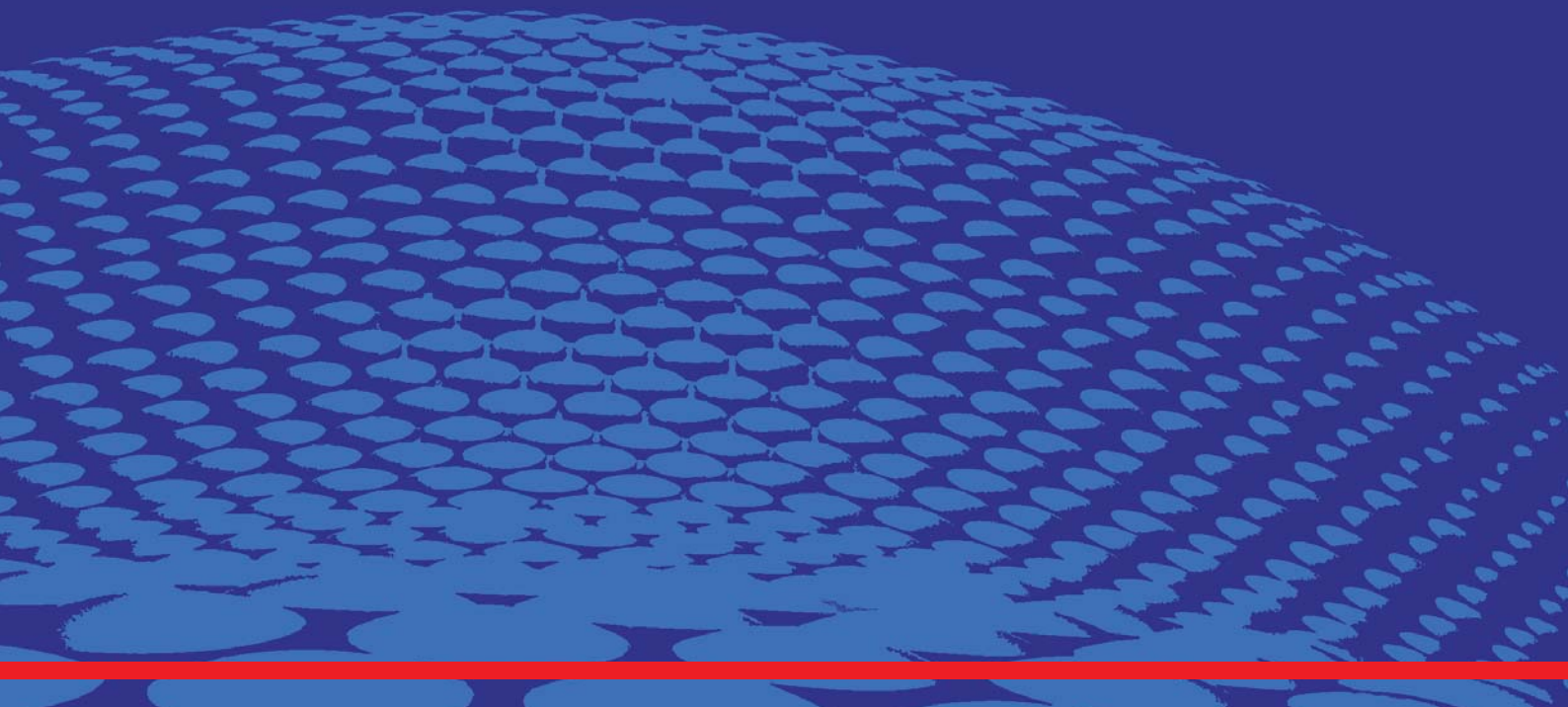


# Welcome to Birmingham and Solihull

Information for Asylum Seekers







# Welcome to Birmingham and Solihull

Birmingham is a city based in the West Midlands of the United Kingdom. The city has a population of around 1,050,000 people. It has a long history of migration to support its growth in industry and a proud tradition of welcoming people to the city.

Birmingham is a diverse city, with residents from a range of national, ethnic and religious backgrounds. The majority of Birmingham residents are White British. There are a large number of immigrants and refugees who have settled in Birmingham. They are Pakistani, Indian, Afro-Caribbean, White Irish, Bangladesh, Somali, and Kurdish.

In 2010, Birmingham will be the first UK city where non-white British will be the majority. The early refugee settlers in Birmingham were Jews and Polish. Later on Refugee settlers came from Pakistan and India and settled in Birmingham.

Solihull is said to be "Town in a country". Its residents are said to enjoy country life in a city. Solihull is famous for its beautiful villages, parks and gardens. Land Rover car factory is located in Solihull. Compared to Birmingham, Solihull has much less ethnic minorities and refugees.

Birmingham and Solihull welcome asylum seekers from many different countries.

The purpose of this pack is to make you aware of:-

- General information about the asylum process that you are going through at the moment
- Mainstream Service providers that are based locally and can help you. This includes their contact details
- Community organisations that could help you develop a network of contacts based in Birmingham
- A basic understanding of your entitlements

This information is intended to provide you with essential knowledge and help you to live and settle in your new home in Birmingham and Solihull.

The Transnational Partnership "Concentus" contributed to the development of this Welcome Pack. This partnership consisted of four transnational partners: Development Partnership (DP) Bridge, Berlin, Germany; DP Inclusion Refugees Network, Rome, Italy; DP cultural Adaptation, Warsaw, Poland and DP Aspire, Birmingham, UK.

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# Asylum Process



**In the United Kingdom, the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) of the Home Office is responsible for assessing and granting asylum.**

## HOW CAN I APPLY FOR ASYLUM?

You can apply for asylum:

- To the immigration officer at the airport, seaport or point of arrival
- If you entered the country legally or illegally you must apply in person to the nearest Border and Immigration Agency office

It is very important that you apply for asylum as soon as possible. This may affect the decision of your application for asylum.

As soon as you contact the BIA, your case will be routed to asylum teams via Liverpool and Croydon asylum support units. This will happen on “Day 1” of your application.

Within one to two days an officer from BIA will be assigned to you. This officer is called your “Case Owner”. He or she will be responsible for your asylum application and support you from start to finish.

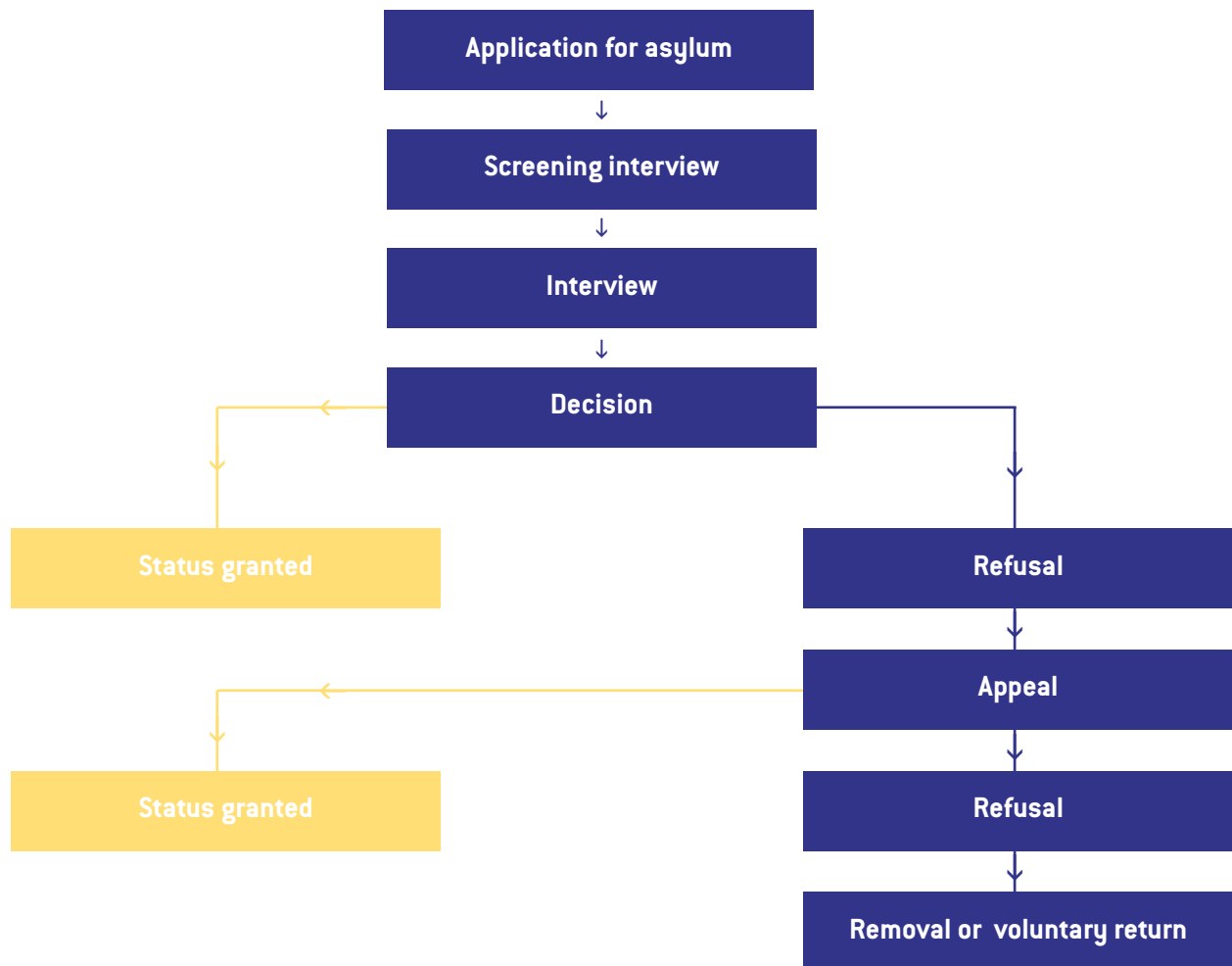
Within two days and before you meet your Case Owners you will be interviewed so that they establish your identity. Detailed questions and personal information is asked about how you arrived in the UK. At this time you will not be asked detailed questions about why you are applying for asylum. All dependents shall accompany you at this stage to include them in your application. Finger printing and photos will be taken at this stage. An interpreter will be arranged for this meeting. After this you will receive what is called an Application Registration Card (ARC).

