The picture depicted is dispersal was either largely led by availability of idle housing or is inconsistent in implementation with due account to similarities and or variations in between regions.

Some regions have more refugees than is justified by the economic and social conditions and others have fewer. Specifically:

**More than economic, social and housing conditions justify**  
North East  
North West  
West Midlands  
Yorkshire and Humberside (slightly)

**Less than economic, social and housing conditions justify**  
East Midlands  
East of England  
South East  
South West

Greater London cannot easily be classified in this way because one of its distinguishing characteristics is that it is the destination of choice of refugees (as well as many other people).
Once asylum seekers have had their legal status and protection rights established, rebuilding and starting a settled life in what eventually becomes a new homeland is a major preoccupation.

At this stage asylum seekers are composed of two groups of individuals:
- Those who are recognised as *bona fide* refugees and are granted status of indefinite leave to remain; and
- Those who are granted exceptional leave to remain on humanitarian grounds.

Except the cap on the length of their stay and the terms of obtaining naturalisation, present legislation does not differentiate between them in relation to employment rights and entitlement and access to benefits and social services.

Finding a home becomes their major concern. ‘Homelessness’ and ‘housing’ in their widely used traditional sense does not capture what refugees mean by finding a home. Refugees’ experience and perception of ‘home’ stretches far beyond a building to live in and not surprisingly some refugees say ‘home is back home and a house where you sleep and eat’.

A popular Ethiopian singer living in the USA puts it as follows:

> Still feel hungry though I have lots to eat
> Still feel thirsty though I have plenty to drink
> Still feel restless though I have enough sleep
> Still feel the cold though I am well dressed
> Still feel homeless though I have a shelter
> Still feel like a stranger and keep losing my way
> Why, why do I…
> Still feel distressed when asked where I'm from?

We observe that for refugees to be in a ‘home’ means:
- To have a shelter in which they do not feel lonely or physically and emotionally isolated;
- To be in an environment where they are valued and respected;
- To have an opportunity to realise their potential and practice their culture;
- To be economically and socially secure;
- To regain a meaning in life and hope for the future;

The challenge refugees face as they look for housing is to feel at home again. This highlights both the importance and the requirements of housing in the effective
settlement of refugees in the UK. This in its turn means the provision of shelter is necessary, but not sufficient to overcome refugee homelessness.

To prevent refugee homelessness, one must understand the complex elements that are necessary to support someone to feel at ‘home’ in the host country and community. These elements include dignity and recognition in the host society, hope in the future, meaningful work and community support. Nurturing a feeling of being at ‘home’ builds a foundation to withstand causes and effects of refugee homelessness including and beyond financial poverty. This requires recognising the experience of loss of ‘home’ and ‘homelessness’ in the design of appropriate services.

Existing legislation regulating the support and housing of homeless persons seems to be too vague and falls short of acknowledging this basic need of refugees and the role of housing in their integration. The choices facing refugees in the transitional stage of their settlement are:

- Placement in housing association run supported housing
- Bed and breakfast
- Other private sector temporary accommodation
- Third sector temporary placements.

The role of the local authority housing is minimal. The practice is to place homeless refugees in housing association supported housing or private sector temporary accommodation of one form or another. There are certainly many refugees in private sector temporary accommodation but information at the national level is non-existent.

In view of this, the discussion in this section will focus on refugee housing in housing association supported housing and innovative schemes run by the voluntary sector.

**Provision of housing association run supported housing**

*(Fact Sheet 6 describes the housing association supported housing for refugees.)*

Measured in numbers of people, only about one percent of HA supported housing is lived in by refugees.

About thirty percent of supported schemes are in Greater London. The second largest in area in numbers is in the South East but the proportion of refugees living in them is very low. The North East has the second highest proportion of refugees living in supported housing, after London.

**Refugees in Supported Housing Schemes**

*(Fact Sheet 8 presents the data on Refugees in Supported Housing Schemes.)*

Nineteen out of every twenty refugees living in HA supported accommodation are single adults. Four out of five are aged between 18 and 38. Six out of ten are male. Just over one in ten are disabled.

Nearly half of all people in HA supported accommodation are homeless – with the numbers growing but the proportion of refugees in this category is lower. This does not match the reported experience of many refugees and the implication is that refugees are generally the hidden homeless –living with friends and family but not actually without a roof over their head.
Six out of ten refugees in supported housing are unemployed compared to just over four out of ten of supported tenants of working age generally. Nine out of ten refugees have weekly incomes of less than £60 per week compared to eleven out of twenty supported tenants generally. The evidence shows the gap is widening.

The economic status of homeless refugees in supported housing suggests that there is a cost argument for a housing plus transition housing for refugees. Many studies have shown that a lot of refugees either come with work experience or are qualified professionals who would need an intensive and coordinated support to move into employment. Support would undoubtedly make considerable savings in housing benefit expenditure who would otherwise had to pick up costs of maintaining homeless refugees staying in supported housing for several years.

More than four out of ten refugees living in supported housing are living in Greater London but the proportion has been going down – even before forced dispersal was introduced. This calls into question the policy of dispersal and supports arguments for encouraging voluntary and choice-led refugee dispersal and housing.

About a third of supported tenants generally had previously lived with family and friends. The next largest group (about one in eight) had come from prison or hospital. For refugees, housing with family and friends accounted for less than three out of ten tenants but hostels and shared housing accounted for a quarter as did people with no fixed accommodation. Numbers leaving Bed and Breakfast have been going down.

Compared to supported tenants, refugees are more likely to be referred to HAs by advice agencies and to self-refer, but self-referral is going down. Also agencies considered “non-major” for housing associations account for one in five referrals. These agencies are probably voluntary organisations. Nevertheless, the overall role of voluntary agencies has declined during the last four years.

The decline in self-referral is unlikely to represent a fall in applications but represents reduced success in applications – the closing of a route into housing for refugees. There is clearly an issue about the accessibility to be addressed.

**Housing association support**

*(Fact Sheet 7 describes types of housing association scheme)*.

Broadly, there are four kinds of schemes for supported housing
- Sheltered housing
- Foyers
- Direct access hostels
- Other Supported housing schemes

The majority of refugees live in the fourth category of accommodation. Refugees generally live in either self-contained flats with some common facilities or shared houses.

Just under half of the provision is long-stay. Refugees are more likely than other supported housing residents to be in short (less than a year) or medium term stay accommodation.
Schemes housing refugees provide primarily resettlement or intensive housing management support and for many refugees, such schemes represent gateways to permanent housing in the social sector but it must be remembered that the number of refugees in such schemes is very small.
By ‘permanent homes’ we mean the broader processes of refugee inclusion into the host community’s way of life by consolidating progress in settlement made throughout the reception and transitional stage. The location and type of the first home of refugees are central factors in rebuilding and starting a settled life in their new homeland.

A mutual adaptation process can be expected if refugees socialise with the host community within a stable neighbourhood. It should increase the prospects for community cohesion and lay the foundations for refugee inclusion as equal and active members of the wider community. However, if there is no stability or interaction, it is unlikely that inclusion will ever take place.

For a large majority of refugees a move into permanent housing means a local authority or housing association tenancy. Private sector housing is out of reach although its share of total rented dwellings of England is around 35%. Existing systems of recording local authority tenancies do not monitor lettings to refugees and the Home Office does not seem to have a system that monitors the settlement process of asylum seekers once they are granted leave to remain in the UK. In fact no one agency is specifically responsible and or claims to be a sole agent overseeing the process of refugee settlement.

The only official system that monitors refugee permanent housing is the Continuous Recording System (CORE) maintained by the National Housing Federation. The only data available therefore relates to refugees in housing association properties. We are not aware of major factors that would make the profile of refugees in local authority property significantly different. The CORE system may not capture smaller housing associations.

**Numbers of refugees in housing association properties**

About half of one per cent of housing association properties are let to refugees. Over 75% of refugee tenants are in the age group of 18-38 years old. Lettings to women-headed refugee households averaged around 44% of new lettings to refugees during the last six years and rising. On average 11% of annual new lettings were allocated to disabled households and the proportion that went to disabled refugees has stayed fairly constant at around 5%.

Single adults comprised 47% of all 2001/02 new lettings to refugee households. During the last six years on average 40% new lettings to refugees went to single adults and their proportion was increasing in the last two years. That single adult refugees formed a
large proportion of refugee household that secured HA tenancies is not a surprise as they account for about 80% of the refugee community. Multi-person refugee households tend to be larger than new housing association households generally. However, refugee households with four or more members has barely moved above 0.1% of all new lettings in the last six years. Lettings to refugee couples without children have gone down from 6% in 1996/97 to 2% in 2001/02. Any alarmist stories of large families ‘swamping’ housing are clearly unjustified.

What is worrying is that based on the number of new HA lettings and the number of refugee acceptances in the last six years, the number of new tenants of HA who are refugees is less than half of what would be expected.

**Previous housing status**

Overall 80% of HAs’ new lettings go to people who are homeless but don’t fit the statutory definitions but only 56% of new HA refugee tenancies are in this category. It is not clear whether this means that local authorities are designating more refugees as statutorily homeless or it is more difficult to get housing as a refugee if you are non-statutorily homeless.

For a large majority of refugee households temporary accommodation of one form or another is the dominant route to permanent housing. As might be expected fewer refugees than other new tenants come from private ownership or the private rented sector.

The only data available on how long refugees have spent in temporary accommodation is from supported housing: it suggests that the average length of stay is most likely to be two or more years. The share of refugee households coming from temporary accommodation averaged around 60% despite some fluctuation during the last six years. The rise in refugees moving into HA housing from rough sleeping, although comforting since it means their homelessness is addressed, is also worrying in that it reflects appalling emergency conditions.

During 2001/02, new HA tenant refugee households whose last accommodation was short life housing accounted for 13% of the total, for other tenants it was 2.3%. The three years trend shows a steady but slow decline in the proportion of HA tenant refugee households moving in from short-life housing, even so it is still very high.

**Permanent housing characteristics**

The proportion of ‘permanent’ shared facilities like bathroom, WC or kitchen is disproportionately high for refugees.

Assured tenancies were the dominant form of new tenancy - around 90% of total new lettings throughout the last six years overall. The proportion of refugee households with assured tenancy averaged around 85%. Until 1998/89 disproportionately more refugee new tenants seem to have taken assured short hold tenancies compared to all other new tenants. Since 2000 this variation seems to have transferred into starter tenancies.
Overall, referrals by local authority and statutory agencies consistently secured HA lettings for over 40% of households. However, their role has declined especially since 1998/99 and during the six years under consideration, its share of new lettings has decreased by 7%. This was the case with new HA tenancies secured by all other households. For refugees however the picture is different. In 2001/02 local authorities and statutory agencies referred almost 70% of refugee households who secured HA tenancy. Refugee households who had directly applied and were on reporting HAs’ waiting lists formed 18% of those who secured new lettings from HAs.

The share of voluntary sector referred refugee households was only 7%. However, voluntary agency referral seems to have been more helpful in the case of refugees since it secured only 1% of new tenancies to all other households during the same year. There is a significant decline in successful voluntary sector referral of refugee households compared to all other households: from 17% to 7% and from 2% to 1% respectively during 1996/7 to 2001/02. This is surprising and worrying in view of the increased role of the voluntary sector in both housing and refugee support.

Once in a housing association property, refugee tenants tend to stay there.

**Regional distribution**

Whether it is to do with number and rate of acquiring new properties or due to turnover, HAs’ potential to generate new dwellings seems to be higher in Greater London, South East and the North West. The lowest potential of generating new units seems to be among HAs in the North East. Despite some small fluctuations, the trends have stayed fairly steady throughout the last six years. Dispersal has created extra demand but there has been no corresponding increasing in supply. The proportion of refugee households that secured HA tenancies in Greater London has declined by over 25% during the last six years. The main regions where growth is taking place are West Midlands and the North West. One implication of this might be that if refugees are left to make individual choices about where they live, they choose areas where there are most likely to be jobs, homes and a supportive social structure.

**Economic status**

Unemployment levels among new refugee tenants are 30% higher than all other new HA tenants – themselves much higher than national averages.

The proportion who are students and those in some form of training and government new deal programme was three to four times higher among refugees than those among all other HA tenants.

During the last six years employment levels have been improving among all tenants of reporting HAs. However, the increase in the proportion of employed households among other tenants has been much faster than those among refugee tenants: from 21% to 30% as opposed from 7% to 10% respectively.

Getting into permanent housing has not been accompanied with a parallel improvement in the economic well being of refugee households. The proportion that were living on a
weekly income of up to £60 was almost 30% higher among refugee tenants. The proportion getting between £60-100 weekly was almost 10% lower than those among all other tenants. The relative share of refugee households within the over £200 income bracket was 17% lower than those among all other tenants.

Over 80% of refugee households were either wholly or partly dependent on benefits, over 20% higher than the case with those among all other tenants. Furthermore, the proportion that does not depend on benefits was consistently lower by an average of 12% compared to those among all other tenants. The actual number of refugee households among all tenants that are wholly or partly dependent on benefit was no more than 0.5%. Nevertheless, considering that most refugee are young and able bodied individuals, come with qualification and work experience and they appear to be more eager to improve their employability, there is a strong economic and cost argument to find an alternative housing model for the settlement of refugee communities.
Introduction

Housing forms just one aspect of the refugee experience and has to be set within a larger context. All the nations surveyed had static or decreasing numbers of legally controlled immigrants and increasing illegal immigration. The public portrayal of immigration is usually that of a problem, and a problem that can be solved by controlling (and reducing) immigration. Refugees are increasingly caught up in general responses to immigration, although all states recognise some humanitarian duty to a variously defined refugee or asylum-seeker category.

Distribution of refugees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total world refugee population*</th>
<th>12,051,120</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>1,868,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>128,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>4,820,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3,305,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South and Central Asia</td>
<td>2,702,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>2,044,480</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* USA, World Refugee Survey 2002, puts the total figure at 14,921,000

Countries of immigration and other countries

There is a clear difference in policy between the countries of immigration, Australia, Canada and USA and the others. The former group have well organised systems for legal immigrants that see the immigrant into homes and work and citizenship. The response to illegal immigration however is increasingly militarised, with serious consequences for refugees who by the very nature of their circumstances can rarely make legal application for entry prior to their arrival in a country.

European countries have a range of responses to refugees. While Germany has a well-organised system of reception centres, the near impossibility of obtaining German citizenship acts as an obstacle to integration. By comparison, in the UK, though ad hoc arrangements prevail, there is a clear route to citizenship. EU refugee policy is
emerging, and taken together with the possibilities of a new EU citizenship, restrictive national legislation may be challenged. The EU has also facilitated secondary migration by individuals who initially settled and became citizens of one EU country moving to another.

**European Social Charter (Revised), Article 31**

*With a view to ensuring the effective exercise of the right to housing, the Parties undertake to take measures designed:*

1. To promote access to housing of an adequate standard;
2. To prevent and reduce homelessness with a view to its gradual elimination;
3. To make the price of housing accessible to those without adequate resources."

By 1 July 1999 there were enough ratifications for the Revised Charter to come into force.

