The Newsflash is a two-weekly round up of publications, information, events, funding and jobs relating to asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers for anyone who wants to keep up to date with the latest developments.

The newsflash is produced by the East of England Local Government Association - Strategic Migration Partnership.

**Asylum Seekers and Refugees**

**UK Visas and Immigration announce asylum financial support restructure**
Asylum Financial Support has completed a restructure of its operations. The restructure has seen a shift away from Financial Support matters being dealt with in the region which the service user lived, to four specialised areas delivering defined aspects of Financial Support as follows:

- **Assessment**: The Assessment Team processes initial applications for support (ASF1s), will handle any appeals related to decisions made and manage the case whilst the service user is in Initial Accommodation. Contact details: e: asylumsupportIAreferrals@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk efax: 0870 336 9623 t: 0300 123 1690. Senior manager Lisa Taylor e: lisa.taylor2@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk t: 01733 847825

- **Accommodation Monitoring Team**: The Accommodation Request Team will manage the case once it has been issued to the accommodation provider, up to and including arrival at the dispersal accommodation or Failure to Travel. Contact details: e: AsylumSupportAccommodationMonitoringTeam@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk fax: 0141 555 1561 t: 0141 555 1418 (9am to 5pm). Senior manager Asma Nazir e: asma.nazir@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk t: 0208 196 0347

- **Section 95 (S95) casework**: The S95 Casework Team take responsibility for the case once the case has reached the ‘Group Dispersal’ stage and is ready for ongoing S95 support to be set up and will deal with any casework up to and including the termination of support. Contact details:
  - General – e: nationals95casework@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk fax: 0870 336 9627 t: 0300 123 2235 (9.30am – 3pm Monday to Friday).
  - Cessations/discontinuation of S95 support – e: NationalAsylumSupportCessations@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk fax: 0870 336 9628 t: 0300 123 2235 (9.30am – 3pm Monday to Friday).
  - Senior managers: Jon Morris e: jon.morris@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk t: 0208 196 5154 and Ian Barrow e: ian.barrow@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk t: 0151 213 6565.

- **Section 4 team**: This team remains unchanged. Contact details: E: Section4nationalteam@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk fax: 0870 336 9485 t: 0113 386 5723 (2pm – 4pm). Senior manager Claire Dale e: Claire.dale@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk t: 0113 386 5795.

**Chief Inspector of Prisons’ report into unannounced inspection of Yarl’s Wood Immigration removal centre**
Yarl’s Wood immigration removal centre in Bedfordshire held 354 detainees at the time of this inspection. Most of those held were single women but the centre also held a number of adult families and there was a short-term holding facility for single men. The centre has been controversial since it opened in 2001 and in recent months it has been the subject of new allegations about the treatment of women held there and the conduct of staff. We last inspected the centre in June 2013 and at that time concluded that the centre was improving, although significant concerns remained and for the most vulnerable women we found the decision to detain was much too casual. This inspection found that in some important areas the treatment and conditions of those held at the centre had deteriorated significantly, the main concerns we had in 2013 had not been resolved and there was greater evidence of the distress caused to vulnerable women by their detention. We did not find evidence of a widespread abusive or hostile culture among staff – although there were some matters of concern. Women told us about, and we observed, positive attempts by staff to ameliorate the impact of detention for those in their
care, although staff numbers and training gaps limited what they could do. Please follow this link to read the report in full: https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/08/Yarls-Wood-web-20151.pdf. Please follow this link to read a response from the Refugee Council: Prisons watchdog slams deteriorating Yarl’s Wood as ‘national concern’

Migrant Help announcement - Asylum Help temporary service limitations
Due to the high numbers of new clients currently arriving into the Initial Accommodation, Migrant Help may have to temporarily reduce some of their proactive outreach and multi-agency drop-in asylum activities. Their advice sessions within the Initial Accommodation sites and reactive outreach services continue unaffected and the national Asylum Helpline (0808 8000 630) continues to support any other clients requiring assistance. They hope to bring them back up to the previous levels of engagement as soon as it is operationally possible.

Home Office International and Immigration Policy Group - consultation on reform of support for failed asylum seekers and other illegal migrants
The consultation document can be found on GOV.UK at: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reform-of-support-for-failed-asylum-seekers-and-other-illegal-migrants
The consultation impact assessment can be found on GOV.UK at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reforming-support-for-failed-asylum-seekers-and-other-illegal-migrants-impact-assessment
At the end of the consultation document there are some particular issues on which the organisers would like to hear about. A template is provided, if needed. Please send us your views by email to: FASSupportConsultation2015@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. The final date for responses is 9 September 2015. Please see events for another opportunity to feedback on this consultation.