This card will contain your personal details and photo. You need to present this card to any services you want to access and you have to present it at any time you visit your Case Owner. If you lose your ARC it is very important that you inform your Case Owner immediately and also report it to the police. Get from the police station proof that you reported the lost card. This is called a Crime Reference Number.

Your Case Owner will arrange legal advice for you by day 10 of your application for asylum. On Day 15 of your application you will undergo a substantial interview of your claim. You will be asked detailed questions about why you are applying for asylum. Applicants may bring legal representation to this interview if they wish. An interpreter is provided if necessary. On day 20 from your initial application for asylum you will receive a decision about your asylum application served by your Case Owner. This decision will be that you either get “Grant of asylum”, you may get refugee status, humanitarian protection, discretionary leave or ‘refusal of asylum’.

If you receive refusal of Asylum your Case Owner will give you details of any appeal rights and time limits. Asylum seekers may be legally represented during an appeal. Your solicitor will help you to lodge your appeal on time.

If your asylum appeal is exhausted or dismissed, then your asylum support will be terminated. At this stage you have to consider voluntary return or Section 4 support.



### WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CASE OWNER?

A Case Owner is the main contact for an asylum applicant and their dependents. The Case Owner responsibilities include:

- Interviewing the asylum seeker
- Making the asylum decision
- Presenting any appeals
- Providing and managing support and on going contact with the asylum applicant
- Asylum seekers to report to them as directed.
- Organising voluntary return or removal in case of negative decision
- In case of positive decision the integration of the asylum seeker into the UK

### WHAT IS VOLUNTARY RETURN?

Voluntary return is if you decide to leave the United Kingdom at any time and during any stage of your asylum application. You can either arrange your own travel to leave the United Kingdom or may seek assistance and money to go back. If you want to register for voluntary return, contact Wolverhampton Asylum and Refugee Support on telephone 01902 311554.

### WHAT IS INTEGRATION?

If you are given a positive decision to remain in the United Kingdom you have the right as any UK citizen to access all services provided by the government such as education, housing and health. You also have responsibilities as a UK citizen to abide by all laws and regulations and be a responsible person. Integration is new and existing residents adapting to each other

### ARE YOU UNHAPPY WITH YOUR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE?

If you are unhappy with your legal representative and feel that they have represented you badly you can make a complaint to the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner. Phone 0845 0000046 or visit their website at [www.oisc.gov.uk](http://www.oisc.gov.uk). Check that your lawyer is OISC registered.

### WHAT IF I GET A NEGATIVE DECISION?

If you are refused leave to remain in the UK, you should seek legal advice immediately from your solicitor. There are options for fresh representations, judicial review etc. ASIRT runs a weekly drop-in session on a Thursday in which you can get advice and look at the possibility of making further representation on your asylum application. At this session you can get a hot meal and collect a food parcel. Contact ASIRT on Telephone: 0121 772 6700

# British Culture

**The majority of British people are reserved in manner and speech. Neighbours greet each other when they meet in the street by saying 'Good Morning'. They are famous for their politeness in using the words 'please', 'thank you' or 'excuse me' frequently.**

Do not get offended if a British person addresses you using the following words: dear, love, flower, mate, son, etc. British people usually shake hands when they meet.

When a British person is invited in someone else's home, they usually take with them a gift such as a flower, a bottle of wine or chocolate.

## RELIGION:

The official religion of England is Christianity. England has a diverse society, where everyone has the right to religious freedom. If you want to have a place to practice your faith call any of the Refugee Community Organisations.

## CULTURE:

The UK is a country where you can have and practice your culture. A good example of the practice of other cultures in the UK is the Refugee Week in June of every year where all refugees participate in an event at Victoria Square in Birmingham where they demonstrate their culture and folklore dances. Also there is a Notting Hill Carnival where Caribbean culture is celebrated. Many cultural celebrations take place in Birmingham including Summer Melas, Black History Month, Frankfurt Christmas market and Eid. Refugee community organisations support the celebration of important cultural events such as Afghan/Kurdish New Year (Nowruz), Albanian Flag Day and Ethiopian Millennium.

## DO:

- Stand in a line or queue for example at a bus stop and in the supermarket
- Treat women in the UK with the same respect and equality as men

## DO NOT:

- Litter the street
- Greet people you do not know well with a kiss

**There are many churches, mosques, synagogues and Hindu temples in Birmingham and Solihull**

**The main religious networks in Birmingham and Solihull include the following:-**

### Birmingham Churches Together

All Saints House, 172 Herbert Road, Small Heath

Birmingham, B10 0PR

Telephone 0121 766 5522

The office is open 9.00am-4.00pm Monday to Friday

### Birmingham Central Mosque

180 Belgrave Middleway, Highgate. Birmingham, B12 0XS

Telephone 0121 446 4157

[www.centralmosque.org.uk](http://www.centralmosque.org.uk)

### Birmingham Central Synagogue

133 Pershore Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7PA

Telephone 0121 440 4044

### Sri Dashmesh Sikh Temple

305 Wheeler Street, Lozells, Birmingham, B19 2EU

Telephone 0121 523 6059

### Solihull and District Hebrew Congregation

3 Monastery Drive, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 1DW

Telephone and fax 0121 706 8736



# Legal Assistance

**In the UK a solicitor charges hourly rates to give legal advice, assistance or representation at court to anyone. The government pays the solicitors to give legal advice, assistance and court representation for Asylum Seekers. The solicitors get their money from what is called “Legal Aid”.**

The Legal Aid, paid by government to your solicitor, is limited to a number of hours to prepare with you your case and to represent you at court if necessary. If you exhaust your legal aid hours the solicitor may request from you to personally pay for any extra work.

It is very important that you contact your solicitor if you change addresses or telephones. It is also advisable to contact your solicitor regularly. If you receive any letters from the Home Office contact your solicitor immediately. Usually the Home Office will give you time to send a reply or send additional information as requested. You may lose your case if you do not reply on time.

If you receive a letter try to understand what is required from you or what it is for. Take the letter to someone who can translate it for you. You can seek translation or interpretation services from any Refugee Community Organisations or One Stop Shops.

If you need a solicitor or want to change your solicitor, contact your case owner or any voluntary organisations in this Welcome Pack.

Any legal advice you get should be from a solicitor or an advisor from an organisation registered with the Office of the Integration Services Commission (OISC). Any organisation registered with OISC shall display the OISC logo.

You can also contact the Office of Immigration Services Commission (OISC) for the contact details of approved organisations who can give you advice about your asylum application and assistance on telephone 08450000046 or you can visit their website on [www.oisc.gov.uk](http://www.oisc.gov.uk)



For enquiries regarding Asylum applications call the Asylum Support Customer Contact Centre on telephone: 0845 602 1739. They are open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 9.00pm

## Helpful organisations:

**Refugee Legal Centre**  
King Edward House, 5th Floor,  
135a New Street,  
Birmingham, B2 4QJ  
Tel: 0121 644 5570  
Fax: 0121 6445571

**Immigration Advisory Service**  
King Edward House,  
135a New Street,  
Birmingham B2 4QJ  
Tel.: 0121 616 3540  
Email: [robina.shah@iasuk.org](mailto:robina.shah@iasuk.org)

**Asylum Support and Immigration  
Resource Team (ASIRT)**  
All Saints, Herbert Road,  
Small Heath, Birmingham B10 0PR  
Tel: 0121 772 6700  
Fax: 0121 772 3900  
Email: [admin@asirt.org.uk](mailto:admin@asirt.org.uk)



# One Stop Shop Services



**The government know on your arrival that you may have more than one need. You may want one organisation that can help you and support you to overcome these needs. These organisations are called One Stop Shops.**

One of them is the Refugee Council in Birmingham. They have an Asylum Seekers Support Team (ASST). They can assist you to get legal assistance. They can give you advice on your asylum application and process. The one stop shops can provide you with assistance to see a doctor by completing the HC1 form. They can assist you in how to get your children a school place.

The Refugee Council and one stop shops will support you from your arrival. They will assist you until you get your application decision or removal. One stop shops usually have a person speaking in each of the major refugee languages. If no one in their office speaks your language they can arrange an interpreter.

## **CONTACTS:**

### **Refugee Council**

Asylum Seekers Support Team  
First Floor, Smithfield House, Digbeth, Birmingham,  
B5 6BS  
Tel: 0121 622 1515



The Citizens Advice Bureau is another organisation that can give you assistance in your needs such as housing, benefits, legal matters or if you owe money to someone. The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) provide free, confidential and independent advice from locations including in bureaux, GP surgeries, hospitals, colleges, prisons and courts. Advice is available face to face and by telephone. Most bureaux offer home visits. The CAB advice helps people resolve their debt, benefits, housing, legal, discrimination, employment, immigration, consumer and other problems and is available to everyone regardless of race, gender, sexuality, age, nationality, disability or religion.

The CAB will always act in the interests of their clients without influence from any outside bodies. CAB and all other service providers do not judge their clients or make assumptions about them.

CAB advisers can:-

- Interview clients face to face and by telephone to find out what the problem(s) are
- Access regularly updated information databases for up to date information
- Help clients to negotiate with services providers or to appeal against decisions, for example benefit claims
- Write letters or telephone service providers on behalf of clients
- Help clients to prioritise their problem(s)
- Help clients with form filling

[Citizens Advice Bureaux](#), Ground Floor Gazette Buildings  
168 Corporation Street, City Centre, Birmingham B4 6TF  
Tel: 0121 687 5350

[British Red Cross](#), Bradbury House, 7 Lowe Street, Camp Hill, Birmingham B12 0ER  
Tel: 0121 766 5444

The British Red Cross aims to alleviate some of the problems faced by asylum seekers who have been made homeless and destitute after receiving a negative asylum decision. They help destitute asylum seekers find temporary accommodation and they also provide vouchers to buy food.