Within the non-immigration countries, there are increasing differences between the amounts of social support given to citizens and that given to refugees. This is leaving refugees in extreme poverty in the UK for example. Some nations still provide equal social benefits to citizens and refugees, and as the level of social security in the social democracies of North West Europe far exceed the UK anyway, refugees are economically better off there.

**Housing supply**

Refugee access to housing might be related to overall housing supply. In fact, although the mix of rented and owned housing varies, and the ratio of privately owned to socially owned rented housing varies between nations, this does not have a direct bearing on the housing available to refugees. However, the relatively large amount of social housing in the UK and Sweden for example has provided the majority of refugees with their first home in the past. In fact, the housing opportunities available to refugees are most closely tied to the level of housing subsidy they receive. The freedom to live where they chose is also important. There is little restriction in the UK or the US for example, unlike Germany. The US is peculiar in having a large number of mobile homes and, like cheap housing in other countries, mobile homes are frequently used by refugees.

**American and Australian housing markets (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Owner-occupied</th>
<th>Rented</th>
<th>Mobile homes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7.8 million dwellings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(115.3 million dwellings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Housing policy
Where and how refugees are housed varies considerably from country to country. Housing opportunities depend more on the funds that are made available to refugees by the state than any other factor, except perhaps than for the presence of an established immigrant community of the same group as the refugee. Established immigrants typically provide housing, work and social support for new migrants. The official policy of the state towards refugees frequently fails to be implemented in terms of effective integrative measures including the provision of housing. In Belgium for example, the reception centres are full so the state has had to amend its own legislation to allow refugees to move on into other housing. The decent and efficient Australian provision for official refugees is in stark contrast to the prison camps awaiting 'illegal' migrants.

In general, accommodation for refugees is most organised and controlled in the countries with the longest tradition of receiving immigrants. The worst provision is in the countries that were until relatively recently experiencing emigration such as Greece, Italy and Portugal. Ironically, the degree of organisation and control is not necessarily related to the degree of integration. For example the difference between the Norwegian experience of initial housing in centres is followed by relatively swift transfer to other accommodation. This contrasts with the German situation where refugees are required to live in reception centres, often for many years.
Based on its research Praxis proposes the criteria listed below for evaluating government policies. Although listed separately, they are in most cases interdependent factors.

**Information to enable freedom of choice in settlement**
The choice of where to live is often restricted for refugees, for instance in Germany. In other countries where asylum seekers and refugees are free to choose, they are often badly informed as to social and economic environment of the house. This is where refugees who have been living in the host country for some time can play an important role in the integration of fellow refugees. They can help them to overcome language and cultural barriers more quickly and provide them with a social network and information about the host society.

**Adequate quantity and quality of housing**
In many countries there is simply a shortage of different kinds of accommodation but even where there are sufficient dwellings or places to stay there are issues of quality.

Each stage of housing - reception, transition and permanent - needs to be embedded in a community so that those housed can maintain social access - to schools, friends and support services - as they move from one to another. This is vital to avoid wasting lifetime. Refugee housing must be within normal communities, and so be on a scale probably not exceeding 100 individuals in any one place. Large-scale, isolated reception centres as increasingly used in Australia and being introduced for the UK are costly and inefficient, partly because they are inhuman.

**Recognition of specific needs**
Some refugees will need particular and intensive support, e.g. victims of torture. The housing component of this support might need to be very different from that provided for the majority.

**Refugee empowerment**
Refugees should take a full part in the management of their housing. There should be much greater opportunity for desires and opinions as well as needs to be heard and acted on. The UK experience is that systems operated by refugees (with support) are
cheaper and more effective in terms of integration than centrally controlled systems, e.g. those in Germany and the Netherlands. A long stay in a reception centre, in a condition of prolonged insecurity and forced passivity with almost every decision about your life being made by others, is damaging to people. They become institutionalised, lose self-esteem and initiative and will have more trouble rebuilding their life, be it in the host society or in the country of origin.

**Housing issues considered with other aspects of integration**
The most effective schemes integrate all components of the integration process, e.g. access to work and education. Schemes for legal immigrants in the US and Australia do this. The US has a system of pre-immigration training in language and culture.

**Equality of provision and support between refugees and citizens**
Some nations, e.g. Finland, Sweden, do not differentiate between citizens and refugees in terms of access to housing allowances or subsidies. This facilitates rapid movement out of reception centres into homes. The cost of housing subsidy is typically less than the cost of reception centre housing and the refugee is more likely to be working and paying taxes from a home than from a centre.

**Minimising time and restrictions on life in reception accommodation**
Asylum procedures can be very lengthy, up to five years or more. In most countries where asylum seekers are accommodated in reception centres, they are not allowed to live outside the reception centre. In these centres they are not (or only very exceptionally) allowed to work or to follow education while their asylum application is being processed. In some asylum seeker centres in the Netherlands asylum seekers can buy their own food and prepare it themselves, but until very recently they were not even allowed that choice. This leads to a long stay in the reception centre, in a condition of prolonged insecurity and forced passivity.

**Public relations work**
Countries and governments that maintain a positive discourse (policies, practice and language) around the issue of immigration in general and refugees in particular promote inclusion more effectively. There is a clear difference between the attitude of the immigrant countries such as Canada, with their talk of the *New Canadian*, and the concept of the *guestworker* as defined in central Europe. A positive discourse improves the process of integration by engaging the sympathy and understanding of the receiving population. It is particularly important to expose the myths concerning the scale of immigration and the perceived economic impacts of immigration. Information can also be focused on specific targets such as potential landlords.

**Accepting the advantages of plurality**
There is nothing in any host country that gives more comfort to refugees than someone who comes from their own country, speaking the same language, who has been living in that country for some time and can show them how things are. Accordingly, it is not only acceptable but often desirable for there to be a degree of separation between the refugee community and other communities.
Fact sheet 1:
Legal and policy context of housing for asylum seekers and refugees

Until 1993 homelessness assistance and social housing were accessible to all people legally in the country. The Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 introduced limited immigration checks and restricted asylum seekers’ entitlement to temporary housing.


A major change followed with the enactment of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 (AIA 1996) and the Housing Act 1996 (HA 1996). Rigorous immigration checks became compulsory for any homelessness assistance and allocation of social housing and asylum seekers were made ineligible for tenancy offers covering all types of local authority permanent housing. Orders following the AIA 1996 classified people based on immigration status:

- A = people with refugee status
- B = those with Exceptional Leave to Remain
- C = settled people
- D = overseas students
- E = port applicant asylum seekers and those from upheaval countries
- F = asylum seekers with transitional protection right under benefits rules.

While overseas students were eligible to a council tenancy under specific circumstances, asylum seekers not entitled to benefit were disqualified from getting any form of assistance if they were homeless. Refugees categorised in classes A, B and C were allowed access to homelessness assistance and social housing with the exception to those in class B who have conditions attached to their status.

The HA 1996 replaced the housing waiting lists with ‘housing registers’ from which asylum seekers are excluded. It also introduced a habitual residence test, inapplicable to refugees and those with a status of exceptional leave to remain. Homelessness was redefined and a broader exclusion criterion and limited the length of homelessness assistance to a maximum of two years with possibility of extension.
Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA)

A further tightening of the regulatory environment was adopted when the third legislative change came into effect with the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA). The IAA and the accompanying Process Manual:

- Introduced a new centrally managed support system under the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) for all new asylum seekers and existing applicants appealing against refusal on their application. NASS is empowered to manage the dispersal and support of asylum seekers in government designated areas called ‘reception zones’ outside London and the South East.

- In addition to dispersal, it allowed for residency restrictions denying asylum seekers the right to choose the location of their housing and mobility thereby instituting a housing-led system of dispersal. It granted local authorities power to disperse asylum seekers to areas with cheap and surplus housing. The interim arrangement was initially planned to last until April 2002.

- Created an assistance role for voluntary agencies through contracts from the Home Office to provide emergency support service for asylum seekers.

- Gave power to detain asylum seekers at any time, for any reason, with no limit on time and with two routine bail rights. This is followed by a statutory rule introducing detention centres.

- Ended entitlement of asylum seekers to benefits and replaced it with a package of accommodation plus vouchers and some cash for essential living needs, altogether equivalent to 70% percent of income support. Those with friends or relatives in London and South East are allowed to stay in London and claim ‘subsistence only’ package from NASS. Following a barrage of criticism for immorality and subjecting people fleeing persecution to humiliation and stigmatisation, the Home Office has now scrapped the voucher system.

- Instituted an interim arrangement to cater for existing in-country applicants. However, inabilitys of the IND and the NASS system to clear backlog applications and increase in special need asylum seekers has forced the Home Office to extend it to 2004.

- Removed support to asylum seeker families with children and those with special needs based on the National Assistance Act 1948 and under the Children Act 1989. This was found unlawful by a court ruling in 1999 and the rights of this group of people to access support from local authority social services was reinstated.

- Introduced a grace period of 14 days for asylum seekers with positive decision to vacate NASS accommodation, contact local authority services for benefit and assistance for housing. As it happens this did not account for difficulties that can be faced by refugees due to cumbersome bureaucracy, little or no knowledge of the UK housing market and benefits system and language problems. Recent extension of the period to 28 days may alleviate some of these difficulties, however, it is unlikely for it to solve the problem especially in dispersal areas with insufficient special support systems.
The IAA and its Process Manual do not look beyond the point of decision on asylum and develop a policy for the integration needs of asylum seekers with successful applications. In fact, the Home Office consultation paper on refugee integration was issued in the same month during which the IAA received Royal Assent.

Secure Borders, Safe Haven

The White Paper ‘Secure Borders, Safe Haven: integration with diversity in modern Britain’ and the ‘Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Bill’ 2002 (NISB) have proposed a fourth round of legislative changes in a decade.

• On the positive side:
  • The White Paper sees asylum seekers and rising immigration within the wider context of global developments and migration;
  • The document represents a step forward in looking for a holistic approach to immigration and addresses issues of employment and migration;
  • There is a welcome stress on the importance of social integration and community cohesion as an important part of immigration and asylum policy.

• However, the asylum aspects of these documents focus on control and deterring the flow of asylum seekers rather than on integration. In fact, many of the proposed changes do not go beyond the stage when asylum seekers are still in the process of getting decision on their application. In many cases, the positive tone and analysis contained in the White paper is not followed by specific policy detail and there is little specific on how to facilitate refugee integration.

• Dispersal remains a central principle and the housing issues have not been addressed in any significant way. Asylum processing and support policy is not linked with a settlement and housing policy under the Homelessness Act of 2002.

• The proposed asylum processing system is composed of three stages: reception, accommodation, and detention/removal.
  • **Induction/Reception centres:** to be established at the port of entry and elsewhere across regions, accommodating 200-400 new applicants each and providing a comprehensive reception including screening and induction. No details are stated as to who would provide these centres and what would happen if people stay for more than the planned period of one week.
  • **Accommodation centres:** full-board centres with 400-700 bed spaces established in outskirt districts across the country and accommodating asylum seekers for a planned period of than 6 months during which their applications are processed. Each site would also provide on-site health service, education for children, legal advice and purposeful activities for adults. These are planned to ultimately replace dispersal. They are seen as an appropriate policy response to install a fast and controlled system of processing asylum. Many have expressed concern about the potential risk of exacerbating the isolation and institutionalisation of asylum seekers and the Home Office is considering to pilot a parallel scheme proposed by the Refugee Council. Suggested models includes a network of small and medium size hostels/centres with no more than 100 beds. These will be situated in or near diverse urban areas of current dispersal regions. Core centres will also be established to provide integrated casework management for a number of centres covering no more than 600-bed hostels/centres.
• Until the capacity of accommodation centres reaches a level that can house all asylum applicants, existing NASS dispersal and accommodation system will continue supporting asylum seekers. NASS will also operate a system of reporting requirement and SMART cards for ID and cash benefit purposes. There are as yet no specifics on how will asylum seekers will be selected for placement in accommodation centres and for dispersal through the NASS system.

• **Detention/Removal centres**: these will accommodate people with negative decisions to facilitate deportation.

The legislation to enact these proposals has recently completed its Parliamentary passage.

**Homelessness Act 2002**

Effective since March 2002, the Homelessness Act 2002 amends the legislative framework for assessing homelessness and allocating social housing. The emphasis is instituting a system of long-term local strategy to tackle and prevent homelessness.

• At the level of institutional commitment, the Act introduces a duty to housing authorities to consult a wide range of agencies. This will provide refugee agencies and community organisations with an opportunity to table refugee concerns and interests, and engage in the process of homelessness reviews and strategy development. Local authorities are also required to consider homelessness in its broadest sense and direct their reviews and strategies beyond the unintentionally homeless and those in priority need.

• The Act makes the following amendments to previous legislation regarding homelessness assistance and allocation of social housing affecting refugees and asylum seekers. The Act:
  • Continues ineligibility for social housing for people who are not eligible for benefit due to their immigration status and those who do not pass the ‘habitual residence’ test. The asylum seekers are completely disqualified from any right to assistance. The Act may also exclude those who come out of accommodation centres with successful asylum claims from qualifying for housing assistance and allocation of social housing, since they may not fulfil demands of conventional six-month residency and pass the ‘local connection’ test.
  • Provides power to local authorities, if they have sufficient stock, to house people unintentionally homeless but not covered under the duty for those with priority need, thus opening some hope especially for single adult refugees.
  • Extends priority need homelessness to include those 16-21 years old, people vulnerable to all forms of violence or the threat of it and people leaving institutions. This could benefit young refugees and potentially those who may feel threatened by racist violence.
  • Lifts the requirement to assess availability of other housing and not using own stock for short-term accommodation, thereby limiting the scope for out-of-borough housing of homeless refugees.
• Makes it a duty of housing and social service authorities to house households with children that do not qualify under the homelessness duty and hence retaining the right of refugee children under the Children Act 1989.
• Obligates local authorities to provide advice and assistance to people who are not qualifying under the principles of priority need.
• Amends the groups to whom reasonable preference can be given in the allocation of social housing to include all homeless people, not only unintentionally homeless and in priority need, people in unsatisfactory housing and those in need of moving from a particular area to prevent hardship.
• Empowers housing authorities to ignore applicants' preferences of location for social housing, thus limiting the right of refugees to settle where they feel safe and can easily access community support.

In many areas the Act makes important changes: however, it seems its implications for refugee housing is highly dependent on local authorities who are granted more discretion in implementation.
Fact sheet 2: Refugees during the reception stage

Contrary to the exaggeration and hysteria propagated by the media and commentators like the Migration Watch UK, by 2001 the UK had hosted only 8% of around 1 million new asylum seekers worldwide. From 1992-2001, an average of 15,000 refugees were granted asylum in the UK, about 21% of average annual deaths and outward migration together.

It is also worth noting that more than 80% of all asylum seekers in the UK are young adults, within the prime age group of 18-35 years old, and substantial numbers come with professional qualification and work experience. The following statement by a refugee depicts what, given the opportunity, refugees can contribute to UK society and economy.