Migrant Children’s Project newsletter – July 2015
This latest newsletter includes a summary of the Supreme Court case R (Tigrere) v Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills which found that the rule which prevented those with limited leave to remain from accessing student loans could not be justified. Please access the newsletter in full to read about what this means for those with leave to remain who would like to access student finance. The newsletter also has items on legal aid and details training courses offered by the Migrant Children’s Project, plus migration news stories. Please follow this link to access the newsletter in full: MCP July newsletter - access to higher education, legal aid, asylum support & more

Migration

How to improve support and services for destitute migrants – report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation
This report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation looks at:
- who destitute migrants are and why they are destitute;
- the services and support that is available;
- how that support could be improved;
- how best to provide accommodation and other forms of support; and
- areas where there may be legal question marks, providing reassurance through legal opinion.”
Migrant workers accessing healthcare in Norfolk – report from HealthWatch Norfolk
The aim of the research, was to identify, by working with GYROS in Great Yarmouth, KLARS in Kings Lynn and Keystone in Thetford, whether there are cultural or practical barriers experienced by Norfolk’s migrant worker communities when accessing GP and acute health services in Norfolk. The report concludes that such barriers do exist but that they are complex, arising from differences in cultural norms and practices around accessing such services in countries of origin, as well as in cultural and practical barriers that exist within the UK system. Please follow this link to read the report in full:
A further report looks at maternity services, with one chapter dedicated to experiences of migrant workers. Please follow this link to access the report in full:
http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/sites/default/files/hwn_report_on_maternity_services_in_norfolk.pdf

Government announces new measures to crackdown on rogue landlords, making Britain a harder place for illegal migrants to operate
The announcement outlines the measures which will result in quicker eviction of illegal immigrants and the blacklisting and banning of rogue landlords. Please follow this link to read the announcement in full: New measures to crackdown on illegal immigrants renting properties - Press releases - GOV.UK

All public sector employees who work directly with the public to have fluent English
New legislation requiring every public sector worker employed in a public-facing role to speak fluent English will be introduced in September, Cabinet Office Minister Matt Hancock confirmed. This will mean that all public sector organisations must ensure that staff can communicate effectively with the public, to what is expected to be at least ‘level 2’ – equivalent to a C or above at GCSE. This requirement would increase depending on the nature of the role and profession. Doctors, for example, are already required to have a much higher level of English. Organisations including the NHS, armed forces and state-funded schools will all be bound by a new code of practice which will be produced following a consultation in the autumn. The legislation and code of practice will apply to both existing and new employees working in public-facing roles. Please follow this link to read the announcement in full.
All public sector employees who work directly with the public to have fluent English - Press releases - GOV.UK

Modern slavery offenders face life in jail as Modern Slavery Act comes into force.
On 31st July the new Modern Slavery Act came into force. The first series of measures, focused on criminal justice provisions, to come into force include:
- ensuring that those who commit these crimes are subject to the toughest possible asset recovery regime.
- introducing Slavery and Trafficking Reparation orders, which encourage the courts to use seized assets to compensate victims.
- the commencement of regional pilots of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) – the system used across Government and by various agencies to refer, protect and support victims of modern slavery.
The Prime Minister announced that, following consultation, additional provisions that address the prevention of slavery in supply chains will come into force in October. The turnover threshold for businesses who must declare what steps they are taking to tackle modern slavery has been set at £36m. Additional provisions of the Act which further address support for victims will be introduced later this year. Please follow this link to read the announcement in full:
Modern slavery offenders face life in jail as Modern Slavery Act comes into force. - News stories - GOV.UK
(thanks to the East Midlands SMP for these items).
**Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) report into salary thresholds under tier 2 of the points based system**

The MAC has urged the government to be cautious over any early decision to raise the minimum salary requirements for skilled migrant workers, pending the completion of the MAC’s wider review of the Tier 2 route later this year. In its report, “Review of Tier 2: An analysis of salary thresholds”, the MAC sets out its preference for using occupation-specific salary thresholds, but does not at this stage make recommendations on minimum salary thresholds for individual roles. The MAC has, however, concluded that there is a good case for increasing the overall minimum threshold for Tier 2 (General) — currently £20,800 - because this was calculated in 2009 when the skill requirement for migrant workers was much lower than it is now. The report also suggests that work is needed to consider the impact of the Tier 2 (General) monthly limit being reached in June and July, particularly given that applications for Certificates of Sponsorship for those lower-paying occupations not on the Shortage Occupation List are at greater risk of being refused. The MAC believes the government should consider looking at some professions, including some healthcare roles and graduate recruitment schemes, separately from the Tier 2 limit in order to address these issues in the short-term. Please follow this link to read the report in full: Review of Tier 2: analysis of salary thresholds - Publications - GOV.UK