Refugee Services in the British Red Cross assist vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers in crisis by helping them to access basic services and by providing short-term practical and emotional support to improve their lives.

British Red Cross also provides a messaging and tracing service for refugees and asylum seekers to contact their lost friends or family members locally or internationally.

# Benefits and Social Welfare



**The government of the United Kingdom provide economic assistance to its citizens and residents in a time of need. The government gives benefits to aid or promote the well-being of the person for the common good. The government assists the person to reach to a stage where they can live a happy and healthy life and contribute economically, socially and culturally to the country.**

As an asylum seeker on your arrival you will receive a temporary form of cash support. This is called the Interim payment. This payment comes in tokens. These tokens will be provided to you in person on arrival. These tokens can be exchanged for cash at any designated local Post Office.

Post office open times:

Monday to Friday	9.00am to 5.30pm
Saturdays	9.00am to 12.30pm

## [What do I do if I lose my tokens?](#)

In case you lose your tokens, or you are looking for backdated support, call the Asylum Support Customer Contact Centre on: 0845 602 1739

They are open: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.45pm

Within two days from your call for a lost token, a person will bring you an Emergency Support Token (EST). Make sure you are at home and ready to receive your emergency tokens.

In case of stoppage, break, abnormality or difficulties with your support payments, call the Asylum Support Customer Contact Centre on telephone: 0845 600 0914

They are open:

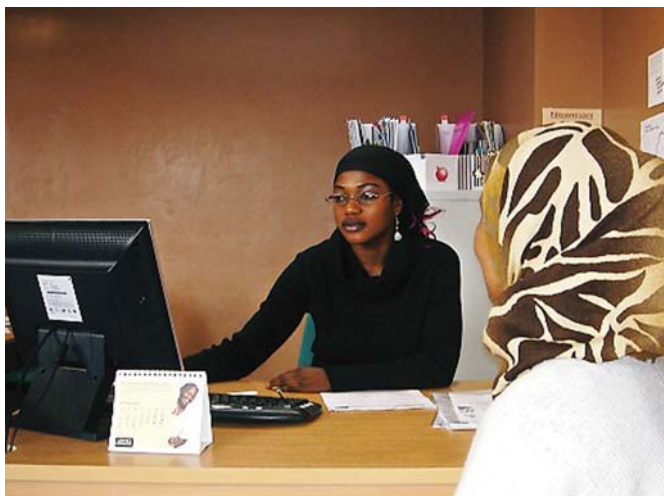
Monday to Thursday	9.00am to 4.45pm
Friday	9.00am to 4.30pm

Normally within 18 days of your application for asylum, you will receive what is called an Application Registration Card (ARC). From the moment you receive your ARC, your support will be paid directly to your post office account. You will use the ARC card to obtain money from your account at any post office.

## HOW CAN I ACCESS BENEFITS WHEN I GET A POSITIVE DECISION?

As soon as you receive a positive decision about your asylum application, it is very important that you apply for a National Insurance Number. It is very important for your welfare and employment to have a National Insurance Number. You must apply for it from the Jobcentre Plus National Insurance Number Allocation Services on Telephone 08456000643

There are a whole range of benefits people may be entitled to. If you are of working age you can either apply for Income Support, Incapacity benefit or Job Seekers Allowance.



## JOBSEEKERS ALLOWANCE:

Jobseekers Allowance is for unemployed people. It is to provide financial help for people who are available for work and actively looking for work. If you receive your leave to remain you shall start looking for a job immediately. You are allowed to get jobseekers allowance and attend a training course or volunteer for up to 15 hours per week.

## INCOME SUPPORT:

Income support is for people between 16 and 60 years of age who may not have to go to the Jobcentre Plus regularly to look for work. These are:

- lone parents
- sick or the disabled
- those who are unable to work because of caring for someone
- those who are registered blind

## INCAPACITY BENEFIT:

If you can't work because of ill health or a disability, you can claim incapacity benefit.

When you get your positive decision you can claim benefit from Jobcentre Plus at 0800 05566688. There may be a charge if you call this number from a mobile.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech difficulties  
Textphone: 0800 0556688

## HELPFUL ORGANISATIONS:

### Afro-British Support Services "IMPACT"

17 Stoney Lane, Sparkbrook, Birmingham, B12 8DL

Tel: 0121 773 9426 or 0121 773 5325

Email: [info@afrobritish.co.uk](mailto:info@afrobritish.co.uk)

Website: [www.afrobritish.org.uk](http://www.afrobritish.org.uk)

### Wardlow Road Centre

Wardlow Road, Duddeston, Nechells, Birmingham, B7 4JH

Telephone for an appointment on 0121 464 3555



# Housing



**Asylum seekers unable to find accommodation may be eligible for accommodation support from the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA). For initial and dispersal accommodation see Asylum Support Section.**

## **EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION:**

Emergency accommodation is a temporary arrangement for asylum seekers who would otherwise be having nowhere to sleep and live. An asylum seeker looking for support may apply for emergency accommodation.

Asylum seekers are dispersed to accommodation which is given on a no choice basis, by coach. The majority of accommodation is self catering. Usually the accommodation provided is a shared accommodation. An asylum seeker has to leave the provided accommodation in both cases of positive or negative decision about their application.

### HOW CAN I GET ACCOMMODATION AFTER A POSITIVE DECISION?

If you get a positive decision, you have to move on from your dispersal accommodation within 28 days. You can ask your accommodation provider for an extension to stay at the property up to a maximum of three months. You can also ask your accommodation provider to convert the tenancy of the property to your name. In either case your accommodation provider has the right to say yes or no.

### WHAT IS HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT?

Housing benefit and council tax benefit are for people who receive low income and need help to pay their rent or council tax. Housing benefit and council tax benefit are claimed through the neighbourhood offices. For housing benefit and council tax benefit enquiries you can contact the Wardlow Road Centre. Wardlow Road is a neighbourhood office with expertise and interpretation onsite.

When you receive your positive decision you have to apply for your housing and council tax benefit as soon as possible. You can only do this when you get accommodation that is in your own name.

### WHAT IS A PRIVATE LANDLORD?

You can rent a house from its private owner who is called the landlord. You have to decide if it is better for you if the landlord gets his rent from the benefit services. If he or she accepts you have to fill in the housing benefit application accordingly.

### WHAT IS SOCIAL HOUSING?

It is better for you to apply immediately for a council house from your neighbourhood office. The number of people asking for council or housing association accommodation are greater than the houses available. They may put your name on a waiting list. Families with small children or disabled persons are a priority. Do not get discouraged about the time that you will wait for a council house.

### WHO CAN APPLY FOR SOCIAL HOUSING?

Some of the criteria for the people applying for social housing are:

- A person living in the area who can demonstrate local connection
- A person offered work in the area
- A person wanting to live nearer to a relative or a carer
- A person moving away from harassment or domestic violence

### HOW CAN I APPLY FOR SOCIAL HOUSING?

To apply for a council house go to your nearest neighbourhood office and ask for a housing application form. You may need help in filling in this application form.

To apply for accommodation from a housing association you have to call them or visit them at their offices to get an application form. If you find yourself homeless or want housing advice and support call or visit the following organisations:

### HELPFUL ORGANISATIONS:

#### Wardlow Road Centre

Wardlow Road, Duddeston, Nechells, Birmingham B7 4JH  
0121 464 3555

Besides the Asylum Seekers Team, Wardlow Centre is the base for a number of Refugee Community Organisations.

#### Live Renewal & Homeless Accommodation Association Ltd. (LIVRAHA)

Flat 1, 427 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 4LB  
Tel: 0121 773 4310

#### Birmingham Money Advice & Grants

Birmingham Legal Centre, 1st Floor, Dolphin House, 54 Coventry Road, Birmingham B10 ORX  
Tel.: 0121 766 7466  
Website: [www.b-mag.org.uk](http://www.b-mag.org.uk)

# Education

**British law says that every child in the UK aged 5 to 16 must receive an education. Education in the UK is provided free of charge. There are a number of different schools that your child(ren) will be expected to attend. Parents must ensure that their children go to school. Boys and girls receive the same education. The school year starts in September.**

## **CHILDREN UNDER 5**

A school for children under 5 is called a Nursery School. You do not have to send your child to a nursery school if you do not want to. If you do want your child to go to Nursery School this can be arranged.

There are different schools for children of different ages. These are as follows:-

**Infant Schools** - These are schools for children aged between 4 to 7 years old.

**Primary Schools** - These are schools for children aged between 4 to 11 years old.

**Junior Schools** - These are schools for children aged between 7 to 11 years old.

**Secondary Schools** - These are for children aged between 11 to 16 years old.

When a child reaches the age of 16, education is no longer compulsory. Young people who wish to continue their education can choose to continue at school or go to college. Support organisations and one stop shops can tell you more about schools in the area you live in and will help you get a place in a school for your child. You must ensure your children attend school.

## **School education for children under 4 years of age**

School education for children under 4 years of age is not compulsory but it is available with arrangement. Your options include the following:-

**Nurseries** - Children who are 3 and 4 years old can receive 12 hours free sessions in a nursery each week. For children under 3 years of age you would have to pay for the sessions.

**Playgroups** - Provide education for children between 2 and 5 years old. Sessions can be in the morning or afternoons and usually last between 2 and 4 hours.

**Childminders** - a man or woman who look after children from birth to 8 years of age in their own home for at least two hours per day.

**Crèche** - Crèches are where parents can leave their children for a short period of time usually to attend adult education, leisure activities or whilst they go shopping.

**Parent and Toddler Groups** - these are groups that are usually free of charge. Adult carer's can take children to make friends with other children and to all play with their children together.