"I came to UK in October 1995 and have been fighting to stay here since. I get frustrated when I read news that millions of taxpayers money is used on refugees, and nobody says anything about how much working refugees like myself pay in tax and National Insurance. I was on state funds for only 9 months Nov 1995 to August 1996. I got a full-time job and started college September 1996 and have been a taxpayer since then. I am a qualified Accounting Technician (MAAT), Studying to be A qualified Chartered Accountant (ACCA), no criminal convictions (Law abiding Citizen), taxpayer, voter, donor to charities (Centrepoint Largest UK homelessness Organisation, Oxfam and Local neighbourhood Credit Union).

I received a total of £2,340 in state funds (Income support and Housing benefit), before finding work. My P60s total for last 6 tax years is £15,000 (Tax & NI Paid). Hope you see my point why am angry to be called 'good for nothing immigrant'. As a refugee myself I care about others like me and my message to everyone and my fellow refugees is ‘Together We'll Overcome, Conquer, Prosper And Stand.’"

During the ten years to 2001 the number of asylum applications lodged with the Immigration and Nationality Department (IND) were rising steadily during 1995 and between 1997-2000. Every time some legislative change is introduced it is associated with drastic falls in numbers of entrants followed by increases (sometimes even sharper): in 1993 (down 9.1%), 1996 (down 32.6%) and in 2001 (down 11.2%). It appears that control and deterrence-led legislative changes had a temporary effect and rapid increases took place the following year: 1994 up 44.7% and 1997 up 9.65%. 1999 saw a 54.6% rise in the asylum applications.
The implication is that, as everywhere in any given period of time the number of asylum applications in the UK was largely influenced by the intensity and spread of political conflict and socio-economic injustice throughout the world, not by control and deterrence.

For the period 1992-2001, the rate of granting positive decisions on asylum, both by IND and through the appeal process and including ILR and ELR, varied between 14% in 1995 and 69% in 1992. The absolute number of positive decisions almost doubled during 2000 and 2001, primarily due to a government measure to clear a backlog of nearly 118,500 cases at the end of 1999. Without accounting for effects of these measures, the ten-year annual average ratio of positive decisions stands at 43% - excluding their effect, it drops down to 31%.

During the first nine months of its existence to December 2000, the NASS was processing around 27,600 asylum seekers through the dispersal system. By December 2001 its processing capacity has increased over two times to reach 66,635 asylum cases. Out of these:

- 43% were single adults and 57% families including those with children.
- Those who were dispersed and on accommodation plus subsistence package accounted for 61% and the subsistence-only made up 37%.
- The ratio of single asylum seekers on accommodation plus support to those who were on subsistence-only packages was 3:1. Among families it was 1:1.
- Asylum seeker families constituted 47% of those on accommodation plus package through NASS. This suggests that asylum seeker families including those with children were not treated significantly differently by the NASS system.

Compared to the nine months of 2000, during 2001 the number of asylum seekers on accommodation plus and subsistence-only NASS packages rose by 45% and 37% respectively.

At the end of June 2002, a total of 82,895 asylum seekers were under the NASS system, 41% of which were on support-only package. Ninety-eight percent of asylum seekers on subsistence-only support were in England and within England, London attracted 72% followed by the South East with 23%. The concentration of subsistence-only cases was higher in London accounting for 92% or 17,1910 asylum seekers placed there.

The South East followed with 78% or 3,150 of applicants placed there and the smallest concentration was in the North East - 8% or 70 cases were dispersed there. The popularity of the subsistence-only package is obvious, for it grants a choice to live where access to services and community support is significantly higher. It is no surprise that London and to a lesser extent the South East are the most preferred areas for this group of people irrespective of an imminent risk of joining the hidden homeless already there.

The dispersal of asylum seekers via the NASS system covered all regions of the UK. At the end of the second quarter of 2002, there was a 26% rise in the number of dispersed asylum seekers during 2001. Out of these 91% were in England, 0.1% in Northern Ireland, 6.5% in Scotland and 2.8% in Wales. Among those dispersed in England during
the same period, the regions allocated with the largest number were Yorkshire & Humberside (12%), the North West (12%), and West Midlands (12%).

In 2001, 14,400 asylum seekers were reported as ‘absconded’: the Catholic Housing Aid Society (CHAS) estimates the figure close to 24,000 and that it is likely that a large number of them have drifted to London and South East. If we add this to the subsistence only cases in London and the South East, the number of asylum seekers trying to settle in these regions during 2001 reaches close to 50,000. Contrasted with this and what is indicated by the trend among subsistence only asylum seekers, the regional distribution demonstrates that the dispersal system is failing both in terms of control and in facilitating an effective integration of those seeking asylum in the UK.

The number of people who went through the Oakington reception centre more than tripled in 2001 to reach 9,125. In July 2002 it processed 3,245 asylum seekers. Between 2000 and 2001 detention centres handled an annual average of 1,200 asylum seekers. The six months to July 2002 have recorded a 7% rise in the number of those who were in detention centres.

Establishments used for detaining asylum seeker include immigration removal and short-term handling centres, dedicated immigration service wings, prison establishments and police cells. Between the end of 2001 and March 2002 three dedicated wings and one prison establishment, which were handling 300 asylum seekers, were withdrawn from serving as detention centres. However, no capacity was lost since the removal centre Haslar, and short-term handling centres in Manchester and Liverpool prison were introduced with the same capacity.
Fact sheet 3: Population trends, the economy, housing and refugees in England

The 2001 census estimates England’s population at 49.1m. During the same year the economically inactive population made up 29% or 14.2m, thus standing with a population support ratio of 2.4:1. In the same period there were 59,700 asylum seekers in England. Even if we assume that all these asylum seekers will be granted refugee status, then the potential refugee settlement demand in 2001 stands at 0.1% of England’s population. Including this potential refugee settlement demand, England will still require 95,000 inward migrants for the next 20 years to get the population support ratio close to the standard 3:1 level. It will have a shortfall of 35,500 for 2001.

In 2001 unemployment averaged about 2.5% population and this meant 0.24 unfilled vacant positions per individual unemployed person. With potential refugees included, unfilled vacant positions comes down by 0.01, thus refuting arguments that refugees put undue pressure on the England’s unemployed citizens and on the potential to generate employment.

The Labour Force Survey estimates that in 2001 the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population of England constituted 8 percent of the population. If we add the 59,700 asylum seekers to these, the BME population rises by a mere 0.1% in 2001; again discrediting suggestions that existing flow of refugees is leading to a “swamping” of England and the English.

The above analysis is based on an unrealistic assumption that each asylum applicant will be granted some form of refugee status. This assumption can be justified on the grounds that there no reliable prior means to predict accurately the chances of each asylum seeker to be refused refugee status. In reality, however, the average rate of positive decision on asylum application for the last 10 years indicates a 3 in 10 chance. This gives a potential refugee settlement demand of 38,859 in 2001, lower by 22,800 or 38% than the 59,700 asylum applicants during the same period.

In 2001 there were 126,500 thousand vacant local authority and housing association dwellings in England representing 1.1 houses per priority homeless citizen, 2.1 houses per potential refugee and 1.0 house per all homeless, i.e. priority homeless citizens plus all asylum applicants during 2001. This indicates that the problem is not so much of housing shortage, as it is that of planning and efficient use of existing housing stock.
Fact sheet 4:  
Economic and social conditions in the regions

Analysis of the regional distribution of refugees calls into question what the real rationale for dispersal is.

Outside London the two principal areas of dispersal are the North West and Yorkshire & Humberside - together they accounted for a little under 30% cases dispersed by NASS during 2001. West Midlands follow by hosting 12% and with 8%, 6.5% and 6.2% respectively North East, South East and East Midlands follow in the third group. With fewer than 2%, South West is the least targeted region for NASS dispersal of asylum seekers.

Population density
Figure1 demonstrate that population density does not explain the pattern of dispersal. An 'ideal' policy would shift populations from higher to lower density populations.

Dispersal to relieve pressure from Greater London looks necessary, but this is not true of the South East. It has a far smaller population per square kilometre. To varying degrees the same is apparent in the South West, East England and East Midlands. However, the dispersal system seems to have arbitrarily targeted the North West, Yorkshire & Humberside, and to lesser extent North East too, irrespective of similarities with other regions, e.g. in the southern (except London) and eastern England.

Economic conditions
The second factor that needs attention in deciding on dispersal is the economic environment of the respective region. Among other things, this includes economic factors like unemployment, job creation and economic inactivity among the regions’ citizens. In an ideal situation dispersal can be expected to target regions where the rate of economic inactivity and employment generation are high and unemployment is low.

From Figure 2, it appears that the South West, South East, and East of England are allocated disproportionately fewer asylum seekers despite their relatively benign economic environment. The same can also be said about dispersal to the East Midlands, although to lesser degree.

In the case of Greater London, although unemployment is higher compared to the rate of employment generation, there is also a higher rate of economic inactivity (adults not
seeking work at all) among its citizens. This suggests that there may be an economic argument in favour of the higher potential refugee demand observed in the Greater London region, provided other factors are also conducive to settlement.

On the other hand, areas where the rate of unemployment and employment generation more or less converge and the proportion of the economically inactive is either relatively small or is proportionate, seem to be allocated a higher number of dispersed asylum seekers. The North East and North West, Yorkshire & Humberside, and to lesser degree West Midlands, seem to match conditions for a hospitable economic environment for refugee settlement provided other factors are suitable as well.

**The social environment**

A third factor a dispersal policy may consider is the regional social environment. This includes the size of the Black and Minority Ethnic population. It can be argued that a sizeable ethnic minority community is necessary for settling refugees to lean on, and get support from. The extent of racial incidents can be seen as an important indicator about potential insecurity for dispersed refugees.

Figure 3 shows how the 2001 dispersal fares in this respect. At first glance the chart suggests higher rates of racially motivated incidents are correlated with a higher settlement rate of ethnic minority populations. However, such an interpretation needs to take account of the propensity among different ethnic minority communities to report these incidents and the factors that may impact on them.

Fear of repeated racially-motivated incidents against a background of small ethnic minority communities and the relative attention the communities attract from police authorities significantly affects victims’ readiness to report. Hence, it is no surprise to find that there is a higher rate of reporting racially-motivated incidents in Greater London and this emphasizes the importance of the size of ethnic communities in deciding on the dispersal of asylum seekers.

What stands out in the 2001 dispersal, is that East England, East Midlands and the South East seem to offer a better social environment for refugee settlement. However, the 2001 dispersal has allocated a disproportionately small number of asylum seekers into these regions. Outside Greater London, West Midlands and Yorkshire & Humberside appear to be the only regions where due account to the social factor seems to have been considered in dispersing asylum seekers.

Interestingly, what the figure shows regarding dispersal to the NE & NW reflects recent rises in reported racially motivated attacks on refugees there. Overall, the state of dispersal detected in Figure 3 calls into question the extent to which 2001 dispersal by NASS is informed by considerations about the security of asylum seekers and prospects for community cohesion.

**Housing**

A fourth factor that impacts on decisions regarding the dispersal of asylum seekers is availability, type and location of housing. There is no data to assess the type and location of all housing in England. (However, the discussion in Fact sheets 3 and 4
have assessed refugee housing at the initial stage in the process of their settlement). Here we will concentrate on whether housing availability has in any way influenced the 2001 dispersal of asylum seekers in to England regions. Thus we will look both to occupied/active and idle/vacant housing.

In 2001 the active housing stock in England included 6,376,000 rented dwellings. Out of these 34% were private sector, 22% registered social landlords (housing associations – HAs) and 44% local authority housing.

Figure 4 shows the 2001 state of active housing stock and its relation to housing demand by the priority homeless and demand that may potential arise due to dispersed asylum seekers.

Total active housing stock was higher than the priority homeless in five regions: NE, NW, Y&H, EM, EE and SE. Among them the relative differences was higher in the NW and Y&H and these regions have attracted a higher number of dispersal. West Midlands, the third region with highest rate of dispersal outside Greater London, has a higher rate of priority homelessness compared to total active dwellings. On the other hand, in EE and SE, where active housing stock is higher than the priority homeless, the relative number of dispersed asylum seekers was rather much lower.

For economic reasons private sector housing is relatively less accessible to asylum seekers. Outside Greater London the relative size of private sector housing compared to housing association and council housing is higher in the EE, SE and SW and those regions have been allocated a smaller proportion of dispersed asylum seekers. In all the other regions “social sector” housing is higher than the private sector and dispersal targeted there was higher too.

The housing association sector is relatively larger in the NW, WM, SE and SW, compared to the national average. On the other hand, in the NE, Y&H, EM and EE, council housing forms a higher than average proportion of social housing. Although priority homelessness is higher in WM, SE and SW, it was only the WM that hosted a larger proportion of dispersed asylum seekers. If the size of the HA sector relative to the size of priority homelessness is to be taken as an influential factor, then only dispersal to the NW seems to have been effected by it.

Priority homelessness is higher relative to the size of council housing stock in the NE, Y&H, EM and EE and the former two regions were hosting a higher number of dispersed asylum seekers. However, the share of dispersal allocated to EM and especially EE was very small, suggesting that 2001 dispersal was not taking into account the relative size of council stock and the size of priority homelessness across regions.

Neither the regional distribution of total active housing stock and its relative size compared to the size of homelessness, nor the regional relative size of homelessness compared to the size of council and housing association active housing stock, seem to have any influence on 2001 dispersal by NASS. The relative size of private sector active stock seems to influence the size of asylum seeker dispersal across regions and this may well imply a cost-conscious dispersal in 2001. However, this must be seen in
light of the mismatch between the size of social sector housing and dispersal and the size of vacant dwellings across England.

In 2001, idle housing stock amounted to 126,500 dwellings in England. Out of these 69% were council properties and the remaining 31% housing association properties. The distribution of 2001 vacant housing stock and its relation to the size of priority homeless and dispersed asylum seekers is shown in Figure 5.

The regions with large size idle dwellings in excess of homelessness are the NW and WM. Both NW and WM have a smaller size of homelessness compared to the size of their idle housing stock and both regions were targeted for dispersing a higher proportion of asylum seekers. However, the NW was allocated 2% more asylum seekers than WM although the relative size of its idle housing in excess of the size of its homeless is 10% higher than that of WM. The North East, where the relative size of idle housing in excess of the priority homeless is 5%, the number of asylum seekers dispersed there was almost 5% smaller than those dispersed into the West Midlands.

In Y&H dispersal seems to match the size of existing idle housing. Although to lesser extent, due to the relatively higher homelessness, the same can also be said about EM.

Figure 5 demonstrates that in Greater London, the South East and South West, idle housing may go a long way in checking higher rates of homelessness. Nevertheless, the finding illustrated in Figure 4, and considering the insignificant size of demand that can be generated by refugees, it is not clear whether there is any housing-based argument to disperse asylum seekers out of these regions. As indicated earlier, if brought into use the 126,500 empty houses mean 1 idle dwelling per 1 homeless person, i.e. including priority homeless and all 2001 asylum seekers together.
Fact sheet 5: The impact of economic and social factors on refugees

When all the economic and social factors are looked at together they do not generally balance each other out. In some cases it becomes even clearer that dispersal is economically and socially undesirable.

Eight variables, four with possible negative and four with possible positive impacts, have been computed and their regional relative weights are used to form the diagrams in this section. Where a factor is believed to have a negative impact on refugee’s settlement, e.g. unemployment, its regional relative weight is inverted so that the best situation is always closest to the centre of the diagram. The worst is always to the outer edge.

