

BREAKING: New data shows compensation scheme is failing Windrush generation on eve of 75th anniversary

Under embargo until 00.01 on Wednesday 21 June

- **Only 8 out of 20 people surveyed by Praxis¹ have been able to apply to the Windrush Compensation Scheme since it was launched in April 2019;**
- **Just 3 of the 20 have received compensation in this time.**
- **Praxis continues to receive ‘Windrush’ referrals from homelessness services - people who are struggling to prove their rights to basic services let alone compensation.**
- **Windrush drove many people into long-term homelessness and they face a legacy of vulnerabilities including severe mental and physical health challenges.**

The shockingly low number of people who have been able to access compensation through the Windrush Compensation Scheme is underlined today through new data from human rights charity Praxis, ahead of the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush.

A survey of Praxis’ current and former clients thought to be eligible for compensation as victims of the Windrush scandal highlights the low numbers who are actually able to obtain recompense.

It has taken more than a year to get satisfactory offers for all of those who have applied bar one – for most, the clock is still ticking.

The compensation scheme was a key plank of the Government’s plan to right the wrongs of the scandal.

Praxis’ data underlines official Home Office statistics, which indicate that less than half of those thought to be eligible have applied for compensation and just 11% have actually received compensation (Home Office, March 2023)

Those surveyed by Praxis have not applied for compensation because they didn’t know they could, or didn’t know how to. Some worry that, although they have experienced substantial losses as a result of the scandal, they don’t have enough evidence to meet the Home Office’s high burden of proof. Still others are facing health issues that prevent them from engaging with this system entirely.

Sally Daghlian, Praxis’ CEO, had this to say: *“This compensation scheme only adds serious insult to serious injury for those whose lives have been devastated by the Windrush scandal.*

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the department that shredded thousands of lives is now failing at compensating its victims for the hardship they had to endure.

¹ Praxis surveyed 20 current and former clients about their experiences of the compensation scheme between 15 May and 15 June 2023. These are a sample of the approximately 120 people affected by the Windrush scandal who, starting from 2015, Praxis supported in obtaining vital documents proving their right to work, rent, have a bank account, use the NHS and access other vital support. The majority of these individuals had become street homeless as a result of the scandal, or were in otherwise very vulnerable circumstances, including facing severe mental health issues, when they first came to Praxis. Although we supported them in regularizing their status, we did not have the capacity or expertise to support people with applications for compensation.

The compensation scheme should be removed from the hands of the Home Office and managed by an independent body working closely with the communities affected, providing a simplified and speedy process with expert, independent representation available for claimants.”

Fitzroy Maynard, a victim of the scandal whose compensation claim has been pending for years, had this to say: *“Every time the Home Office asks for evidence, I have to relive the trauma they put me through. It’s so painful to revisit those memories time and time again.*

The Home Office should never have been put in charge to look after the compensation scheme themselves They should stop taking so long in processing claims - it feels that they have no intention to pay people their full due, and that they just want to wear us down. This is what is happening with me, after so many years I am disheartened, but I am still going to fight.”

Fitzroy came to the UK in 1980 from Antigua to join his family. Yet after living and working here for decades, when he lost his job he struggled to find new employment because he couldn’t prove that he had a right to live and work in the UK. A few months later, his benefits were also stopped.

Left with no support, in late 2007 Fitzroy became homeless. He was forced to resort to sofa surfing, and even living on the streets at times, for more than a decade. During this time he was the main carer for his young daughter after his daughter’s mother became severely ill.

In 2018, Praxis helped him to obtain the documentation he needed to access employment and support. Fitzroy and his daughter are now living in a flat provided by the council, but it is in a state of serious disrepair.

With the help of a solicitor he was able to apply for compensation in 2020, but despite the significant losses and hardships he faced as a direct result of the Windrush scandal, he didn’t hear anything from the Home Office for nearly one year.

In 2021, around one year after submitting his claim, [he launched a legal action against the Home Office for the protracted delays in processing his and other claimants’ applications](#). Since then, he has received an offer of compensation, but it falls significantly short of compensating him for all the hardship he has gone through - including losing years of wages. He is currently in the process of appealing against this offer.

Note to Editors

1 – Praxis is a human rights charity. For 40 years we have supported people who have made the UK their home with immigration advice, peer support and campaigning. We use the evidence from our frontline work to influence change so that all people in the UK can live in safety and dignity. In 2018 we played a key role in uncovering the Windrush scandal.

For any questions or to arrange interviews please contact:

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