## **IMPORTANT**

**It is a criminal offence to keep children away from school for no reason. You may face legal proceedings if you are caught doing this.**





School lunches are provided free of charge to children of asylum seekers. School uniforms are worn by some primary schools and all secondary schools. Parents/guardians are expected to provide these. Please do not purchase school uniforms until you have received confirmation of a school place. If you are experiencing financial difficulties to buy school uniforms for your children please notify your case owner or the refugee community organisations or the school. All travel costs have to be paid for by you. In exceptional circumstances financial assistance will be given. Please contact the Education Department Transport Section by telephoning 0121 303 2450 (North Birmingham) or 0121 303 4425 (South Birmingham).

#### **EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE**

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) could give young people up to £30.00 per week to help out with the costs of staying in learning after 16 years of age. Whatever you learn after 16 years of age, it could offer you the opportunity to get good training, better qualifications and a good job. If you qualify, EMA payments are £10, £20 or £30 per week depending on your household income.

#### **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND APPEALS**

By law, parents must ensure that their child is receiving a suitable education from the age of five until they are sixteen.

In Birmingham and Solihull, your child can start to go to school in September following his/her 4th birthday. If you require any help in finding a school place, please contact the Admissions and Appeals Section on 0121 464 5512/5513.

# Further Education for Adults



**During your stay in Birmingham and Solihull you can attend ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes. It is important that you try to study ESOL because it will:-**

1. Improve your level of English which will help you learn more about living and working in the UK
2. Help you to increase your understanding of the integration process which you are going through
3. Help you to converse with other people
4. Help to increase your confidence and to live and contribute to your local community

#### **ESOL FUNDING FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS**

ESOL is no longer free, except to priority groups, which will include people who are unemployed or are receiving income-based benefits and Asylum Seekers who have been waiting for 6 months and more. This means that asylum seekers will not be automatically eligible for free tuition. Refugees who are unemployed or in receipt of income-based benefits will still be eligible for free ESOL tuition. Asylum seekers aged 16-18 are eligible for free ESOL tuition. Please contact your local College for further information. Most asylum seekers will not be eligible for free ESOL tuition unless you go through the voluntary sector.

#### **HOW DO I ENROL FOR ESOL CLASSES?**

There are many ESOL providers in Birmingham and Solihull. Detailed below are the main providers of ESOL classes in Birmingham.

##### **Sutton Coldfield College**

Great Barr Campus, Aldridge Road, Great Barr  
Birmingham, B44 8NE  
Telephone 0845 155 0101  
[www.sutcol.ac.uk](http://www.sutcol.ac.uk)

##### **Birmingham Adult Education Service**

2nd Floor Central Library  
Chamberlain Square, Birmingham, B3 3HQ  
Telephone 0121 303 4318

##### **South Birmingham College**

Hall Green Campus, Cole Bank Road, Hall Green,  
Birmingham, B28 8ES  
Telephone 0121 694 5000

##### **City College Birmingham**

The Council House, Soho Road, Handsworth  
Birmingham, B21 9DP  
Telephone 0121 204 0000

##### **Bournville College**

Bristol Road South, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 2AJ  
Telephone 0121 483 1111

##### **Matthew Boulton College**

Jennens Road, Birmingham, B4 7PS  
Telephone 0121 446 4545

##### **Solihull College**

Blossomfield Campus, Blossomfield Road  
Solihull, B91 1SB  
Telephone 0121 678 7000

#### **FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ADULTS**

The following organisations are some of the organisations who can help support you to access education and training:-

##### **Birmingham Churches Together**

All Saints House, 172 Herbert Road, Small Heath,  
Birmingham, B10 0PR  
Telephone 0121 766 8764

##### **Spurgeons Midland Office**

77 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich  
West Midlands, B70 6PY

#### **CONTACT**

Laurel Road, Handsworth, Birmingham  
Telephone 0121 686 3454



# Higher Education for Adults

If you wish to find out more about higher education opportunities call any of the Birmingham Universities. Details are below. Degrees and diplomas gained abroad may need to be converted in order for them to be recognised in the UK. To get a letter of comparability of your certificates call NARIC on 0871 330 7033 or visit their website [www.naric.org.uk](http://www.naric.org.uk). Some professions like doctors, nurses or lawyers may require retraining or additional qualifications.



## [The University of Birmingham](#)

Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT, United Kingdom  
Telephone 0121 414 3344

## [University of Aston](#)

Aston Triangle, Aston, Birmingham B4 7ET  
Telephone 0121 204 3000

## [Birmingham City University](#)

Perry Barr, Birmingham, B42 2SU  
Telephone 0121 331 5595

It is important to consider very carefully the financial implications of studying in the UK. Fees for non-European students are charged at a higher rate because the University does not receive any Government funding. Although it may be possible to obtain limited work while you are studying in the UK, students from outside the European Economic Area do not have automatic right to do so. Annual fees for overseas students range from £5,250 to £10,300. A student can be exempted from the higher rate International Fee by showing a 'relevant connection' with the UK or the European Union. To demonstrate a relevant connection you must meet all of the following requirements:-



- You have settled status in the UK/EU. That is you must be ordinarily resident in the UK/EU without being subject, under the immigration laws, to any time restrictions. For example, you must be a British Citizen or have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain, Indefinite Leave to Enter or Right of Abode by the UK Government.
- You have been ordinarily resident in the UK/EU throughout the three year period before the start of your course.
- At no time during the relevant period must your residency in the UK/EU have been wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full time education.

You may also be exempted from the higher rate International Fee if:-

- You are recognised by the UK Government as a refugee and have been ordinarily resident in the UK since being recognised as a refugee.
- You have been informed in writing by the UK Government that you have been granted Exceptional Leave to Remain, Discretionary Leave to Remain or Humanitarian Leave to Remain in the UK.
- You are a European Economic Area (EEA) migrant worker or the child of an EEA migrant worker.
- You are an exchange student.

If you are unsure whether you would be classified as a 'home' or 'overseas' student for fee payment purposes and would like clarification before submitting an application, you should contact International Admissions at your chosen University or College.

The following organisation can help support you with accessing education, training and employment:-

#### [TRELLIS Project](#)

Centennial House, 100 Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1AU Telephone 0121 480 3867

#### [Lifeline Options](#)

Waterlinks Enterprise Centre, 69 Aston Road North (via Holland Road West car park) Aston, Birmingham B6 4EA Telephone 0121 359 5435

Fax 0121 359 2230

Mobile 07811 088849

Email [lifelineoptions@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lifelineoptions@yahoo.co.uk)

# Health Information

**In the UK most health treatment is free. Asylum Seekers and all citizens are entitled to free healthcare services under the National Health Service (NHS). The NHS helps treat and prevent illness.**

## **AM I ENTITLED TO HEALTHCARE IN THE NHS AS AN ASYLUM SEEKER/REFUGEE?**

Yes you are. As an asylum seeker in the UK you are entitled to exactly the same range of services as any other resident of the UK. You should get an HCI form which entitles asylum seekers to get free prescription, dental care etc.

## **IS THERE A CHARGE FOR HEALTH SERVICES?**

There is no charge made for:-

- Seeing a doctor or other health professional
- Medical investigations or screening
- Hospital care
- Ambulance transport

## **THE NHS PROVIDE SERVICES THROUGH:-**

**Primary Care** - Family doctors are called General Practitioners. Primary Care also includes nurses and health visitors.

**Community Clinics** - Services for mothers and babies and family planning services for the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

**Hospital** - Accident and Emergency services and specialist health services.

**Dentists** - for dental checks and treatment

**Opticians** - for eye sight checks

**Chemists** - for dispensing medicines prescribed by your doctor

## **OBTAINING HEALTH SERVICES IN THE UK**

### **How do I obtain health services?**

Most health services in the UK are accessed through Primary Care. General Practitioners (GPs) provide the majority of healthcare at, or from, premises where they work. This is called a doctors surgery. To obtain most health services it is important to have a GP.

Accident and Emergency at your local hospital is only for emergencies. For a non-emergency you should contact your GP. GPs have a certain number of patients on their

'list' and cover a defined geographical area. All UK residents, including asylum seekers and refugees, are entitled to be 'registered' with a GP. This means that the doctor accepts the person as a patient and agrees to look after their health needs.

When you arrive in Birmingham and Solihull you should register as soon as possible with your local doctor.

## **HOW DO I REGISTER WITH A DOCTOR?**

You will need to visit the doctor you have chosen and ask if they will accept you as a patient. Your Case Owner can help you to find a doctor in your local area. When you first register with a doctor you will have a health check. Everyone who registers with a GP receives a 'new patient check'. A nurse at the practice often does this. You will be asked questions about your past health problems and the immunisations you have received.

The Birmingham Asylum Seekers Health Outreach Team (BASHOT) is a National Health Service Team working with asylum seekers and refugees. The team will:-

- Help you find and register with a local doctor and dentist
- Tell you about what other health services are available to you
- Advise you on how to deal with non-serious illnesses.
- Provide a confidential service with interpreters if necessary

## **BASHOT**

Victoria Road Medical Centre, 229 Victoria Road, Aston  
Birmingham B6 5HP

Telephone: 0121 327 8901





### **CAN I SEE A DOCTOR THE SAME SEX AS ME?**

You can choose to register with a GP who is the same sex as you if you wish. In hospitals, whilst patient preferences for same sex doctors will be considered, this may not be possible.

### **CAN I GO TO SEE MY GP WHENEVER I WANT TO?**

Generally GPs have times when they are available. These are called 'surgeries or clinics' and they run an 'appointment' system. This means that most of the time you have to pre-arrange to see your doctor. Most GPs will also have emergency clinics which you can attend if you need to see your doctor urgently. Ask your GP surgery what the arrangements are. If you need an interpreter when you want to see the doctor this may be arranged for you. Please ask the doctors receptionist.

### **IF I AM NOT HAPPY WITH MY GP CAN I CHANGE?**

If you are not satisfied with your doctor you have the right to find a new doctor who is willing to accept you as a patient. The Health Authority can help you do this if you have problems.