North East
The North East (NE) covers 7% of England, has 5% of its population and contributes 3.5% to Gross Domestic product. In 2001 it was allocated 4,800 or 8% of asylum applicants. From the diagram it appears that, the NE has a less than conducive environment for refugee settlement. Asylum seekers dispersed there are likely to face a higher level of racial prejudice, and the relative size of ethnic minority community seems too small to provide them with adequate community support. This likely grim social environment for refugee settlement is compounded by the high unemployment in the NE relative to existing potential for employment generation.

The only positive factor approaching the bull’s-eye is idle local authority housing. However, considering that housing association idle housing is much smaller in size, it is
likely that idle council dwellings are in disrepair and in hard-to-let locations. Public authorities are also likely to be confronted with difficult decisions in allocating housing for refugee settlement due to the relative size of existing priority homelessness. Furthermore, the NE has a smaller proportion of economically inactive population (6%). Considering the small potential for employment generation, it is unlikely that the region requires an inward migration equivalent to the number of asylum seekers dispersed there in 2001.

The obvious alternative in these circumstances is to house asylum seekers in difficult-to-let council properties and/or in the private sector. The former relegates asylum seekers to health and security problems and social exclusion, eventually increasing the social service costs to local authorities and driving refugees out of the region. The private sector adds huge costs to local authorities and the NASS and allows little scope to monitor and maintain quality of housing. Moreover, once asylum seekers are granted with refugee status, the limited employment opportunities and less accessible housing in the region means it is probable that refugees would either stay - increasing the benefits bill of the local authorities - or migrate to other regions.

**North West**
Covering 11% of its land size and home to 12% its population, the North West (NW) produces 12% England’s GDP. In 2001, the region was allocated with 14% asylum seekers, 3,800 more than the NE.

The diagram above shows the state of refugee settlement environment in the NW. One variation with a potential positive impact on refugee settlement is the large ‘social sector' housing and especially that of idle housing association properties. But this is offset by the relatively high size of priority homelessness (14.5%) in the NW. Likewise, there is higher proportion economically inactive population in the NW. However, it is unlikely for it to convert into a viable demand for inward migration since potential employment generation is likely to be offset by the high level of unemployment in the region. Overall the relative weight of priority homeless compared to available social sector housing, that of unemployment to the potential in job creation and the small size of the ethnic minority
population (4%) hardly makes the NW a far better refugee settlement region compared to the NE and does not warrant a 6% higher dispersal level.

Yorkshire & Humberside
Yorkshire & Humberside (Y&H) covers 10% of England’s land, almost 12% its population and contributing 9% of its GDP. On a par with NW, in 2001 Y&H was hosting the highest number dispersed asylum seekers (14%) in England.

The relative weight of unemployment in Y&H seems to be smaller than that of employment generation. Although not significant if compared with the NW, there was also a large economically inactive population indicating some demand for inward migration. Council housing, both active and idle, is higher and priority homelessness is 2% lower than in the NW.

However, there is 4% less ethnic minority population but racial incidents are also less by around 4%. This suggests a higher density in the clustering of ethnic minority communities in Y&H. Overall, it is likely that Y&H may have a relatively reasonable settlement environment for refugee settlement and hence, the grounds for dispersing 0.2% more asylum seekers into Y&H may be warranted and the differential amount is minimal.

West Midlands
The West Midlands (WM) covers 10% of land, is home to 11% of the population and contributes 8% of England’s GDP. From the diagram it is apparent that condition in the WM does not seem to be proportionately conducive for dispersing 12% of asylum seekers in 2001.

In terms of social factors, WM has a comparable size of ethnic minority population to Y&H and has recorded 1% less racial incidents in 2001. These conditions may warrant for a proportionately higher dispersal to the region. However, while the economically inactive form 11% population and unfilled job vacancies are 12%, unemployment is around 12%. Hence demand for inward migration is likely to be low and employment opportunities for eventually settling refugees may well be slim. The priority homeless
levels are high while available social housing is small, thus suggesting that allocating decent housing for refugees may well be no less harder than, say, in the NE. The indication is that WM did not seem to have had significantly conducive refugee settlement to receive either 6% more asylum seekers than EM or only 2% less than Y&H.

**East Midlands**

East Midlands (EM) is the second less densely populated region in England with 8.5% population in 12% of land and it contributes 10% GDP. In 2001 EM received 6% of dispersed asylum seekers, 2% less than that of the NE. However, as shown in the diagram the settlement environment of the EM seems to be relatively more conducive.

There are more economically inactive people and although unemployment is slightly high, employment generation is 5% higher than that in the NE. The ethnic minority population is 2% bigger and, since reported racial incidents are only slightly higher that in the NE, this community seems relatively densely clustered within EM. Other than a smaller number of housing association properties, the size of social housing as it relates to potential demand from dispersed asylum seekers and priority homeless is more or less the same as in the NE. The implication is that there is hardly any reason to disperse fewer asylum seekers into the EM. In fact, the relative weight of unemployment, priority
homelessness and racial incidents suggest that EM could have relieved the NE of some of its 8% dispersed asylum seekers.

**East of England**
The East of England, the second largest region in England with third lowest population density and 12% GDP, was host to a quarter of the number of asylum seekers dispersed into the WM.

The refugee settlement environment depicted in the diagram demonstrates that in 2001 there was less ground to disperse 50% less asylum seekers into EE than into EM. The relative demand for inward migration is high, due to a high proportion of economically inactive population. Unemployment is only 1% higher than unfilled job vacancies. Reported racial incidents are low while the region has a 2% larger ethnic minority population than EM.

Except for the smaller size of housing association rented dwellings, EE seems to have more or less a comparable size of active social housing with EM. A distinctive variation is the 2% higher homelessness and 2% smaller idle social housing. However, unless overall settlement environment is ignored this variation can hardly lead to a decision to disperse 50% less asylum seeker.

Furthermore, if we consider the relative weight of demand for inward migration, unemployment, homelessness and the social factors like size of ethnic community and racial incident, there is hardly any reason other than the size of hard-to-let social housing to disperse four times more asylum seekers into the WM than into EE.
The South East
Dispersal policy aims to relieve pressures on the South East (SE). In terms of land size the SE accounts for 15% of England and with 16% population it contributes 18% to GDP.

As depicted in the chart, the SE’s demand for inward migration is among the highest in England. It has an economically inactive population of 15%. Employment generation is the highest in England (14.6%) and its unemployment is 12%, on a par with that of WM. The relative weight of racist incidents and the size of its ethnic minority populations is almost the same as that of Y&H. The same situation is shown with regard to the size of homelessness too.

SE also enjoys a slightly larger active social sector housing than WM. This suggests that, in 2001 there existed a settlement environment benign enough to disperse more or less the same number of asylum seekers into the SE and WM. In reality dispersal into the SE was almost half of that into the WM. Unless the relative size of social sector idle housing is given priority, these variations in the size of dispersal into the SE and the preoccupation of dispersal policy to relieve pressure from the SE do not seem justified by the relative regional settlement environment there.

The South West
Moving into the South West (SW), we find the lowest density of population England (18% of population in 10% of the land). The SW contributes 9% England’s GDP.

The bull’s eye chart shows no significant variation in the SW to support the lowest number of asylum seeker dispersed there (2%) in 2001. The relative demand for inward migration is high - in fact it is more or less the same as in Y&H and WM where six and five fold more asylum seekers were dispersed respectively. The relative weight of unemployment was 4% lower than the rate of employment generation and there were less reported incidents despite a small size of ethnic minority population, suggesting that the latter are highly densely clustered in the region.
Although homelessness is much lower and the state of social sector housing offers no less a comfort for dispersal than it is the case in the SE, the SW was allocated to host a third of asylum seekers dispersed into the SE.

**Greater London**

The situation in Greater London (GL) is depicted in the chart below. In addition to a high density of population, GL accounts for over 19% England’s and 16% UK GDP.

As the bull’s eye chart clearly demonstrates, except for the large ethnic minority population the relative weight of most factors directs in support of a dispersal policy to relieve the pressures of refugee settlement demand in GL. However, such an emphasis in policy needs to be proportionate to the relative size of refugee-generated settlement and other sources of pressure coming from inward migration from other regions of the UK and from elsewhere in the world. To single out London and argue that refugees should disproportionately be dispersed away from GL is tantamount to suggesting that fleeing political prosecution qualifies for exclusion from a natural tendency of people to converge towards an economic backbone and multicultural centre of the host country.
Fact sheet 6:  
Provision of housing association supported housing

The analyses in this section are based on data on reporting housing schemes obtained from the Continuous Recording System (CORE) maintained by the National Housing Federation (NHF). The CORE has been developed jointly by the NHF and the Housing Corporation to record information on Registered Social Landlords (RSL) lettings and sales. The system also records lettings by housing associations (HA) affiliated to the NHF but are not registered with the Corporation. (In what follows the generic term HA has been used to denote both RSLs and those which are not registered with the Corporation).

A supported housing scheme is one where the landlord, in this case HAs, takes on a formal responsibility for providing housing-related support to its tenants, over and above the support that would normally be provided by landlords managing general needs housing.

Overall scale of provision
At the end of September 2002 there were 17,180 HA run supported housing schemes in England operating around 119,000 accommodation units. Only 1% or 167 of these schemes were providing accommodation to refugees. Refugees occupied 1002 or 0.8% of all units.

Regional distribution
Figure 1 shows the 2001/02 regional distribution of supported housing schemes in England. With 28% of all schemes operating almost 30% all accommodation units, Greater London has the highest concentration of HA run supported housing schemes. The South East followed with 14% schemes operating 15% of all units. The North West has the third highest concentration with 13%, however schemes there seem to be rather small since the number of they operate a smaller proportion of all accommodation units in England. All other regions have between 7-8% supported housing schemes running between 7-9% of all units.

Not surprisingly, over 60% of those schemes and 56% of accommodation units with refugees were in Greater London. Relatively few supported housing schemes are provided in major dispersal regions like the North West, Yorkshire & Humberside and West Midlands. The reasons are not clear. Refugees may not have been able to access
supported housing in these areas or may have moved away once they have been granted refugee status.

The North East, the third largest region in terms of its intake of dispersed asylum seekers, has 12% of supported housing schemes accommodating refugees, on par with the proportion in Yorkshire & Humberside. Next to Greater London, the North East has the second largest concentration of supported housing schemes accommodating refugees. Again it is not clear whether this is because are refugees staying in the North East or because more supported housing is available to refugees there. In any case, the difference compared to those in other major dispersal regions is apparent.

The low number of supported housing schemes reported to house refugees in East England and the South West is striking but it is even more stark in the South East, especially in view of the fact that it has the second highest concentration of supported housing schemes in England.
Fact sheet 7: Housing association scheme types

Categories of housing support
The CORE system records supported housing schemes in four main categories and in September 2002 these were:

- **Sheltered** housing schemes which accommodate primarily the elderly and those who require substantial and continuous institutional care and support - 4% of all schemes running almost 10% of available accommodation units
- **Foyers** serving predominantly the young and homeless - less than 1% of reporting schemes with 35 of all units
- **Direct access hostels** which provide immediate and very short-term shelter - 2% of schemes and almost 8% of all units
- **Other Supported housing schemes** besides sheltered housing, foyer and direct access hostels – 75% of all reporting schemes operating almost 65% all accommodation units.

Figure 4 shows refugees’ access to different types of supported housing schemes during 2001/02. Among the 1% of schemes housing refugees, the majority were supported housing scheme other than sheltered housing, foyer and direct access hostels. No sheltered housing scheme housed refugees. Despite the small number of direct access hostels, these seem to provide some places for refugees. However, the number of direct access units made available for refugees was disproportionately small. This may either be due to the small number of such schemes and hence, limited access to refugees, or due to the tendency for most refugees to stay as hidden homeless before moving into supported housing.

Types of accommodation
There are six major types of supported housing units:

- Self contained flat with some common facilities
- Shared flats
- Shared house/hostel
- Direct access hostels
- Bungalows and self contained houses.

The predominant type of supported housing unit was a shared house or hostel and it accounted for over 50% of all accommodation units run by over 45% all schemes. Self-contained flats represented 20% of total accommodation units and were operated by almost 35% of all schemes. Bungalows and self-contained houses accounted 4% of all accommodation units and were run by 6% of all schemes.
As demonstrated in Figures 5, refugees were placed primarily in self-contained flats with some common facility. In fact 77% of all refugee in supported housing during 2001/02 lived in units with some form of shared facilities including bathroom, WC and cooking facilities. Although a small proportion of all supported housing, schemes with self-contained houses seem to take on more homeless refugees than self-contained and shared flats – probably reflecting the different age and household structures of refugee and other supported housing residents. However, while schemes with self contained and shared flats were providing a relatively higher proportion of their units, those with self-contained units allocated a smaller proportion.

Self-contained houses and shared flats were almost equally accessible to refugees as shared hostels and self-contained flats. It is not clear how this influences decisions regarding re-housing refugees into permanent housing. Nevertheless, the fact that there are similar numbers despite the relative importance of self-contained houses and shared flats raises concern about the accessibility of the dominant types of supported housing schemes to refugees.

**Length of stay**

Figure 6 shows expected length of stay by homeless households in supported housing. Around 45% of supported housing schemes are reported to provide long-term stay with no expectation or requirement for their tenants to move. These schemes were housing households that required intensive and continuous care and support. Those who were expecting or requiring their tenants to move to permanent accommodation fell into three categories and in September 2002 these were:

1. Schemes for medium stay, usually for more than a year but with expected move-on - 25% of all schemes running a similar proportion of accommodation units
2. Short stay schemes that accommodate homeless people for up to one year - 11% of schemes operating 15% of accommodation units
3. Very short-stay schemes providing accommodation for up to one month - constituting under 1% of schemes and accommodation units.

It is concerning to note that, in 2001/02 refugees had a higher accessibility into medium-stay schemes with expectation for move-on. However, it is equally worrying to see that schemes serving short-stay with no expected move-on were allocating a large part of their accommodation units to refugees.

**Support services**

Support services provided by supported housing schemes included resettlement support, intensive housing management, counselling support service plus housing management, substantial level of care and support plus housing management, nursing care services and floating support. In 2001/02 over 80% of supported housing schemes were almost evenly distributed between those providing intensive housing management, counselling plus housing management and substantial level of care support plus housing management.

Schemes housing refugees were providing primarily resettlement or intensive housing management support. As shown in Figure 7, schemes providing resettlement support also seem be more accessible to refugees and they were allocating a considerable
proportion of their units to refugees. However, these schemes accounted for fewer than 10% of all schemes in this group and their positive role should also be seen in light of the fact that only 1% of the 17,180 schemes were accommodating refugees during 2001/02.
Fact sheet 8: 
Refugees in housing association supported housing

Household status
Over 95% of refugee households living in supported housing were single adults and the remaining 5% were families with children. Although their proportion was small, the number of refugees families placed in supported housing rose by 31% on average each year over a six-year period. Homeless refugee families with one child and in supported housing formed 56% all families with children and 32% had two or more children.

Gender
Nationally every four of ten homeless people in supported housing were female. In the case of homeless refugees the proportion of females in supported housing is only 3 out of every 10.

