



# Asylum and Refugee Network - QARN

## Asylum seekers and refugees

### What do Quakers hope for after the 2024 General Election?

#### Why are Quakers concerned?

Quakers are calling for the UK to welcome refugees and uphold international law. We believe that the life of the Spirit is in everyone. Compassion and justice should be the central principles of asylum policy. The recent Illegal Migration Act is the culmination of punitive migration policies and puts the UK in a shameful 'race to the bottom' internationally.

During this election we can ask MPs and voters to support fair and humane practical alternatives – policies that will allow the UK to have a credible role in international arrangements for migration and asylum. This leaflet summarises several **key recommendations**. For more detail visit the QARN website.

#### A planned, coordinated response

**We recommend** working constructively with other countries, especially in Europe, to assist refugees. Richer countries should play their part, as 83% of the world's refugees are hosted by low- and middle-income countries.

#### Faster, fairer decisions

Currently more than two-thirds of asylum seekers wait over six months for an initial decision.

**We recommend** investing in the provision of effective legal help so that people seeking asylum can properly present their cases.

#### Allow asylum seekers to work

They can earn income, start to integrate and contribute their skills in our communities.

#### Safe and regular routes

**We recommend** using a similar system of online, fee-free permission to travel to the UK as has been offered to Ukrainian and Hong Kong nationals.

**We recommend** a radical amendment of the so-called Illegal Migration Act. The right to a fair hearing of all asylum claims should be reinstated.

#### Alternatives to immigration detention

**We recommend** adopting alternatives to detention that are supportive and cheaper.

#### End exorbitant fees for migrants who have 'Leave to Remain'

**We recommend** reducing the visa renewal fees so that they cover only the cost of administration.

**We recommend** introducing a fee waiver for the application for permanent residence and reducing the number of years' wait to five.

#### What can we do?

The General Election gives Friends opportunities to urge that Britain honour its obligations under international law and that protections for refugees be restored.

**Suggest alternatives**

**Help refugees to have a voice**

**Challenge the lies**

**Visit the QARN website**

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