All your consultations with the doctor are private and confidential. Your medical information will not be shared with anyone else without your permission.

### **NHS DIRECT**

#### **What is NHS Direct?**

NHS Direct is at the forefront of 24 hour health care, delivering telephone and e-health information services day and night direct to the public. NHS Direct has an authoritative health website and an NHS Direct Digital TV service.

NHS Direct aims to provide information and advice about health, illness and health services to enable patients to make decisions about their healthcare and that of their families.



If you or someone in your family is unwell, has had a minor injury or you need advice about a health problem, you can also contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647. This is a telephone helpline and you can speak to a qualified nurse. The service is free, confidential and runs 24 hours a day every day of the year. If English is not your preferred language, NHS direct has interpreters in a range of different languages to help you with your concern.

### **COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS**

Community Pharmacists will dispense any medicines that have been prescribed by your doctor. They also sell medicines for a wide range of illnesses such as coughs, colds and flu. Pharmacists also give free advice and information on everyday health problems.

# Health Information

## MATERNITY SERVICES

The Birmingham Womens Hospital deals with general obstetrics and midwifery as well as patients with infertility or high-risk pregnancy problems requiring specialist expertise.

Birmingham Womens Hospital provides counselling and support for women who have recurrent miscarriages, stillbirth and neonatal death. The Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit provides speedy assessment and diagnosis of newly-expectant mothers. A part of the Gynaecological Emergency Assessment Unit see patients on the day of the referral and, in many cases, provide same day diagnosis.

## MIDWIFERY

Community based midwives provide care in the community and in the delivery suite, as well as providing antenatal and post-natal care. A core of midwives at Birmingham Womens Hospital provide expertise and care to women with complex labours. The midwives also provide pre-pregnancy advice and education programmes.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:-

[Birmingham Womens Health Care NHS Trust](#)

Metchley Park Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TG  
Telephone 0121 472 1377

The African Well Woman Clinic provides general healthcare advice, specialist reproductive health services and also provides help for women with the physical effects of female genital mutilation. Their contact details are below:-

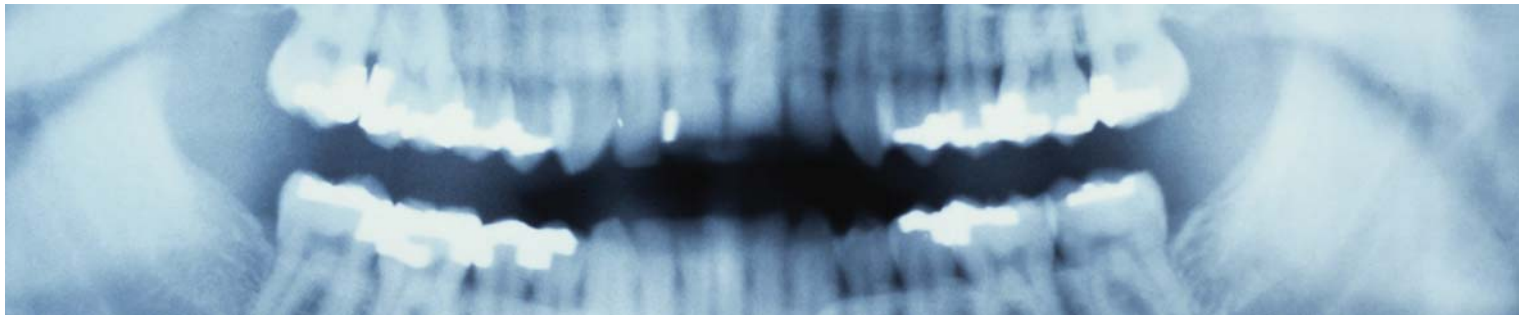
## African Well Woman Clinic

Birmingham Heartlands Hospital  
Princess of Wales Women's Unit, Labour Ward, Bordesley Green East, Birmingham, B9 5SS  
Telephone 0121 424 3514

## SEXUAL HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

Family Planning Clinics offer free and confidential advice on all aspects of sexual health. Clinics are held at 19 sites across Birmingham, which are geographically convenient and meet both clinical and cultural needs. Family planning clinics offer a one-to-one service where patients are helped to make the right choice for their sexual needs. Linkworkers and interpreters are employed within the service to ensure that clients access the full range of services available.





## DENTAL CARE

### Where can I find a Dentist?

If you want to find your nearest Dentist, call:

#### Birmingham East and North Primary Care Trust

4th Floor, Waterlinks House, Richard Street, Aston,  
Birmingham B7 4AA.

Telephone: 0121 333 4113.

#### South Birmingham Primary Care Trust

Moseley Hall Hospital, Alcester Road, Moseley  
Birmingham, B13 8JL

Telephone 0121 442 5600

#### Solihull Care Trust

20 Union Road, Solihull, West Midlands, B91 3EF

Telephone 0121 711 7171

If you need emergency dental care call your dental practice for advice on what to do. When the surgery is closed there will be recorded information. If you do not have a dentist you can still get NHS care in an emergency. Call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 for information.

## DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR DENTAL TREATMENT?

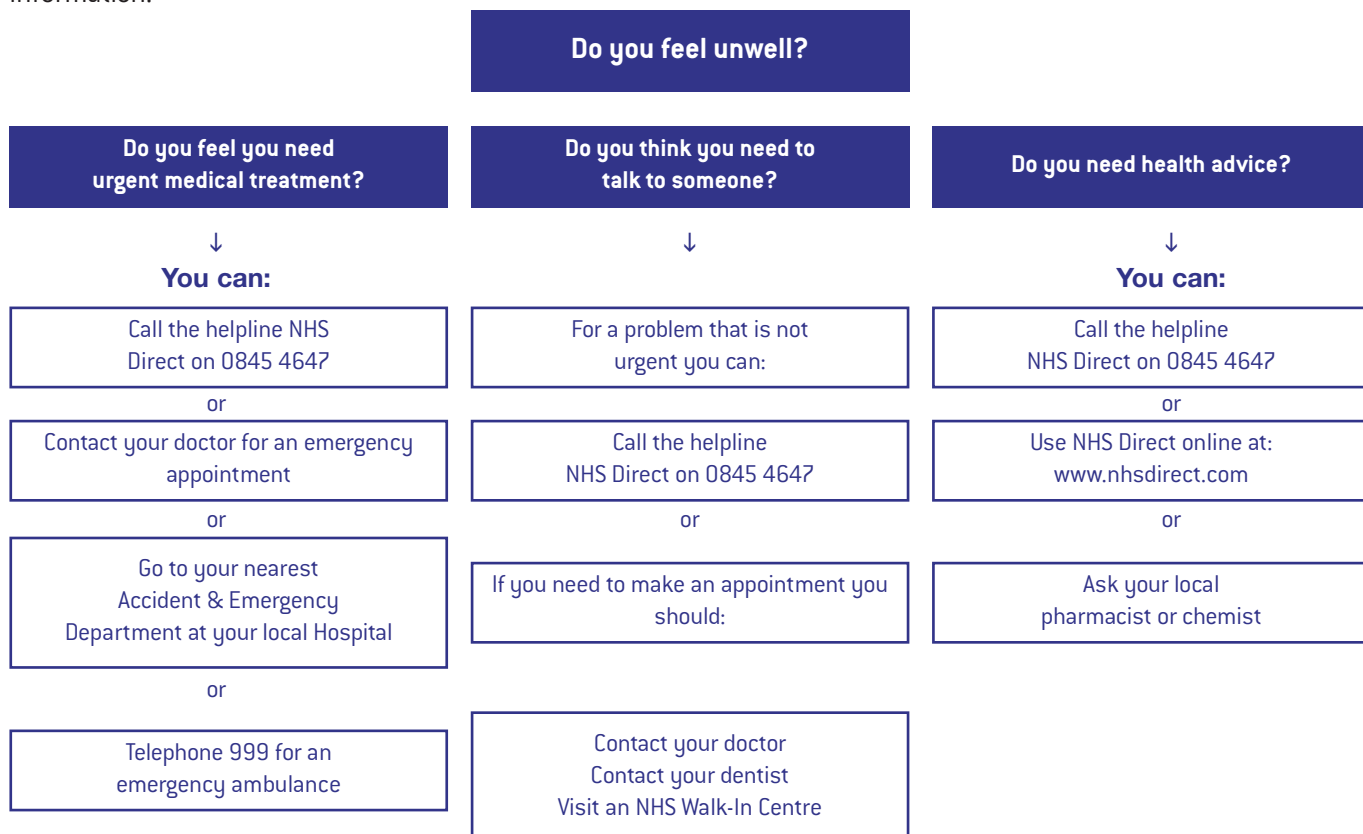
Dental check-ups and treatment are free for:-

- All children under 16 years of age
- Young people under 19 years of age in full time education
- Pregnant women or mothers with babies under one year old
- People receiving income support
- People with an exemption certificate

Charges are made for dental treatment in the NHS for everyone else. Before you have any treatment from a dentist you should understand what is planned and what the cost will be.

## EYESIGHT

If you need your eyes testing or need new glasses (spectacles) make an appointment to see an optician. Opticians have shops in most town centres.





# Health Information



## **MENTORING AND BEFRIENDING**

This service links refugees only (not asylum seekers) with volunteer British mentors to aid integration. RESTORE link both asylum seekers and refugees with volunteer befrienders to provide support and friendship in Birmingham. The organisation called Time Together provide mentors for refugees only.

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:-**

### **RESTORE**

Birmingham Churches Together  
All Saints House, 172 Herbert Road, Small Heath  
Birmingham, B10 0PT  
Telephone 0121 766 8764  
Email: [restore@birminghamchurches.org.uk](mailto:restore@birminghamchurches.org.uk)  
Website: [www.birminghamchurches.org.uk](http://www.birminghamchurches.org.uk)

## **COUNSELLING AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

Sometimes you or someone in your family will feel unhappy. When you feel unhappy it may help to talk to someone. You may feel lonely, bored or something may be happening to you or someone in your family that you wish you could make better. You may not know who to talk to or feel that they may not understand you.