Disability
During 2001/02 a total of 6,750 disabled homeless people were living in supported housing run by HAs. They formed 11% of all homeless tenants in supported housing and 2% were using a wheelchair. Disabled refugees including those using wheelchairs formed 3% of refugee households in supported housing.

Age
Reflecting the age distribution of all refugees, 78% of those in supported housing were in the 18 to 38 years old age group. The trend in Figure 2 shows that refugees aged between 18-38 years old formed around 80% of all refugees in supported housing during the last six years. Among them, the proportion of those aged between 18-24 years old was showing a steady rise compensating for the decline in the proportion of those aged between 25-38 years old. Figure 2 also shows a steady rise in the proportion of young homeless refugees placed in supported housing. Refugees aged 1 to 17 years old accounted for 6% of all refugees in supported housing in 1996/97 and this proportion reached 16% in 2001/02.

During the same period the age distribution of refugees has not changed significantly to support such a trend in placement of refugees in supported housing schemes. In view of this, the trend depicted in Figure 2 suggests that housing association running supported housing and agencies referring to them are likely increasingly to prioritise younger refugees for placement in supported housing schemes. Such a tendency may be seen as beneficial to younger refugees, however it also means hidden homelessness for those who do not fall in the prioritised age category.
Priority homelessness
For the six years period since 1996/97 supported housing schemes in England were housing on average a little over 60,000 homeless households. Figure 3 shows trends in the type of homeless households living in supported housing since 1996/97.

The figure shows an incredible consistency in decisions on the intake of HA run supported housing schemes. The placement of homeless households also reflected the policy environment in housing. In all the six years under consideration, the largest population of homeless households populating supported housing schemes were the single homeless who generally do not qualify as priority homelessness under the Homelessness Act of 1996.

There was a rapid growth in the total number of homeless households placed in supported housing right after the introduction of the Act- 19% and 14% during 1997/98 and 1998/98 respectively. Then after the growth rate subsided and in 2001/02 it was around 1%. The overwhelming increase in 1997/98 and 1998/99 came from placements of single homeless households. Furthermore, in 2001/02 statutory homeless formed 21% all households in supported housing while 47% were households who did not qualify as statutorily homelessness but were either living in insecure temporary accommodation or literally homeless.

Supported housing schemes in England were housing an annual average of 1,100 homeless refugee households during the last six years. On average homeless refugee households made up 1.8% of all households living in reporting supported housing schemes. During the last six years there was no significant change in the number or proportion of refugee households in supported housing. This may either mean no change in supported housing units made available for refugees or the number of refugees applying for placement was not changing. Home Office statistics discount the latter since there was some growth in the number of asylum seekers granted with refugee status. The implication is that many refugees may be hidden homeless and access to supported housing was not changing proportionately to accommodate increases in demand from these communities.

Among refugees, the statutory homeless in supported housing were 15% in 2001/02. This may mean that, once refugees are accepted as statutory homeless by local authorities their chance of being resettled into permanent housing is proportionate. However, the fact that the majority of refugees do not qualify to register as statutory homeless, means over 85% of the refugee homeless are destined to populate supported housing for a long period of time.

Economic status
Figure 8 shows the employment status of homeless households in supported housing during 2001/01. As expected, unemployment is high among the homeless in supported housing and in 2001/02; 41% all tenants were registered unemployed and those who were in full or part-time work accounted around 5%. Around 23% were out of employment due to disability and illness. About 2% were either on government sponsored training schemes or New Deal programmes and about 4% were students.
Those who were looking after a member of their families and thus were not seeking work made up 12%.

During the same period, over 60% of refugees in supported housing were unemployed. A total of 92 refugee households were looking after members of their families and thus were not looking for work. They formed 1% of all supported housing tenants who were not seeking work. Refugees in full or part-time work and in supported housing made up a little over 2% of all employed supported housing tenants. The support environment in supported housing does not seem to facilitate with services that could open up employment opportunities for refugees and the relative number of those who are unemployed was 20% larger than among other tenants. However, refugees tend to make use of all avenues for employment and the relative number of refugees who were either in part-time employment, government New Deal programme and training, or studying for qualification was higher.

**Income**

Weekly incomes of homeless people living in supported housing reflected their employment status. As shown in Figure 9, during 2001/02 over 55% of all households in supported housing had a weekly income between £40-59. As expected, the higher the weekly income bracket the smaller the number of households living in supported housing. In 2001/02, the average weekly income of all households in supported housing was £72.47, about £18.00 higher than the weekly income support for single persons aged 24 or over.

The condition was rather worse for refugees. During 2001/02, 87% of refugees living in supported housing had an income of between £46-59 weekly. In fact 5% were living on under £40 weekly income and it was only refugees who constituted tenants of supported housing living on a weekly income of under £40.

Figure 10 shows trends in weekly income of refugee households living in supported housing during the last six years. Average income has not changed during 1996/97-2001/02 and it has hardly moved over the £50 mark. This means most refugees in supported housing were living on weekly income £3.95 less than the weekly income support for single persons aged 24 or over, respectively £8.00 and £15 less than the average weekly rent of local authority and RSL housing in London. Although there was a marked decline in the proportion of refugees living on under £40 since 1996/97, from 34% to 5%, this was associated with an entrapment of the overwhelming majority of these households within the weekly £40-59 income bracket. Those who were escaping this income bracket formed only a small proportion and even then, considering that they were primarily in the group earning between £60-100 weekly, their incomes were likely to be insufficient incentives to initiate moving out of supported housing.
Regional distribution
During 2001/02, there were 1,400 homeless refugee households or 2% of the 65,267 households living in supported housing in England. Out of these:
- 42% were in Greater London
- 11% in Yorkshire & Humberside
- 7% each in West Midlands and South West
- 6% in the South East.

The 2001/02 regional distribution of households in supported housing is shown in Figure 15.

As shown in Figure 16, throughout the 1996/97-2001/02 period HA supported housing in Greater London accommodated the majority of homeless refugee households. This reflected the concentration of existing move-on housing services in the region, which influences refugees’ perception of their chances of getting placements and thereby their tendency to converge into Greater London. However, since 1996/97 the proportion of refugees living in supported housing in Greater London has been declining by about 5% annually; in 2001/02 it stood at 38% coming down from a high of 61% in 1996/97. This suggests that either less and less homeless refugee households were applying for or less and less of those who were applying were getting placement in Greater London’s supported housing schemes.

Figure 16 suggests that there is a slow growth in the number of refugee households getting placement in supported housing since 2000/01 in all regions outside Greater London, most notably in Y&H. The exceptions were the North East and North West. This trend corresponds with the implementation of dispersal during this period. However, the proportion of refugees living in supported housing outside Greater London was increasing even before 1999/2000; from 13% in 1996/97 it has reached 43% in 2000/01.

Previous housing
Figure 11 shows that the 2001/02 residents of supported housing generally were coming from different types of previous accommodation. Those who have moved from family or friends’ homes formed 32%. 10% were previously living in hostel or sheltered housing. The homeless coming from bed and breakfast accounted for 10% and squatters and people who have no fixed address formed 11%. A similar proportion were people who
have lost their social sector tenancy. People from some form of institutional care and those from prisons and hospital accounted 13%. This distribution reflects the priority homelessness criteria set out by the Homelessness Act of 1996.

Refugees living in supported housing during 2001/02 were coming primarily from three sources: 29% leaving family or friends’ home and 24% each from hostel or shared housing or from other sources. The next group (11%) were previously in bed and breakfast and the same amount were squatting and did have no permanent address. The 24% who are reported as previously living in other forms of accommodation represented the hidden homeless who had no fixed accommodation to be registered as any of the traditional types of tenure. As with other homeless households, HA supported housing schemes were providing shelter to refugees who do not fully qualify as statutory homeless according to the priority homeless criteria.

As shown in Figure 12, the number of refugees moving from B&B and family/friend’s accommodation was declining since 1996/97: in the case of B&B from 26% to 11%, and from friends and families’ home from 34% to 22%. The proportion moving into supported housing from sheltered hostels did not change. However, the number of refugees who previously were squatting and did not have any fixed address has increased from 9% in 1996/97 to 34% in 2000/01. The largest increase occurred during and after 1999/2000, thus corresponding in time with the launch of a new IAA and a policy of dispersal. Although there is no hard evidence to suggest a direct relationship, it is likely that, refugees finding it hard to qualify as statutory homeless in some areas are drifting into regions where they perceive they would have a relatively better chance of securing placement in supported housing.

Referral agencies
In addition to direct individual application, four major types of agencies were referring households in supported housing:

- Local authorities and their housing departments
- Health and social service agencies
- Housing associations
- Voluntary agencies and advice services.

Figure 13 illustrates the proportion of homeless households referred into supported housing during 2001/02. Housing associations running supported housing allocated almost a quarter of their accommodation to households who made direct application for placement. The highest share of accepted referrals for supporting housing schemes were local authorities and their housing departments - 16%. Referrals from health and social service including GPs accounted for 15% while voluntary agencies followed with 14%. During the same period, the police, probation and prison services and domestic violence units referred almost 10% of all homeless households living in supported housing. Those referred by agencies other than the above major agencies accounted for 9% of placements.

In 2001/02 refugees seem to get a fair number of referrals both from local authorities and their housing departments as well as from social and health services. However, when comparing the relative size of refugee referrals to total referrals, the proportion of refugee referral was much higher among advice services like the CAB and the law
centres than all other major referring agencies. Accounting for 17% of all, self-referral was the second popular avenue for refugees to access placement in supported housing during 2001/02, almost in par with those referred by local authorities and health and social services.

“Non-major” (for other tenants) sources of referral were a major resource in facilitating supported housing placement for refugees and in 2001/02 their combined share was almost 20%. The ‘Supported Housing New Lettings Log’ of CORE does not give any specific description to identify these agencies. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that there is a major gap among major referral agencies in terms of their coverage and accessibility to homeless refugees. The fact that the police, prison and probation services are referring 4% of refugees on a par with advice services adds to this concern and demands further investigation.

Findings shown in Figure 14 show a complex trend in the role of different agencies. Until 1996/97, voluntary agencies were referring the highest number of refugees into supported housing (31%). This role of the voluntary sector jumped by almost 11% in 1997/98 and then after it started to fall down and reach under 15% in 2001/02. As we all know this period also saw the introduction of the 1999 IAA and the NASS-led dispersal system, and it seems this had some consequences on the roll of the voluntary sector in referring refugees into supported housing. On the one hand, refugees dispersed where voluntary organisation either did not exist or were inaccessible found referral support from other agencies like the citizens and legal advice centre; refugee referral from such agencies jumped from nothing to an average of 8% during 1999/2000 to 2001/02. On the other hand, all kinds of agencies other than the traditional were filling the gap and their referrals jumped from under 10% in 1998/2000 to almost 20% in 2001/02.

Changes in the regulatory environment did not seem to have had any significant impact on the number of refugee referrals by local authorities and their housing divisions. There was only a 1% decline in 1999/2000 compared to 1999/99 and this was followed by a slow growth in the share of refugee referral from these agencies during 2000/01 and 2001/02. In contrast the share of health and social services’ referrals increased by about 7% in 1998/2000 only to slow down in subsequent years.

One other significant change is direct applications of refugee households for supported housing accommodation. As demonstrated in Figure 14, self-referral accounted for over 25% of refugee housed in supported housing in 1996/97. In 1997/98 its share went down by around 10% and despite a small growth in 1998/99 the share of self-referral never picked up again and stood at 16% in 2001/02. If we look at the share of self-referral to all tenants of supported housing schemes, its pick was 30% in 1996/97. Thereafter, it has been consistently declining to reach 24% in 2001/02.
The detention of asylum seekers has aroused intense debate since the arrival of the first boats from Cambodia in 1989. There was further controversy with the opening of the Port Hedland immigration detention centre in northwestern Australia in 1991. The isolation of the centre, reports of poor facilities for detainees and the slow processing of their applications, generated adverse media attention and some deep seated community divisions. Numerous groups throughout Australia, including major churches, non-governmental organizations, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, have raised community concerns.

Australian detention practice has also attracted adverse comment from international organisations including the US Department of State and the International Secretariat of Amnesty International.

In 1994 a number of key organisations in Australia endorsed a Charter of Minimum Requirements for Legislation Relating to the Detention of Asylum Seekers. This Charter is an important statement of agreed norms relating to the detention of asylum seekers. While detention remains the norm for unauthorised arrivals (anybody arriving in Australia without a valid visa), there have been a number of positive developments over the past three years, not least of these being:

- Significant improvements in the conditions in the detention centres;
- Priority processing of detainees at both primary and review levels;
- Case management of detainees in some facilities;
- More rigorous and expert determination of claims;
- Provision for release from detention for certain designated groups of asylum seekers.

Despite these significant improvements, serious concerns continue to be voiced by eminent community leaders. The main criticisms focus on:

- The human rights implications of the detention of asylum seekers;
- The suffering imposed on the detainees;
- The significant costs of the detention of asylum seekers.

The rationale for keeping asylum seekers who enter the country without immigration clearance is immigration control. An additional reason sometimes given is deterrence.
The Australian government provides assistance for some asylum seekers during the period in which their applications for protection are processed. This can include:

- Financial assistance for basic living essentials;
- Assistance in preparing their protection application;
- Access to work rights;
- Access to Medicare.

However, Australia virtually imprisons all 'illegal' asylum seekers.

Links and references


http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/ihavearightto/four_b/e_right_2.shtml is an article about refugee policy that case-studies Australia.

In August 2001, 433 asylum seekers on board a sinking Indonesian ferry were rescued by a Norwegian freighter, the MV Tampa. The asylum seekers, most of them from Afghanistan, had travelled thousands of miles to reach Australia. Once on board the Tampa, the migrants spent days at sea while, Norway argued with Australia and Indonesia about which country should take responsibility for their security. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Between January and July 2001, 7,886 individuals sought asylum in Australia - most of them from Afghanistan and Iraq. In the same period, 39,255 people sought asylum in the United Kingdom and 48,879 in Germany." HRW also states, "In 2000, the ratio of refugees to total population was 1: 1,138 in Australia, 1: 681 in the United Kingdom, and 1: 456 in Germany."
Belgium
Belgian provision is hamstrung by the complex political structure. Cities such as Brussels, like London, have ethnic clustering and a thriving shadow economy. Refugees often provide for themselves, but at the expense of staying outside of the system.

- From 1997, asylum seekers were only to receive aid at reception centres (now full).
- The dispersal plan which is directed by federal government but executed by municipalities is failing, partly due to hostility from local communities.
- Rent support is paid 6 weeks in arrears.

Ireland
Prior to 1999, there were relatively few asylum seekers in Ireland, with the vast majority concentrated in Dublin.

- Social welfare and accommodation allowances for Dublin asylum seekers were administered through the Eastern Health Board.
- As housing grew scarcer and more expensive in Dublin, and as the number of asylum seekers arriving every month began to increase, it became increasingly necessary to accommodate asylum seekers in hotel, bed and breakfast and hostel type accommodation. Towards the end of 1999, with arrivals running at about 1,000 per month, the Dublin area reached capacity.
- Within the city there were clear patterns of concentration, especially within the north inner city area. This sometimes led to conflict between asylum seekers and other communities who were themselves disadvantaged within an increasingly polarised city.
- The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform solution was to implement a policy of 'dispersal' of asylum seekers outside the capital, by advertising in the national media for emergency accommodation and moving people out as it became available.
- The Department has introduced 'direct provision', obliging asylum seekers to stay in officially provided accommodation. Instead of social welfare payments their meals are provided and they receive pocket money of IR£15 per week.
Netherlands
The policy of allocation and dispersal does not take into account the refugees' particular circumstances, e.g. proximity to friends or educational establishment. If the refugee turns down the offer of accommodation the reception support is terminated. Consequently many refugees move from their allocated accommodation back to urban centres.

The main features of the Dutch system are:

- Initial accommodation in reception centres.
- Residence with friends or relatives allowed.
- Refugees have equal rights to citizens regarding allocation of social housing and housing allowances.
- Recent increase in housing allowance gives more access to private sector.
- Replacement of central allocation of housing to a 'market-system' where potential tenants respond to adverts has benefited refugees.
- Municipal obligation to house refugees improves access by removing economic and racist barriers.

Sweden
Sweden has a good supply of modern housing thanks to the 'million dwellings' campaign of the 60's. Immigrants mainly live in the multi-storey apartments on the outskirts of the cities creating segregated neighbourhoods (80-90% non-Swedish).

- Refugees move from investigation centre to residence centre in a few weeks. Residence in the centre is not compulsory but the housing allowance is insufficient for decent housing.
- Eventual housing allocation follows an “All of Sweden” strategy of dispersal driven by concerns about urban concentration and ethnic segregation of immigrant communities as well as an attempt to reverse rural depopulation. This has been unsuccessful as refugees return to the urban centres. Now the Swedes are looking to enable integration through urban improvements aimed at desegregating communities and encouraging the return of the Swedish middle-classes to the city centres.

Links and resources

EU
http://www.asylumsupport.info/publications/ecre/integration.htm is a good source of policy and information documents produced by EU direction and funding. See particularly the Good Practice Guides on Refugee Integration in Europe on Community and Cultural Integration, Education, Employment, Health, Housing and Vocational Training.
Ireland

http://migration.ucc.ie/asylumhousing.htm: Asylum Seekers and Housing Rights in Ireland by Piaras Mac Éinrí, Director Irish Centre for Migration Studies, National University of Ireland, Cork.

http://www.clann.ie/site/iw/about.htm: The Refugee Agency has established a newly formed partnership made up of service providers and refugee groups to address the development of a clustered dispersal mode of settlement for refugees in the south east Ireland as a pilot programme. The Refugee Agency is a public body established by the Irish Government in 1991 under the aegis of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The role of the Agency is to co-ordinate arrangements for the admission, reception and resettlement of refugees admitted into Ireland.

Netherlands

http://www.ercomer.org/ is the site of the European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (NL).

http://www.united.non-profit.nl/pages/info14.htm writes about the people who have died while attempting to enter Europe.

Norway

http://odin.dep.no/krd/engelsk/publ/periodika/016041-280002/index-dok000-b-f-a.html is the website of the Norwegian Refugee Policy newsletter.

www.dep.no/odin/norsk/publ provides a review of Norwegian government policy and its application.
USA
Each official refugee case is assigned to an American private voluntary agency that provides sponsorship and initial resettlement services, including housing, essential furnishings, food, other basic necessities, clothing and additional orientation. Any relatives already in the US are expected to take in new migrants.

- 2001 admissions ceiling was 80,000
- A worldwide processing system sets the guidelines for the orderly management of refugee applications for admission to the U.S. within the regional ceilings.
- Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officers conduct personal interviews of all applicants, often in the countries of origin.
- 2,458,015 legal immigrants as of August 31, 2001 since 1975

Canada
(This section is still in preparation)
Links and references

USA

http://www.amnestyusa.org/refugee/ is the site of Amnesty USA.

http://www.nccbuscc.org/mrs/pubs.htm is the site of the migration and refugee services of the conference of Catholic Bishops.


Canada

Housing New Canadians: http://www.library.utoronto.ca/hnc/links.htm is an excellent list of sites concerning refugees and refugee housing in Canada.
International experience: general resources

General resources: text


A good general read, this book uses layman's language to examine and evaluate countries' responses to immigration. It emphasises the unreliability of migration statistics while providing figures, and does not consider refugee movement as a separate component of migration. Generalised mention is made of housing, but there is no specific reference made to housing policy with respect to refugees.

Key points:

Western Europe, especially Germany, sees itself as a non-immigration area, in contrast to US and Australia that were traditionally immigrant countries.

However, in reality, 4.5% in the EU are legally foreigners (p.122), 8% in Germany, 7% in France, 5% in Holland, 3.5% in UK, and 10% of European marriages are cross-ethnic. There are divergent attitudes to immigrants naturalising. In Germany, naturalisation is still dependent on 'blood', so many settled foreigners are denied full citizen rights, "We asked for workers and we got people instead!"(p.39). In France, by contrast, naturalisation is relatively easy. The French refuse to recognise ethnic communities (p.124), they see multiculturalism as being divisive. This French process of naturalisation 'disappears' refugees (p.134) with consequences for making comparisons. The UK also has a process of naturalisation, but policy is based on ethnic groups. (Incidentally, this difference between the French and English goes back to colonial days!).

European policy: Emerging EU definitions of EU citizenship may erode or overrule the national differences. However, emphasis is on stopping immigration, not resolving ethnic peoples rights (p.53).

There are sometimes tensions between European liberal ideology and tolerance which political elites may express or pay lip-service to, and voters who are often more hostile.
The relationship between the state and the refugee (and the rest of society?) is becoming less paternalistic in every country except perhaps the UK (p.238).

- What rights is the non-citizen entitled too?
- Defining the process of naturalisation:
  - Protection from deportation
  - Welfare
  - Integration
  - Voting rights
  - Political participation

- What to do about *Denizens*: tax paying permanent non-voting residents

- Factors increasing migration (2% population world-wide, UNICPD 1994):
  - Civil rights in receiving countries
  - Transport
  - Telecommunications
  - Chain-migration
  - Economic problems in sending countries
  - Conflict in sending countries

Migrants remit $75 billion (1.5 x ODA)


A clear read, the section on the social context of European Integration has the most to say about refugee housing. Of particular interest is chapter 12: marginal housing estates in Europe, because these have become the homes for so many refugees. This chapter describes estates on the point of social break down being socially re-integrated. The problems and their solutions were found to be similar across Europe,

".. there was a remarkably coherent pattern of change at estate level; greater local control over basic decisions affecting estates such as lettings; more responsive local services such as repairs and caretaking; environmental upgrading to create conditions that were more equal with other communities; social support to compensate for concentrated social disadvantage; and stronger links with near-by areas and the rest of the city." (p.232)

However, while it is possible to stabilise an estate,

" The difficulty in making most estates significantly more socially mixed was widely considered a core problem" (p.235).

" In many estates, more than 50% of households are workless" (p.237).

Europe is not seeing the intense ghetto conditions of black America, but only because of the continuous and continuing application of the 'social model'. Any reduction in public expenditure could reverse this.
The chapter on homelessness in the EU makes passing reference to immigrants and notes 10-20% of homeless people in the EU are migrants and refugees (p.210). The European Federation of National organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) argues that the most effective way to address homelessness in the EU is to adopt a rights-based approach (p.210).

"The EU has no housing competence and no right to housing is enshrined in any of the European Treaties or in European legislation. Therefore homeless people within the EU must rely on domestic law… Direct rights to housing exist only in France and the UK…" (p.211).

In most member states such housing rights that do exist are only available to citizens (p.212).

Most services for homeless people in the EU are provided by the private sector (2/3 - 1/3 in the EU as a whole). But this varies from country to country, in the UK for example, the public sector accounts for about two thirds (p.212).


This book describes the housing conditions of Turks in Western Europe. In case-studying the Turks throughout Europe, it also throws up some specific differences in housing and integration policy across Europe.

London Research Centre (1999) *Dwelling on Difference, Housing and Ethnicity in London*, LRC.

Also [http://www.bris.ac.uk/Publications/TPP/pages/rp013.html](http://www.bris.ac.uk/Publications/TPP/pages/rp013.html)

Key questions addressed:

- What are the main housing problems encountered by refugees and how do housing workers try to resolve them?
- How much success are they having in changing the policy and practice of local authorities and other key agencies?
- To what extent is their work being frustrated by the national policy environment?

The report also draws out the housing implications of the recent changes in asylum law and puts forward a series of recommendations for community-based refugee groups and for statutory agencies.

Drawing on a large survey of migrants who had been in Australia about 6 months at the time of interview, this report looks at what life is like for new migrants to Australia. It finds that migrants, who are generally very well educated and healthy and of prime age, are doing pretty well. Perhaps surprisingly, they are motivated to come to Australia not by the hardship of their life at home but by the positive attractions of Australia. Prominent among these are the quality of life — climate, uncrowded and unpolluted environment, peaceful and civil democratic life, and generally good opportunities. The attractions of family already in Australia are also strong. After 6 months, a majority have jobs, adequate incomes and housing and are pleased to be here. Humanitarian migrants have the toughest time, and are the most pleased to be here.

Refugee Housing—Meeting a Critical Need
A USCCB/MRS publication on standards, strategies, and resources for meeting the housing needs of newly arriving refugees. This publication guides resettlement staff through the process of assessing the need for housing, the available resources, and strategies for meeting the need.

Websites

[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org) provides statistics and other information about refugees.

[http://society.guardian.co.uk/asylumseekers/story/0,7991,480611,00.html](http://society.guardian.co.uk/asylumseekers/story/0,7991,480611,00.html) is a pertinent story in the Guardian with many links to other UK based refugee sites and stories.

[http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/intcam/refugee/briefing/brief2.htm](http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/intcam/refugee/briefing/brief2.htm) provides a platform for refugees to describe their experiences.

[http://www.refugees.org/index.cfm](http://www.refugees.org/index.cfm) provides access to a wide variety of refugee issues and statistics including the World Refugee Survey.


Elizabeth Ferris examines the refugee work of five non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the context of the international refugee system. Her research reveals enormous differences in their mandates, self-perceptions, politics, constituencies and fundraising.
http://www.chasnational.org.uk/asylumbp.htm provides information on asylum seekers and housing.

http://www.peoplenotprofit.co.uk/campaigns_landmark.htm campaigns on the issue of refugees being housed in slum housing.

http://www.support4learning.org.uk/community/law_immig.htm lists resources concerning the legal aspects of refugee policy.

http://www.una-uk.org/obligation.html campaigns for the UK to meet its obligations under UN treaties.

http://www.eurohousing.org.uk/news/fund88.asp provides information about Grants from the European Refugee Fund (ERF) that support Member States’ efforts in receiving, integrating and returning refugees and asylum seekers.

http://www.shelterscotland.org.uk

Additional useful contacts:

The Refugee Council
3 Bondway  London SW8 1SJ
020 7820 3000
info@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Jesuit Refugee Service UK
112 Thornbury Road  Osterley  Middlesex TW7 4NN
020 8847 3555
uk@jesref.org

Churches’ Commission for Racial Justice
Inter-Church House  35-41 Lower Marsh  London SE1 7SA
020 7523 2128
crj@ctbi.org.uk
What is distinctive about the permanent stage is that refugees have overcome all
kinds of hurdles and moved to permanent and decent housing. The move into
relatively permanent residence is central. Permanency is understood to include
broader processes of refugee inclusion into the host communities’ way of life by
consolidating settlement progress made throughout the previous two stages.
Furthermore, this stage has no readily identifiable ending in time since it is a stage
during which the two-way process of both refugees and the host community
proceeds in the direction of continuously higher and complex levels of mutual
adaptation.

Refugees may change their tenure during this stage: however, the location and type
of the first permanent tenure is quite important and to a large extent impacts how this
mutual process of adaptation proceeds in the long-term. The location and type of the
first tenure of refugees adds all accompanying factors emanating from residential
permanency to the process of rebuilding and starting a settled life in their new
homeland.

A first point to their socialising with a stable neighbourhood of the host community, it
also impacts on prospects of community cohesion that develops out of the mutual
adaptation process of both refugees and other citizens. Ultimately this will determine
the extent with which foundations are laid for refugee inclusion as equal and active
members of the wider community. Understanding this complex process settlement
will be the subject matter of the second phase of this study. Here, our focus will be on
the initial and immediate conditions of refugee settlement following their move into
permanent housing.

For a large majority of refugees a move into permanent housing means securing
local authority or housing association tenancy. Private sector housing is out of reach
although its share of total rented dwellings of England is around 35%. Existing
systems of recording local authority tenancies dose not monitor lettings to refugees
and the Home Office does not seem to have a system that monitors the settlement
process of asylum seekers once they are granted leave to remain in the UK. In fact
no one agency is specifically responsible and or clams to be a solely agent of
overseeing the process of refugee settlement.

The only official system that monitors refugee permanent housing is the Continuous
Recording System (CORE) maintained by the National Housing Federation. In view
of this, the discussion in this section will focus on refugee housing in reporting
housing association properties. However, it must be noted that, except the actual
number of possible tenancies, refugee settlement condition in local authority housing
is not be expected to be significantly different. Hence, the situation observed by the
analysis in this section is likely to more or less approximate the state of refugee tenants in local authority properties.

The ‘General Needs New Lettings Log’ records new lettings of reporting HAs and at the end of September 2002, 1,212 HAs were actively reporting new tenancies as they happen. Discussions with staff working on the CORE system suggest that, new lettings by affiliates of the NHF are few and far between and the record may not capture tenancies with smaller HAs. Current records of the Housing Corporation show that, the number of operating HAs with a minimum of 250 units is about 1,500 and a large proportion of these HA do report to the CORE system. Hence, the CORE data is likely to cover most new HA lettings in England.

**Refugees in housing association properties**

The CORE system has registered a total of 158,900 housing association (HA) new lettings in 2001/02 and of these 820 or 0.5% were for refugees. As shown in Figure 1, the number of lettings to refugees has been rising slowly since 1998/99. Nevertheless, the proportion of lettings to refugees is still incredibly small.

If we assume that all tenants who succeeded to acquire tenancy in the last six years are still resident in the HA property, then by 2001/02 HA properties would have housed about 886,500 households with 1.6 million individual members. For the same period 0.35% of all new tenants occupying 3,370 units would be refugee households comprising 6901 individuals or 0.43% of the 1.6 million HA residents.

**Demography**

The age distribution of tenants in reporting HAs is shown in Figure 2. Reflecting the distribution in the wider community, in 2001/02 more than 75% of refugee tenants are in the age group of 18-38 years old. Lettings to women-headed refugee households averaged around 44% of new lettings to refugees during the last six years and during 1997/98 and 1998/99 it was around 50%.

On average 11% of annual new lettings were allocated to disabled households and the proportion that went to disabled refugees averaged 5%. Overall, allocations of HA permanent units for disabled households were risings rapidly since 2000, and in 2001/02 accounted for almost 17% of all new lettings. However, most likely due to the small share of disabled persons among the community, allocations of new lettings to disabled refugee household tends to be rather constant throughout the last six years.