Your Case Owner will try to help you or your family if you tell them what the problem is. Your Case Owner will not tell anyone else what you have said to them unless you want them to. There are some very good organisations who can help you and they include My Time and Lifeline Options

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:-**

### **Time Together**

Wardlow Road Centre, Wardlow Road, Nechells,  
Birmingham B7 4JH  
Tel.: 0121 464 3603

### **My Time Ltd.**

My Time Counselling and Training Centre  
172 Herbert Road, Small Heath, Birmingham B10 0PR  
Tel': 0121 766 6699  
Email: [Michael@mytime.org.uk](mailto:Michael@mytime.org.uk)

# Mental Health

Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust provides care to people living in Birmingham and Solihull who are experiencing mental health problems. Care is usually provided through one of these four ways:-

- Community teams
- Day services
- Inpatient Units
- Outpatient facilities

Most of these are based within the local community so that people can receive treatment in an environment they are used to. Many people are supported in their own homes.

## **IF YOU FEEL ANXIOUS OR WORRIED YOU CAN CONTACT THE FOLLOWING:-**

**Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Trust**  
Unit 1 B1, 50 Summer Hill Road, Birmingham, B1 3RB  
Telephone 0121 678 2000

### **MEDICAL FOUNDATION:**

The Medical Foundation provide specialist services and counselling for victims of torture and trauma. They aim to provide survivors of torture in the UK with medical assessment and care, practical assistance and psychotherapeutic treatment and support. The Medical Foundation office that covers Birmingham and Solihull is as follows:-

Medical Foundation London  
111 Isledon Road , Islington , London, N7 7JW  
Telephone 020 7697 7777  
Fax 020 7697 7799  
Asylum Team Fax 020 7697 7799

The Regional Development Worker that covers Birmingham and Solihull is Lucinda Hardwick.

## **WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY?**

If you, a friend or a relative are experiencing mental health problems for the first time and need emergency treatment, you should contact your GP.

## **ILLEGAL DRUGS**

There are many illegal drugs that are being abused by our society today. Drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy, opium and meth are illegal drugs. It is important for everyone to raise their level of awareness in order to reduce the risk of drug abuse or to help someone they care for who is already suffering from drug abuse or addiction.

If you need urgent support from a Community Drug Team, you should contact them directly. They can give you advice on where to get help for substance misuse problems. You can find your nearest Community Drug Team by calling 0121 678 2000.

## **MORE HELP IN AN EMERGENCY**

You can also get advice, information and support in an emergency from the following:-

**FOCUS LINE** on 08000 272127 5.00pm until 9.00am weekdays and 24 hours at weekends

**NHS Direct** on 0845 4647 open 24 hours a day

**SANELINE** on 0845 767 8000 open 12 noon until 11.00pm Monday to Friday and 12 noon until 6.00pm at weekends.

# Volunteering & Employment

**A volunteer is someone who does or offers to do work or provide a service out of his own free will. Volunteers are not paid for the work they do. Asylum seekers are allowed to volunteer. Volunteering is usually done at charities and not for profit organisations. Usually these organisations pay the volunteer travel and meal costs. If you wish to volunteer please inform your Case Owner.**

## **WHAT WOULD I GAIN FROM VOLUNTEERING?**

Some of the benefits of volunteering are:

- Gaining new or sharpening your skills and talents
- Work experience in a new environment and meeting new people
- Learning English better through practice

## **WILL MY WELFARE BENEFITS BE AFFECTED?**

No. You are allowed to undertake voluntary work without any reduction of benefits.

## **DO I NEED TO PROVIDE REFERENCES OR UNDERTAKE A POLICE CHECK?**

Yes. The majority of volunteering organisations will wish to take up references. Police (CRB) checks are also required for any volunteering role that involves working with children or vulnerable adults.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Asylum Seekers are not allowed to take paid work in the UK. You can apply for permission to work if your period of waiting for a decision about your asylum application takes a long time. If you would like to apply for permission to work you need to get advice from your Case Owner.

If you receive a positive decision about your asylum application, the support given to you will stop within 28 days. You should immediately apply for a National Insurance Number. To seek employment and to access benefits you need to have your National Insurance Number. To obtain a National Insurance Number please contact the Job Centre National Insurance Number Allocation Service on 0845 6000643.

For job opportunities visit your nearest Jobcentre Plus office. Jobcentre Plus is a government agency supporting people of working age from welfare into work.

Nextstep Contractors are a group of organisations that can give you free Information, Advice and Guidance in the following:

- Job search
- Career and skills assessments
- CV Writing
- Job Applications
- Pre-employment interview preparations
- Training opportunities

To get their contact details and locations visit Nextstep Website: [www.nextstepbirminghamandsolihull.org.uk](http://www.nextstepbirminghamandsolihull.org.uk)

If you are interested in knowing more about voluntary work, please ask your Case Owner or contact:-

### **Birmingham Voluntary Services Council**

138 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DR  
Tel: 0121 643 4343

### **Groundwork**

Lockside, 5 Scotland Street, Birmingham, B1 2RR  
Tel: 0121 236 8565  
[www.groundwork.org.uk](http://www.groundwork.org.uk)

There are a large number of voluntary and community organisations that help people to find a job. Here are the contacts of a few of them. Also you can look for them at Nextstep website: [www.nextstep.org.uk](http://www.nextstep.org.uk).





**Afro-British Support Services “IMPACT”**

17 Stoney Lane, Sparkbrook, Birmingham B12 8DL

Tel: 0121 773 9426

Email: [info@afrobritish.co.uk](mailto:info@afrobritish.co.uk)

Website: [www.afrobritish.org.uk](http://www.afrobritish.org.uk)

**RETAF**

109a Digbeth, Meriden Street, Birmingham B5 6DT

Tel: 0121 633 9604

Email: [retaf.forum@hotmail.com](mailto:retaf.forum@hotmail.com)

**Trellis Project**

Centennial House, 100 Broad Street,

Birmingham B15 11R

Tel: 0121 480 3867

**Birmingham TUC Centre for the Unemployed**

448 Stratford Road, Sparkhill, Birmingham B11 4AE

Tel: 0121 771 0871

# Leisure



**There is a lot of recreation and leisure activities in Birmingham and Solihull. Some of them are free and some you will have to pay for. Your Case Owner will give you as much help as you need to get started. Birmingham and Solihull have:-**

Parks, Sports and Recreation, Sports Centres, Swimming Pools, Libraries, Art Galleries, Museums, Cinemas, Ten Pin Bowling, Theatres, Play Areas, Adventure Playgrounds, Community Centres, Youth Facilities and Shopping Centres

For more information about the above you can visit the website: [www.city-vision.com](http://www.city-vision.com)

## **Library Services for Asylum Seekers**

If you are learning English please let them know. You will be able to request particular items from the library stock for free.

If you do not have any proof of a permanent address, you will be able to borrow 2 books. The library card will be posted to where you are living. This library card is valid for 3 months.

When you have a permanent address you will be able to have a library card to borrow up to 8 books.



## **ALL LIBRARIES HAVE:**

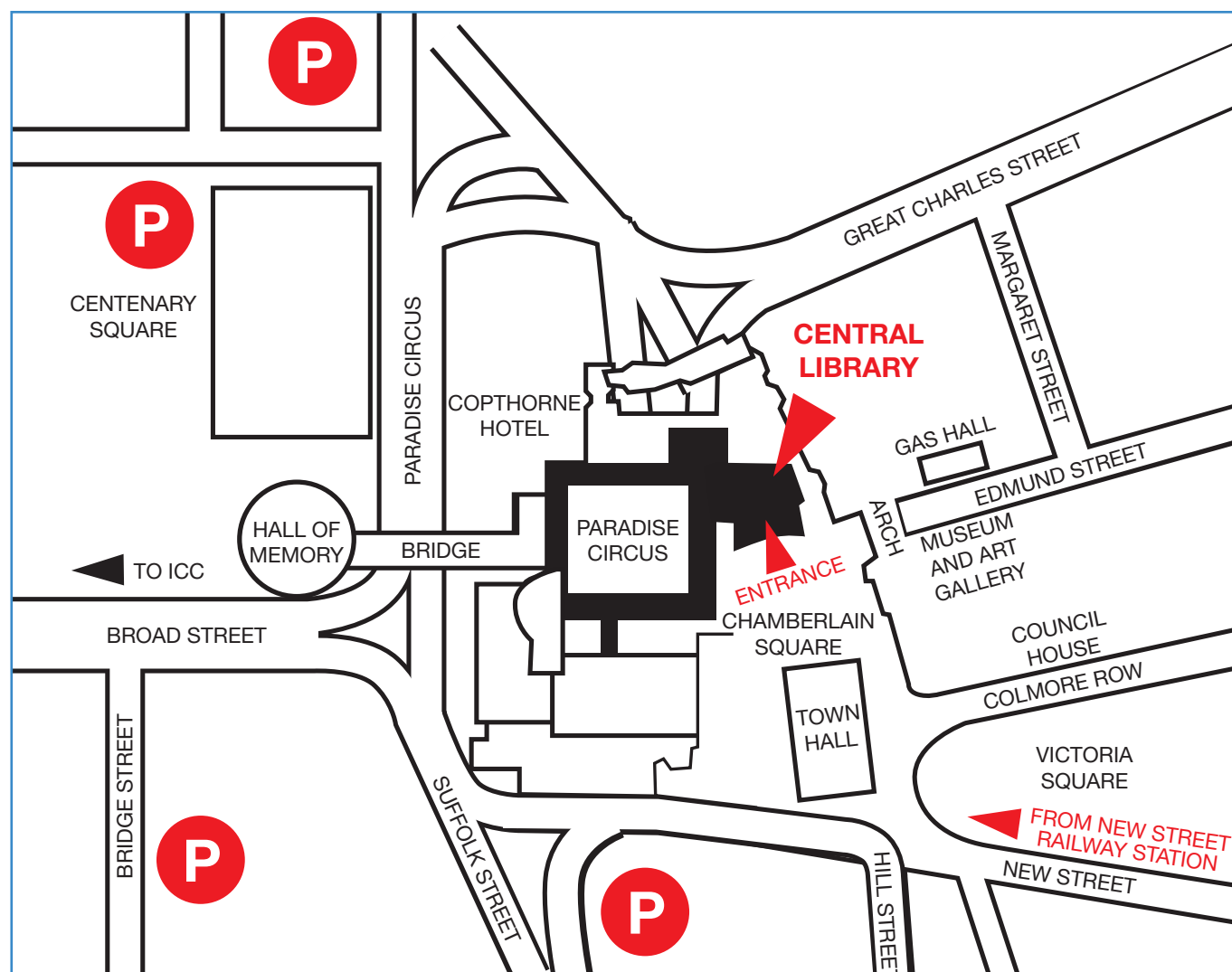
- Free Internet access - you will be able to access most Internet sites and use email
- Materials to help you learn English
- A list of newspaper websites
- An address list for Refugee organisations
- Staff trained in awareness and customer care. They are confident when speaking to people from new communities
- Information and useful addresses
- Materials to help you learn and study
- Staff can use the Language Line to help you. This is a telephone interpretation service