**Household size**

Single households formed the largest group among HA new tenants, around 49% in 2001/02 - see Figure 3. Two and three person households formed about 25% and 14% respectively. While the share of two person refugee households was 12% smaller than all other HA tenants, households composed of four or more persons were higher among refugee tenants. However, this must be seen in light of the actual number of these households: by 2001/02 they formed about 10% of the 3,370 new lettings offered to refugee households throughout the last six years. All other
tenant households with four or more member formed around 7% of all HA tenants that secured their tenancy during the last six years.

Figure 4 shows trends in reporting HA lettings to households with four or more members. Clearly the proportion of all refugee households in this group has barely moved above 0.1% of all new lettings in the last 6 years. If anything, one may say refugee households are slower in catching up with the declining trend in the numbers of all other households with four or more members. The visibility of this group and the sensitivities it attracts are apparent. However, it must be noted that the total amount and trend of housing demand from this group of refugee households refutes all alarmist concerns.

**Household type**

Single adults are the biggest group among homeless people and from the 2001/02 CORE data, it appears that they were the largest beneficiaries and were allocated almost a third of all HA new lettings - see Figure 5. The situation is the same with refugees: single adults secured 47% of all 2001/02 new lettings to refugee households. The trend chart in Figure 6 also shows that, during the last six years, on average 40% new lettings to refugees went to single adults and their proportion was increasing in the last two years. That single adult refugees formed a large proportion of refugee households which secured HA tenancies is also not a surprise as they account for over 75% of the refugee community.

Compared to single parents and couples with children, couples without children seem to have secured a relatively small number of new lettings in all cases but disproportionately smaller among refugee couples.

Figure 6 shows trends in the distribution of HA new lettings among different types of refugee households. As opposed to single adults the number of allocations to all other types of refugee households either remained relatively the same or declined sharply. The declining trend is especially significant in the case of new lettings to refugee couple households without children - from 6% in 1996/97 to 2% in 2001/02.

In many ways the trend in allocation of new lettings among different categories of refugee households reflected their relative size within the wider refugee community. However, this positive trend must be viewed in light of the total number of new lettings being allocated to all refugee households (0.35%).

The total number of positive decisions during the last six years was about 68,700 and HA properties accounted around 33% of all social sector rented dwellings during 2001. If we assume that the relative size of new letting allocation to be more or less proportionate to the share of HA in the total social housing stock, then one would expect them to house a total of 20,000 refugee households during the last six years.

Reporting HAs to the CORE system account for over 75% of all associations with a minimum of 250 dwellings. Hence, it seems likely that total six years new lettings will roughly constitute around 55% fewer than the amount one can expect based on the relative of share of HA dwellings in the social sector.
Permanent homes - homelessness and previous tenure

Homelessness status

The CORE system monitors homelessness status in strictly legal terms. There are four categories of homelessness in the New Lettings Log recordings:

- **not homeless**: those who are homeless but are not referred by local authorities, i.e. their homelessness is not institutionally recognised
- **statutory homeless**: those qualifying according to the Homelessness Act and are formally accepted as a responsibility of local authorities for re-housing
- **non-statutory homeless**: the homeless and in priority need but are either intentionally homeless, have no local connection and or do not fall into any of the priority need categories.

Local authorities do also have acceptance policies based on a broader than the statutory definition of homelessness. Nevertheless, the CORE system’s guide advises strict adherence to the above legal classification of homelessness. This means data gathered based on this classification may not allow for an elaborate assessment of all categories of homelessness beyond those recognised by local authorities.

Interestingly, however, both the annual and trend data depicted in Figure 7 and 8 show that more than 80% of HAs’ new lettings were secured by the institutionally unrecognised but effectively homeless households. In 2001/02 the statutory homeless, i.e. local authority referred homeless accounted for a little over 10% while the non-statutory homeless and households accepted on grounds of the Children Act 1989 accounted 8% and 0.1% of all households securing a HA tenancy respectively. The six years trend depicted in Figure 8 suggests that this distribution of new HA tenancy among the different categories of homeless households has been implemented more or less consistently.

The case with tenancies offered to refugee households is quite different. Allocation of new lettings in 2001/02 and the trend during the last six years demonstrates that unlike all other tenants, a larger proportion of homeless refugee households were securing HA tenancy because they were statutory homeless. HA new lettings secured by the ‘not homeless’ and non-statutory homeless refugees constituted a total of 56% of new HA refugee tenancies.

However, while it is clear that most refugees do not statutorily qualify according to the priority needs criterion, it is encouraging to see that a large proportion of those securing HA permanent tenancies are statutorily homeless. At the same time over half of HA new lettings for refugees are to those who do not qualify as homeless according to the Homelessness Act.
On the one hand this may be good news since it could mean that both local authorities and HAs are employing their discretion to respond to the needs of refugee homelessness. On the other hand, it may be bad news if the number of new lettings to refugee homelessness by HAs and the number of referrals by local authorities, in both cases using their discretion, ultimately determines the chances of homeless refugee households in securing HA permanent tenancy.

Refugees may be facing a more restricted definition of need. Furthermore, this may also mean refugees waiting time in temporary accommodation is determined by this discretion and the factors that may impact on it at any one period in time. It is worth noting that the total number of new lettings secured by homeless refugees has remained between 0.3%-0.5% throughout the last six years.

In fact the trend depicted in Figure 8 shows a sharper fluctuation in the proportion of new lettings allocated to both the 'not-homeless', statutory and non-statutory homeless refugee households. Alongside this, it is worth noting that the slow rise in new lettings allocated to the 'not-homeless' and not statutory homeless refugees during the last three years has led to a 0.1% rise in the proportion of new HA lettings to refugee households.

Previous tenure

Figure 9 shows previous housing of households who secured HA permanent tenancy during 2001/02. The picture depicted indicates that for a large majority of refugee households, temporary accommodation of one form or another is the dominant route to permanent housing.

The share of refugees moving out of private rented housing is almost 10% lower than among all other households. This reflects the fact that only a few refugees can afford a private tenancy upon getting a positive decision on their asylum application. Nevertheless, considering that private sector rented dwellings constitute about 35% of total rented housing stock in England, the need to find ways of enabling refugees to access and maintain their tenancy in the private sector is clearly important.

While 5% new lettings went to households who had moved out of their own property, there were no refugee households in this group. This suggests that, although refugee owner-occupiers are few, once they manage to acquire their own housing they are more likely to maintain their ownership despite periodic hardships. Hence, the likelihood that they may need to move into social sector housing is very slim.

The length of homeless households’ stays in temporary accommodation is hardly monitored. However, the situation with refugees in supported housing suggests that the average length of stay is most likely to be two or more years. Accordingly, the cost both to refugees in terms of the duration it takes them to rebuild their life, and to the local community and economy, in terms of lost benefits from their contribution and costs accrued to support their stay in temporary accommodation, are likely to be high. The implication is that there is a strong economic and cost argument in support of an alternative housing-plus-refugee-settlement package.

The comparative trend depicted in Figure 10 vividly illustrates the same situation. Refugee households not only tend to sustain their ownership of housing property,
they also seem less inclined to switch and move between the different social sector landlords.

The share of refugee households coming from temporary accommodation averaged around 60% despite some fluctuation during the last six years. The rise in refugees moving into HA housing from rough sleeping - although comforting since means their homelessness is addressed - is also another factor strengthening the argument for a comprehensive housing settlement package.

**Type of previous housing**

The CORE system monitors the following three categories of previous housing of households securing new HA tenancy:

- **supported housing** – accommodation that also provides support and care, accounting for 5% or 7,250 households who secured a HA tenancy in 2001/02
- **institutional care** - hostels and residential homes forming 850 households or 0.5% of new HA tenants in 2001/02.
- **short life housing** – housing designated for temporary use and mostly scheduled for full-scale rehabilitation or demolition, contributing 3,660 or 2.3% new HA tenants in 2001/02.

During 2001/02, new HA tenant refugee households whose last accommodation was short life housing accounted for 13% of the total, 10% more than those among all other new HA tenants. The three years trend shown in Figure 11 depicts a steady but slow decline in the proportion of HA tenant refugee households moving in from short-life housing.
Permanent shared accommodation

During the six years since 1996/97 reporting HAs have been placing an annual average of 2,630 households in general needs accommodation with shared facilities like bathroom, WC or kitchen. As shown in Figure 12, the proportion of ‘permanent’ shared accommodation lettings to refugees is disproportionately higher throughout the period since 1996/97. Likewise, housing family refugee households is disproportionately higher than for all other family households. In fact, the trend is for their share to rise steadily as opposed to the tendency of decline in placements of other family households.

The CORE system does not monitor movements of households from shared general needs properties and it is difficult to gauge what happens once households are placed in this type of permanent housing. Nevertheless, the findings discussed above suggest that more and more refugee households are being housed in shared ‘permanent’ dwellings. This is really worrying since it may well mean prolonging the duration of refugee households’ stay in shared accommodation, by creating a sub-layer of temporary shared housing outside the transition and within the permanent stage of refugee housing.

Tenancy in permanent homes

Data on tenancy-type of new lettings by reporting HAs shows that assured tenancies were the dominant form and accounted around 90% of total new lettings throughout the last six years. The proportion of refugee households with assured tenancies also averaged around 85%.

Some variation is depicted in other forms of tenancies and these are illustrated in Figure 13. Until 1998/89 disproportionately more refugee new tenants seem to have taken assured short hold tenancies compared to all other new tenants. Since 2000 these variations seems to have transferred into starter tenancies. The latter are a form of assured shorthold tenancies with the only difference that the probationary period is capped at an initial 12 months after which, if the tenancy is not ended, they are converted into assured tenancies. The movement of households from assured shorthold or starter tenancies is hardly monitored or if it is, information is not readily available. However, the variations depicted regarding refugees assured short-term tenancies clearly demand further consideration.
Referral agencies

During 2001/02 reporting HA processed a total of 158,900 lettings. Of this total over
40% were to households referred by local authorities and statutory agencies, about
38% to direct applicants, 19% to internal HA transfers and the HOMES mobility
scheme, and the rest to those referred by the voluntary sector and other agencies.

In 2001/02 local authorities and statutory agencies referred almost 70% of refugee
households who secured HA tenancies. Refugee households which had directly
applied and were on reporting HAs' waiting lists, formed 18% of those who secured
new lettings from HAs. The share of voluntary sector referred refugee households
was only 7%. However, voluntary agency referral seems to have been more helpful
in the case of refugees since it secured only 1% of new tenancies for all other
households during the same year.

Figure 14 shows trends in the role of referring agencies in securing tenancies from
reporting HAs. Overall, referrals by local authority and statutory agencies
consistently secured HA lettings for more than 40% of households. However, their
role tends to slowly decline especially since 1998/99, and during the six years under
consideration its share of new lettings has decreased by 7%. This was the case with
new HA tenancies secured by all other households.

The picture is exactly the opposite with regard to new HA lettings to refugee
households. To start with, refugee households' likelihood of securing HA tenancies
largely depends on referral from local authorities and statutory agencies. Compared
to all other households, on average 23% more of new lettings to refugee households
are based on local authority and statutory agency referrals and its share shows a
stable but slow tendency to rise. The implication is that allocation of HA new lettings
to refugee is disproportionately highly controlled by LA.

With regard to voluntary agency referrals, Figure 14 shows that their overall role has
been minimal and declining. The decline in successful voluntary sector referral of
refugee households is quite high compared to all other households: from 17% to 7%
and from 2% to 1% respectively during 1996/7-2001/02.

This suggests that changes on homelessness and immigration during this period may
well have some implication on referral arrangements of voluntary agencies.
Considering the significance of local authority referrals in securing HA tenancy by
refugees, it may also be the case that factors influencing this outcome might have
some implication to this effect.

In the light of current Government interest in the role of the voluntary sector and the
latter’s unparalleled strength in providing a grass roots settlement support service to
refugee communities, the observed decline in its role in referring for housing, calls for
reappraisal to bring it to the level matching its role in the process of refugee
settlement.
Fact sheet 18:
Permanent homes: regional distribution

Whether it is to do with number and rate of acquiring new properties or due to turnover, HA potential to generate new dwellings seems to be higher in Greater London, South East and the North West. In a second group are associations in West Midlands, East England, South West and East Midlands. The lowest potential for generating new units seems to be among HAs in the North East. Despite some small fluctuations, the trend depicted in Figure 15 shows that this was the case throughout the last six years.

Figure 15 also shows trends in the number of HAs providing new tenancies to refugee households. The following main trends can be seen:

- Evidently in the regions where HAs have generated more units, more units have been offered to refugee households.
- New lettings to refugees were small relative to the number of total units made available by HAs in the South West. Despite the relatively smaller potential in generating new units, HAs in the North East were offering on average 2% more new tenancies to refugees than those in the South West.
- Although the number of HAs in South East generating new units for letting is comparable to those in Greater London, the number that offers tenancy to refugees was smaller by around 30%. In the South East, the number of HA offering tenancies to refugees was increasing between 1997 and 2000 and since then it was declining annually by over 2%.
- Although the number of HAs providing new tenancy to refugees continued to be the highest among those in Greater London, their share shows a sharp tendency to decline, from 52% in 1996/97 to 36% in 2001/02.

It seems that the more or less static potential of Greater London’s HAs to generate new units and increases in demand are leading some refugees to access HA tenancies elsewhere outside Greater London. This is depicted in Figure 16, which shows trends in regional location of refugees who secured HA tenancies in England. The proportion of refugee households that secured HA tenancies in Greater London has declined by over 25% during the last six years. The main regions where growth is taking place are West Midlands and the North West.

These trends predate the introduction of government dispersal policy and hence, although one cannot discount its role especially during 2001/02, the trend depicted during the last six years cannot be attributed to its implementation. Refugees have been dispersing themselves long before forced dispersal to areas where they perceived their
chances of securing housing are relatively better. This, and the findings on transitional housing and the drift back by many who are dispersed by the NASS, suggest that a planned and co-ordinated policy that facilitates a voluntary and choice-based dispersal better addresses any concerns about the regional pattern of refugee settlement.

To put matters into a real perspective, it must also be noted that, any housing pressure-led argument for dispersing refugees needs to recognise the impact of households moving into England from elsewhere in the UK. The CORE system data clearly shows that housing pressure generated by citizens migrating into England is much higher than that arising due to refugee settlement. In 2001/02 households that secured HA tenancy and whose previous location was outside England were 17% higher than refugee households and on average they were higher by about 28% throughout the last six years.
Fact sheet 19:
Permanent housing
- economic status

Unemployment among all those securing HA tenancies is much higher than the national average. 2001/02 unemployment levels among refugees was 30% higher than all other new HA tenants. The proportion of those who are employed, both full-time and part-time, is smaller by 13% and the variation is 15% in full-time and 2% in part-time employment.

The number of households looking after a family member and hence, not seeking work was much higher among refugee households. However, they constituted only 231 households or 0.7% of all tenants who were not seeking employment for the same reason.

Like those who live in supported housing, refugee tenants seem to be more eager to capitalise on all available means and improve their employability. The proportion who are students and those in some from of training and government New Deal programme was three to four times higher among refugees than those among all other HA tenants. As shown in Figure 17, the relative propensity of refugee households to improve their employability appears to have been constantly higher during the last six years.

Trends in employment status of HA tenants are shown in Figure 18. Despite some fluctuation in some years, during the last six years employment levels have been improving among all tenants of reporting HAs. However, the increase in the proportion of employed households among other tenants has been much faster than those among refugee tenants: from 21% to 30% as opposed from 7% to 10% respectively. While most increases among all other tenants was by those who are in full-time employment, among refugee households the tendency has been an increase in those who are part-time employed.

The proportion of unemployed tenants declined from 30% to 16% among all other HA tenants. In the case of refugee tenants the decrease was from 56% to 49%, thus leaving unemployment levels among refugees three times more than all other households. Since the proportion of the retired tends to decline among refugee tenants and the proportion of those reported unemployed due to sickness or disability remains about 4%, it can be argued that unemployment levels among the economically active refugees has remained disproportionately high during the last six years.
The number of those who are not seeking work and are looking after family members has been increasing among all tenants. However, the increase has been much faster among refugee tenants. It is not surprising that there is a rapid increase in the number of these refugee tenants since single mothers and families with children are the only group of refugee communities that can readily qualify for referral and acceptance for social sector tenancies.

The next issue we examined in association to refugee households economic security is the state of weekly incomes and income sources of HA tenants. Figure 19 shows weekly income of tenants who secured HA tenancy during 2001/02. The picture that emerges suggests that getting into the stage of securing permanent housing has not been accompanied with a parallel improvement in the economic well being of refugee households. The proportion that were living on a weekly income of up to £60 was almost 30% higher among refugee tenants than it the case with those among all other tenants. The proportion income between £60-100 weekly was almost 10% lower than those among all other tenants. The relative share of refugee households within the over £200 income bracket has been 17% lower than those among all other tenants. This may mean there is a tendency for refugee households to be trapped in the weekly income of £100-200 once they manage to escape lower income brackets.

Figure 20 depicts trends in weekly income of reporting HA tenants and it shows that there is a higher likely hood of such an entrapment among refugee households. The pace with which the proportion of refugee tenants in the over £200 income bracket increases tends to be slower compared to the case among all other tenants. Furthermore, the proportion of refugee tenants living on a weekly income of up to £60 has been consistently higher, on average 20% higher, and it shows a slow but steady increase. In the case of all other tenants, the trend is a slow but steady decline.

This depressing picture of refugee households’ weekly income is further amplified by the trend in average incomes depicted in Figure 21. It is apparent that refugees are trapped around the £100 weekly income bracket and generally to live on relatively smaller incomes.

Moving to sources of income, Figure 22 captures the patterns during the last three years. It appears that over 80% of refugee households were either wholly of partly dependent on benefits, over 20% higher than the case with those among all other tenants. Furthermore, the proportion that does not depend on benefits was consistently lower by an average of 12% compared to those among all other tenants. The actual number of refugee households among all tenants that are wholly or partly dependent on benefit was no more than 0.5%. Nevertheless, considering that most refugee are young and able bodied individuals, come with qualifications and work experience and they appear to be more eager to improve their employability, there is a strong economic and cost argument to find an alternative housing model for the settlement of refugee communities.
all the policy documents, government briefings and newspaper articles about refugees and migration the refugees voice is rarely heard. Below are a few statements recorded by Amnesty International and the UNHCR that remind us again why upholding the UN conventions on taking in and caring for refugees matter so much. Refugees speak and show the vivid fullness of their experience, the brutality, terror, and desolation. Stereotypes dissolve under the impact of examples.

“My friend Mohammad died last winter,” says Rahmuddin, an 11-year-old Afghan boy, with a grave face. “It was raining and the weather was so cold. Many other children died in the neighbourhood.”

Rahmuddin, like hundreds of other internally displaced children in Afghanistan, resides in an old tent in the camp. He walks barefoot and wears old clothes. Sometimes, he does not eat for a day, and he stopped going to school a long time ago.

“There was always a moment when I could not feel any more pain... then they would put matches between my toes, light them and see whether I still reacted.”

This young man deserted from the Iraqi army and narrowly escaped execution. He sought refuge in the Netherlands. Today he is studying engineering and putting back together the pieces of his shattered life.

“I cannot go back as I fear that my children and I may be kidnapped or killed.”

Mariam Azimi, a 35-year-old Afghani women’s activist, hiding in a church in Norway in mid-1996. She was terrified of being sent back to Pakistan, where she originally sought refuge, because women who share her views have been assassinated in the refugee camps by Afghan mad groups. Norway rejected her asylum application and was intending to deport her to Pakistan, saying she should claim asylum there.

“My story did not interest the men from the ministry, they did not want to know. I was getting very angry because I simply had enough of being treated like a criminal.”

A refugee from the former Yugoslavia speaking of his experiences in Ireland.
'Who breaks an important promise
Who does not keep his word
He also breaks his consciousness
And breaks his happiness.'

Gjergj Komnino, a 76-year-old Albanian, wrote this poem in Italy while awaiting a decision on his asylum claim. He died in 1996 before that decision was made. He had spent 25 years in an Albanian jail for "anti-communist crimes".

After one week in Sweden, I was returned to Turkey"
Assam fled Iran after the authorities summoned her for interrogation. She knew she would be tortured or killed if she went, and escaped to Sweden via Turkey. The Swedish authorities reached international refugee law by sending her back to Turkey, saying she should have applied for asylum there, even though Turkey was not a "safe third country" for Assam.

I was shocked and upset because I hadn't expected to get a reception like that"
A Turkish refugee and former prisoner of conscience describing his reaction when he was made to strip by an immigration official in Sweden.

I know I am a Palestinian and a stranger to this society. But I start to feel that I belong to his society and it belongs to me."
One refugee fled persecution in Kuwait, the country of his birth, after the 1991 Gulf War. As a Palestinian, he had no "home" to return to. After a long legal battle, Japan eventually granted him refugee status in 1995.

I shouted and cried for help when they were kicking me with their boots"
When Goma Sapkota was released from her torture three days later, she immediately fled hutan. She now lives in a refugee camp in eastern Nepal.

I ran from the war and came to Ghana. But I am old. I can't walk. I can't run. I have forgotten how to smile."
Mary Dunawoogy fled the civil war in Liberia in 1993. She is now 93 years old and is waiting eagerly for the day she can return home.

I prefer you do not use my name and how I was arrested or any information that allows the regime to identify me. After this time, my name is Neina."
"Neina" fled Iran in 1994 after she had been arrested for non-violent political activities. She was tortured in Tehran's infamous Evin Prison. She is a recognized refugee in the Netherlands.
These quotes were taken from Amnesty International at http://www.amnesty.org/aylib/ntcam/refugee/briefing/m) and UNICEF at http://www.unicef.org/noteworthy/afghanistan/humasst/story1.htm.

Campsfield House, where refugees are held near Oxford, is nothing like a house - it is a rison at the end of a leafy lane. The little gestures of contempt and humiliation rankle as deeply as the confinement. Images constantly took me back to South Africa. The long queue forced to wait outside the gigantic immigration and nationality department at roydon brought back childhood memories of the pass office in Johannesburg.' Beverley Naidoo, prizewinning children's author, is reminded of apartheid South Africa by our eatment of refugees (The submerged world in our midst, Guardian, Monday July 16, 2001).

The very different quotes from economic migrants working in the UK below demonstrate the other reasons why people come to the UK.

Ve come here for work, not to live on handouts' (Ben Summerskill Sunday April 29, 2001, Guardian)

A major study of illegal immigrants has found that almost all of them come to Britain with the intention of finding work, contrary to the popular image of new arrivals in search of generous benefits. 'Not a single illegal immigrant we examined thought that benefits was a reason for coming to Britain,' said Professor Bill Jordan of Exeter University, who carried out the government-funded project. 'A key reason people gave for coming here was that they expected to be able to work,' said Jordan, whose work was based on interviews with more than 150 illegal immigrants. 'It's a reflection of our economic conditions.'

Asylum seekers, who are registered on arrival, are largely prevented from working. But illegal immigrants find work, the survey discovered, because they are highly motivated, presentable and - above all - prepared to accept low pay. Many were also better educated than their British counterparts. Half the immigrant workers doing manual jobs were graduates or had diplomas.

Nick Hardwick, director of the Refugee Council, said: 'This research is very significant. It absolutely destroys the myth that people are coming here for a cushy life on benefits.' 'Hamid', from Turkey, works as a kitchen porter in a restaurant in London's West End. Instead of coming to Britain hidden in the back of a lorry, the popular view of an illegal migrant, he arrived as a tourist four years ago and then outstayed his visa. He earns £3.50 an hour, well below the minimum wage and works six 10-hour shifts every week. 'My employer says that he cannot get British people to do the work,' said the 24-year-old. 'I only ever expected to work hard if I came here. No one ever mentioned benefits or housing and I have not applied for them. Britain is a freer country than Turkey and I can work. That
is why I came.' He shares a two-bedroom flat with five other men. They pay the rent of £300 a week in cash.

'One reason that these people do not get identified is that our society is open and deregulated,' said Jordan. 'There are very few internal controls and there is a very good chance that you will avoid detection in any sphere.

'The benefits regime, for so long a point of political controversy, simply appears to be irrelevant,' said Jordan. 'If people can get work in the shadow economy, they don't encounter the benefits system at all.'

The only use of benefits detected by researchers was either when British co-workers sold an immigrant a national insurance number, or when immigrants married a Briton.

Experts believe that there may be up to a quarter of a million illegal immigrants in Britain. Most recent research into the attitudes of immigrants to Britain has focused on the views of asylum seekers because they are registered and easily identifiable. Jordan and his colleagues, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, found their respondents through community networks and also by joining workplace 'raids' carried out by the Immigration Service.
Figure 1: Dispersal and Regional Refugee Settlement Demand and Geodemographics, 2001

- Percent Population
- Potential Refugee per 1000 Citizens
- Percent Refugee Sett. Demand
- Population per Sq. km '00
- Net migration

Figure 2: Dispersal, Refugee Settlement Demand and Regional Economic Environment 2001

- Percent Refugee Sett. Demand
- Percent Econ. Inactive
- Percent Unemployed
- Percent Unfilled Job Vacancies
**Figure 3: Dispersal, Refugee Settlement Demand and Regional Social Environment 2001**

- Percent Refugee Sett. Demand
- Percent Racist Incidents
- Percent Ethnic Population

**Figure 4: Housing Demand, Active Stock and Refugee Settlement Demand by Region, 2001**

- Percent Refugee Sett. Demand
- Percent Priority Homeless
- Percent Total Hous. Stock
- Percent Housing Stock - Private
- Percent Housing Stock- LA
- Percent Housing Stock- RSL
Figure 5: Housing Demand, Vacant Stock and Refugee Settlement Demand by Region, 2001

Figure 6: Dispersal and Regional Cost of Refugee Settlement, 2000/01
Figure 1: Supported Housing Schemes and Refugee Placement in England Regions, Sept. 2002

- Percent Schemes
- Percent Schemes with Refugees
- Percent Units
- Percent Units with Refugees
Figure 4: Types of Supported Housing Schemes, 2001/02

- Sheltered Housing
- Foyer
- Direct Access hostel
- Other Supported housing
- Unknown
- All schemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme Type</th>
<th>Percent Schemes</th>
<th>Percent Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered Housing</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foyer</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Access hostel</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Supported housing</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All schemes</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accommodating Refugees

- Self-contained flat
- Self-contained with comm. Facility
- Shared Flat
- Shared house/hostel
- Direct access hostel
- Bungalow
- Self contained house
- Not Known

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme Type</th>
<th>Percent Schemes</th>
<th>Percent Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-contained flat</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-contained with comm. Facility</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Flat</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared house/hostel</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct access hostel</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungalow</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self contained house</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Known</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6: Refugees and Expected Stay in Supported Housing, September 2002

Figure 7: Supported Housing and their Services for Refugees, September 2002
Figure 2: Trends in Age distribution of Refugees in supported Housing, 1996/97 - 2001/02

Figure 3: Trends in Homelessness in Supported Housing, 1996/97 - 2001/02
Figure 8: State of Employment Among Refugees in Supported Housing, 2001/02

Figure 9: Weekly Earnings of People in Supported Housing, 2001/02

Figure 10: Trends in Weekly Income of Refugees in Supported Housing, 1996-2001/02
Figure 11: Previous Housing of Households in Supported Housing, 2001/02

Figure 12: Previous Housing of Refugees in Supported Housing, 1996/97-2001/02
Figure 13: Agencies Referring Homeless Households into Supported Housing, 2001/02

Figure 14: Trends in Agencies Referring Refugees into Supported Housing, 1996/97-2001/02
Figure 15: Previous Regional Location of Households in Supported Housing, 2001/02

Figure 16: Previous Location of Refugees in Supported Housing, 1996/97-2001/02
Fact sheet 15: Charts

Figure 1: Trend in Tenancy Rate of Households in Housing Association Property 1998/99-2001/02

Figure 2: Age Distribution of HA Tenants, 2001/02

Figure 3: Household Size of HA Tenants, 2001/02
Figure 4: Trends in Number of HA New Lettings to Households With Four or More Members, 1996/97-2001/02

Figure 5: Distribution of HA New Lettings by Household Type, 2001/02

Figure 6: Trend in Distribution of HA New Lettings to Refugees by Household Type, 1996/97-2001/02
Figure 10: Trend in Previous tenure of New HA Tenant Households, 1996/97-2001/02

Figure 11: Trend in Previous Housing of New HA Tenant Households 1998/99-2001/02
**Figure 12:** Trend in HA New Lettings of Shared General Needs Housing by Household Type and Size, 1996/97-2001/02

**Figure 13:** Trends in Tenancy Type of HA Tenant Households, 1996/97-2001/02
Figure 14: Trend in Referring Agencies for HA Tenancy, 1996/97-2001/02

- All other new HA tenants
- New Refugee HA tenants

Referring Agencies:
- Local Auth. Statutory agency
- Voluntary Agency
- Self-referral
- Housing Ass't Home mobility
- Other

Yearly Data:
- 1996/97
- 1997/98
- 1998/99
- 1999/2000
- 2000/01
- 2001/02
Figure 15: Trends in Regional Distribution of HAs Reporting New Lettings and those Providing Tenancy to Refugees, 1996/97-2001/02

Figure 16: Trend in Regional Distribution of New HA Tenant Refugee Households 1996/97-2001/02
Figure 17: Employment Status of New HA Tenant Households, 2001/02

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- On Gov. training
- Unemployed
- Student
- Sick or disabled
- Home/not seeking work
- Retired

Figure 18: Trend in Employment Status of New HA Tenant Households, 1996/7-2001/02

Figure 19: Weekly Earnings of HA Tenant Households, 2001/02

- Up to £60
- £60 - 100
- £100 - 200
- Over £200
Figure 20: Trends in weekly income of HA Tenant Households, 1996/97-2001/02

Figure 21: Trends in Average Weekly Income of HA Tenant Households, 1996/97-2001/02

Figure 22: Trends in Benefit Dependency of HA Tenant Households, 1996/97-2001/02