## **Some Libraries have:**

- Dictionaries for loan
- Dictionaries to look at in the library
- Collections, which reflect the history and culture of Refugee communities
- Community Rooms available to book
- Adult Education and English classes
- Learning Centres

The Libraries offer a wide range of books, tapes and videos that can be loaned. There is no charge for joining the library but they will charge fines for the late return of borrowed items. Most libraries can be easily accessed by people with disabilities and children in pushchairs.





### Birmingham Central Library

Chamberlain Square  
Birmingham  
B3 3HQ  
Tel: (0121) 303 4511  
Fax: (0121) 233 4458  
Textphone: (0121) 303 4547

### Sound It Out Community Music

The Arch, Unit F9  
48 - 52 Floodgate Street,  
Birmingham B5 5SL  
Tel.: 0121 772 8655  
Email: [enquiries@sounditout.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@sounditout.co.uk)

	Opening Time	Closing Time
Monday	09.00	20.00
Tuesday	09.00	20.00
Wednesday	09.00	20.00
Thursday	09.00	20.00
Friday	09.00	20.00
Saturday	09.00	17.00
Sunday	Closed all day	



# Travel and Transport

## TO TRAVEL BY BUS

Buses are the most common type of Public Transport in Birmingham and Solihull. Buses have a timetable to arrive at your bus stop. To travel in a bus you can buy:

- One trip bus passes. That is from your location to a destination
- A day saver: A bus pass ticket you can use for a whole day and night and as many times as you would like
- You can also buy weekly or monthly bus passes

If you are over 60 years of age, you are entitled to a free bus pass to use within the West Midlands. Call Centro on 0121 200 2789

## TO TRAVEL BY TRAIN

There are eight local rail lines in the West Midlands providing fast, convenient travel for commuters and leisure users. Local rail services are operated by Central Trains, Chiltern Trains, Arriva Trains Wales and Virgin Trains. A comprehensive range of day and season tickets are available for both peak and off-peak travel.

## PEAK AND OFF-PEAK TRAVEL

When travelling around Birmingham using public transport you need to select the best value ticket that allows you to travel at the times most convenient for you. 'Peak' times are when public transport is at its busiest, for example when people are travelling to and from work. Peak times are usually between 7.00am and 9.30am. 'Off Peak' applies to all other times during the day. Off Peak times are usually 9.30am onwards Monday to Friday. Public transport at weekends and on public holidays is off-peak.



## TRAVELLING BY COACH:

If you want to travel by coach to other cities in the UK, for details of National Express routes and fares call their enquiries line Tel: 0870 580 80 80

Opening time: every day of the week 08:00am to 08:00pm.

If you call the above number from a BT line it will cost you 07.91 pence per minute. If you are calling from a mobile it varies and is more expensive.

Disabled people and those who need special care have to call the Disabled Persons Travel Helpline: 0121 423 8479.

If you are hard of hearing or deaf, for your travel arrangements you can textphone: 0121 455 0086

Most scheduled National Express coaches arrive at and depart from:

[Digbeth Coach Station](#)

Spencer House, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DQ

## TRAVELLING BY TRAM

The Midland Metro is the tram line linking Birmingham Snow Hill to Wolverhampton, via West Bromwich, Wednesbury and Bilston.

For details, call the Centro Hotline 0121 200 2700.

[Travel Midland Metro](#)

[METRO CENTRE](#), Potters Lane, Wednesbury, WS10 0AR

Tel: (0121) 502 2006

## TAXIS:

If you want to use a TAXI it is recommended you use black cabs or licensed private hire cars. You can identify them by their door signs, number plates or logos. Private hire cars are always called for. If you flag down a private hire car you are not insured and maybe in danger.

Never stop and go with an unmarked car as a taxi.

You can get a bus timetable from your local library and/or neighbourhood office.

# Things you should know

## CHILDREN

You should be aware that in the UK it is against the law to leave your child(ren) at home without an adult to take care of them. If you are caught doing this your children could be taken away from you and you could be prosecuted.

It is advised that you do not leave your children with a stranger or unattended when in public places.

It is against the law to beat, use excess force or any objects or weapons to discipline your child. All the professionals that come into contact with you have a legal responsibility to report any wrong doing to children to the relevant organisations. This will include people like teachers, support workers and doctors.

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a fundamental human rights issue with adverse health and social implications. It violates the rights of girls. The risk of female genital mutilation is recognised as legitimate grounds for refugee and asylum status. FGM is not practiced in most of the world.

FGM is subject to Child Protection Laws in the UK. The Child Protection Act is legislation that is put into place to protect children from harm.

Female circumcision is illegal in the UK. It is also an offence to make arrangements for it to take place while you are living in the UK or outside of it. You can be imprisoned for up to 14 years.

## SEX AND THE LAW

In the UK you have to be 16 years of age to have any kind of sexual relationship. It is against the law to force anyone to have sex with you. Kissing or touching anyone against their will is an offence, even if you are married to the person. Being taken to court for this offence could result in imprisonment.

# Things you should know

## ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Asking people for money is known as begging. This can sometimes be seen as a form of harassment and is against the law. It is advised that you do not do this. Doing things that upset your neighbours or affect their quality of life is called antisocial behaviour and will not be tolerated.

## BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

The host community want you to be happy in your new home. They also want other people to be happy that live near you. You can do this by:-

- Keeping your property clean, especially the garden
- Not making too much noise
- Making sure that your children do not annoy your neighbours
- Disposing of your rubbish in the way that you have been shown and at the right time
- Not to keep animals as pets
- Not throwing anything out of windows
- Not hanging your washing out of windows or on balconies to dry

## IF YOU HAVE A CAR YOU MUST HAVE:

- A driving license that is valid in the UK
- Insurance in case you have an accident
- A valid MOT certificate
- Road Tax

If you have a television in your house, you have to buy a television license.

- For more information about TV license, please call 0870 241 6468 (minicom 0870 575 8604) or log on to <http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk>.

## DISPOSING OF RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

The Refuse Collection service collects refuse from domestic properties once per week, including most bank holidays (excluding Christmas day and Boxing Day). Refuse sacks ("black bags") are provided for each property for domestic waste. Tower blocks and other multi-occupied dwellings may be provided with large containers instead of refuse sacks.

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

For bulk waste removal, recycling of bottles, paper, cans and garden waste please call:

Environmental Services  
Waste Management Operations, Ladbrooke House  
Bordesley Street, Birmingham, B5 5BL.  
Office Opening Hours: 8am to 8pm (Monday - Friday)  
Contact Birmingham Hotline: 0121 303 1112

## DO YOU WISH TO KNOW WHAT DAY YOUR REFUSE IS COLLECTED ON?

If the answer is yes to either of these questions, or you have a refuse collection enquiry that is not covered in these pages, please contact 0121 303 1112





## COMPLAINTS

In England you can comment, compliment or complain about a service you received or if you feel you have a right for a service.

### WHAT CAN I COMPLAIN ABOUT?

You can complain about:

- Lack of service
- Refusal of service
- Delay in receiving a service
- The conduct or attitude of staff
- A decision by a member of staff or panel

### HOW CAN I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

If you are unhappy about a service, you can complain to the person involved and if not satisfied you can complain to the manager of the service. Making a complaint or reporting being a victim of crime will not affect your Asylum application.

If you have a concern about a service, the Refugee Community Organisations sheet can help you in how to complain, comment or compliment.

## RACIAL HARRASSMENT

In the UK it is illegal to attack or insult anyone because of his/her colour, race, ethnicity or national origin. This is known as Racial Harassment. Such action can lead to prosecution by the police.

If you are unfortunate to experience racial harassment while living in Birmingham, you can call and report this to:

- Your Case Owner
- Police on 0845 113 5000
- Victim Support on 0121 455 8211
- Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 1111

The Police in the UK are here to help you.

Collect evidence of the harassment and it is also better to have witnesses if you can.

The Refugee Council is a reporting centre for racial harassment.

## FORMS OF RACIAL HARASSMENT

### Verbal:

Offensive remarks, comments, jokes, threats, name calling or swearing.

### Molestation:

Abusive telephone calls or letters, dumping of rubbish outside your home or through your letterbox, creating persistent noise, malicious complaints about you.

### Physical Violence:

Actual bodily harm or threat of such. Damage to your home and property, for example, smashing windows and doors.

### Racist graffiti:

Written or drawn slogans.

# Safety and Security

**We want you to be safe in your home and when you go out. You can help yourself and your family by doing the following:-**

- Keeping all doors locked.
- Any official wanting to enter your home should have an identification badge. The badges should have a picture of the caller, the name of the company and a telephone number that you can contact to verify the caller's identity. If people claiming to be official callers do not have a badge, do not let them in
- Use the door chain if someone calls at your front door. If you do not know the caller do not let them in
- Do not buy things from people calling at your door unless you want them, you are safe and can pay for them
- Do not sign any document or letter unless you know what you are signing
- Do not accept a ride in a car from someone you do not know
- Do not leave your child with someone you do not know. Do not leave your child at home alone
- Do not respond to aggressive behaviour. If it is safe walk away
- Do not carry out repairs or make changes to the property

If you do not feel safe in your home or in the area you live talk to your case owner or any organisation mentioned in

this Welcome Pack.

## **FIRE**

Do not remove or cover the smoke detectors at your home. In case of fire these smoke detectors will give out a high pitched continuous sound. You must read and understand the fire evacuation procedure provided by your housing officer.

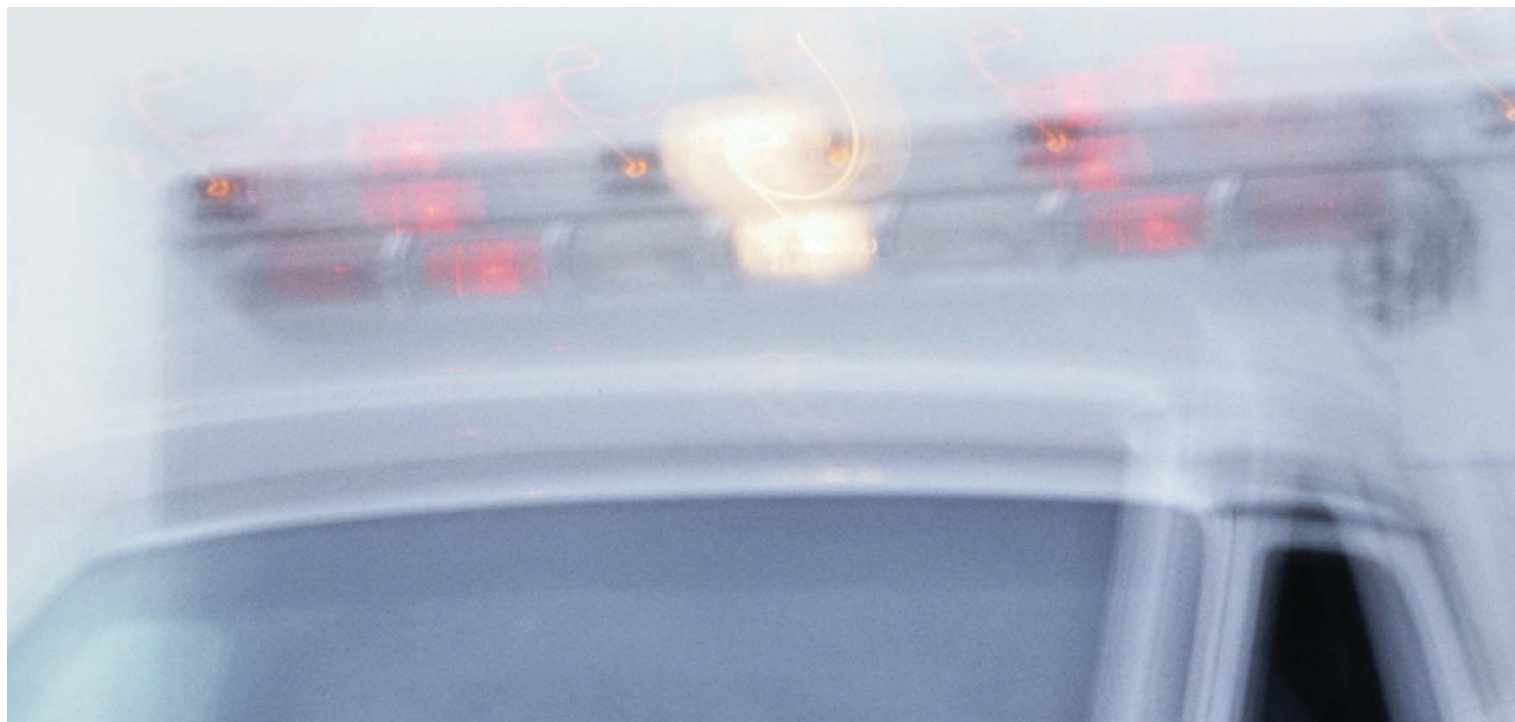
## **GAS LEAKS**

If you smell gas or hear it leaking:

- Do not turn light switches on or off.
- Do not use naked flames.
- Do not smoke.
- Do not close ventilation outlets in your rooms.
- Open all the windows and doors to get rid of the gas.
- Turn off the gas supply at the meter immediately.
- Call the gas leak emergency number 0800 111 999
- Contact the housing provider or landlord.



# Emergency Services



**Birmingham and Solihull Police are here to help you. They aim to reduce crime and disorder and make Birmingham and Solihull a safe place to live.**

**Over the last few years, robbery levels have fallen across the West Midlands, however there are still plenty of things you can do to reduce your chances of becoming a victim of crime**

- Keep your bag closed and close to you
- Do not overload yourself with bags and coats
- Avoid showing your cash in public and do not advertise your mobile

If you find yourself in a serious, dangerous or life threatening situation contact the emergency services by telephoning 999 and ask for the police.

If your house is on fire or you see a fire somewhere else call 999 and ask for the Fire Service. Do not try to put the fire out yourself. Do not use a passenger lift.

If you or someone else needs to go to hospital in an emergency due to an accident or sudden, severe illness such as chest pain or unconsciousness, telephone 999 and ask for the ambulance service. Do not call 999 or go to a hospital accident and emergency department for non-urgent health problems. Call your doctors surgery or NHS Direct for advice on what to do.

All 999 calls are free in the UK (including calls made to 999 from a mobile telephone).

For children and young people help, you can call Childline on 0800 1111 about anything from abuse, bullying and racism to general advice.



# Refugee Community Organisations

**In the UK the government funds voluntary and community organisations to guide you and to give you impartial suggestions about issues you may face in all matters, such as Housing, Health, Education, Welfare, Employment. These services are free at the point of contact.**

There is a large number of Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) in Birmingham that provide Information, Advice and Guidance. They provide support services to asylum seekers and refugees. If they can't help you in the matter of your concern, they can signpost or refer you to organisations or agencies that can solve your issues.

To engage with a service it is better for you to get as much information as you can. Be better informed to make a better decision.

If you have qualifications overseas and want them assessed. If you are looking for training, further skills or employment information, call the organisations mentioned here.

Do not ask and take advice from somebody who is not competent or not well informed in that matter.

You can contact the Refugee Community Organisations for assistance and for any information you may need. The following list is not exhaustive.

## **Afro-British Support Services "IMPACT"**

17 Stoney Lane  
Balsall Heath  
Sparkbrook  
Birmingham  
B12 8DL  
Tel: 0121 773 9426, 0121 773 5325  
Fax: 0121 772 7463  
Email: [info@afrobritish.co.uk](mailto:info@afrobritish.co.uk)  
Website: [www.afrobritish.org.uk](http://www.afrobritish.org.uk)  
Languages: Somali, Amharic, Tigrinya, Swahili, French, Arabic, Oshie (West Africa), Acholi (East Africa and Sothorn Sudan), Bajuni (East Africa), Pidgin English,

## **Afghan Youth & Family Association**

14 Halescroft Square  
Northfield  
Birmingham  
B31 1HF  
Telephone: 0121 243 4007  
Languages: Afghanistan

## **Cite Celeste Francophone Community**

The Wardlow Road Centre  
Wardlow Road  
Nechells  
Birmingham  
B7 4JH  
Tel: 0121 464 3555  
Languages: French

# Refugee Community Organisations

## Midland Vietnamese Refugee Community Association

8 Charleville Rd  
Handsworth  
Birmingham  
West Midlands  
B19 1DA  
Tel: 0121 554 9685  
Languages: Vietnamese

## Windows for Sudan

109a Digbeth  
Meriden Street  
Birmingham B5 6DT  
Tel: 0121 643 9850  
Email: winsudan@yahoo.co.uk  
Languages: Arabic and Amharic

## Refugee Housing and Support "REHOUSE"

288 Mary Street  
Balsall Heath  
Birmingham  
B12 RJ  
Tel: 0121 4465588  
Email: rehouse@btconnect.com

## CADA

109a Digbeth  
Birmingham  
B5 6DT  
Tel: 0121 633 7933  
Email: m.misindu@employabilityforum.co.uk  
Languages: French

## KARIBU

98 Broom Hall Crescent  
Acocks Green  
Birmingham  
B27 7JS  
Telephone: 0121 777 9225

## Somali Disability and Elderly Support Group

97 Grange Road  
Small Heath  
Birmingham  
B10 9QT  
Tel: 0121 753 0035  
Languages: Somali

## Bosnia-Herzegovina UK Network

172 Herbert Road Small Heath Birmingham B10 OPR  
Telephone: 0121 772 3052  
Languages: Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian

## Asylum and Refugee Council

14a Highgate Craft Square, Highgate Square, Birmingham,  
B12 0DU  
Tel: 0121 440 5097  
Languages: Somali

## Baran Development Association

130 Soho Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B19 1AF  
Tel: 0121 507 0166  
Languages: Kurdish

## Ethiopian Community in the West Midlands

The Wardlow Road Centre, Wardlow Road, Nechells,  
Birmingham, B7 4JH  
Tel: 0121 464 3555  
Languages: Amharic

## Ugandan Community

Asbury Overseas house, 3 college walk, Selly Oak,  
Birmingham, B29 6LF  
Tel: 0121 471 3137  
Languages: Acholi, Lou (East Africa and Southern Sudan)





THE HORSE WAS GIVEN TO THE CITY OF  
Oxford by the Duke of Devonshire  
in 1850. It was the gift of  
the Duke of Devonshire to the  
City of Oxford, and it was  
the gift of the Duke of Devonshire  
to the City of Oxford.