**Migration Watch report – Economic characteristics of migrants in the UK in 2014**

The report looks at key labour market outcomes of migrants to the UK. The report finds wide variation, particularly in employment status, wages and benefit claims. In these terms migrants from some regions have particularly strong economic characteristics compared to those born in the UK while others have much weaker economic characteristics. Please follow this link to read the report in full: MigrationWatchUK | 1.42 : Economic characteristics of migrants in the UK in 2014

**Events**

**ESOL for all levels: information and assessment day – 2 September, Great Yarmouth**

Information and initial assessments for Great Yarmouth College will take place at Artillery Square (near St. George’s Park and Nelson Road Central in the centre of Great Yarmouth) between 9.30am and 3pm and from 6pm to 9pm. For more information, please call t: 01493 419 266 or 01493 419 290.

**Local authority duties to adults and families with no recourse to public funds who are at risk of homelessness, training workshop – 14 September, Bury St Edmunds**

A course for front line advice workers who refer NRPF clients to Social Services for accommodation and/or financial support. With increasing numbers of NRPF clients in the East of England, this course, delivered by Catherine Houlcroft from the NRPF Network, will help advisers to develop their understanding of how to respond to NRPF clients in urgent need. The training is appropriate for practitioners who are working with families who face restrictions to welfare benefits on account of their immigration status in the UK and are at risk of becoming homeless. The workshop sets out the statutory context of social services provision, what assessments must be undertaken and the information that would be needed by social services if a referral is made for support. Course content includes:
- An overview of NRPF, what this means and who this applies to
- Local authority duties to adults and children & families, and exclusions to support
- Case studies
- Policy challenges and the work of the NRPF Network

The course is recommended for those working with in NRPF clients in district and borough housing services, customer services’ advice staff in councils or charities, or domestic abuse advisers. Please follow this link for more information and to register to attend: Local authority duties to adults and families with no recourse to public funds who are at risk of homelessness. | Events | EELGA SMP
Trauma Informed Care for Vulnerable & Marginalised Adults – 17 September, Stowmarket

This event will take place 9.30am – 4.00pm (provisionally), at Haughley Park Barn, Stowmarket, IP14 3JY.

The Objectives of the day will be:
- To enhance awareness amongst practitioners and organisations who deliver services to marginalised and vulnerable adults with histories of trauma.
- To identify current efforts by services to provide trauma informed and trauma specific interventions and to increase awareness of evidence based practices.

The outcome of the day will be to draw up a summary of the key elements that come out of a workshop style event and share those with a wider audience in Suffolk; with the intention of informing service development and partnership working for the benefit of this client group. Lunch & refreshments will be provided. Please register your interest in attending this event to e: sarah.hutchings3@nhs.net. Confirmations will then be sent confirming full details and our agenda for the day.

Effective fundraising: Showing the value of what you do: courses from Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum - September 5, 12 or 19, Cambridge

Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum and TCHC is offering free training help groups in applying for funding, helping them to clearly describe what they hope to do and the value and benefits of this work. The training will be run on the following Saturdays; 5, 12 and 19 September from 10 to 1 at the Meadows Community Centre, 1 St Catharine’s Road, Cambridge CB4 3XJ. The course covers the following:
- measuring need and planning work to meet need;
- what do terms such as vision, mission, outcomes, outputs mean;
- how you set your overall aim and goals to achieve your aim;
- how you collect evidence to measure progress;
- what measuring impact means;
- how you describe benefits of your work;
- how you use this knowledge to write effective funding applications.

Please contact the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum on t: 01223 655241 if you are interested in this training, stating which date you would like to attend or email them on e: eddie@cecf.co.uk. Please note places are limited so please apply as soon as possible.

Cultural Competence for health professionals training from Mind – 24 September, Norwich

A culturally competent health care system can help improve health outcomes and quality of care, and can contribute to the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities. Examples of strategies to move the health care system towards these goals include providing relevant training on cultural competence and cross-cultural issues to health professionals and creating policies that reduce administrative and linguistic barriers to patient care.’

This training is facilitated in an informal style with a mixture of facilitator’s and participants’ experiences. A variety of interactive delivery methods are applied which may include: short lecture-based learning, practical and fun problem-solving exercises, case studies, audio visual material, individual reflection and assessment, small and large group discussions with high levels of participation. To book a place, first request a booking form from Amrita Kulkarni on e: cdwmanager@norwichmind.org.uk or t: 01603 432 457. The free workshop will be held at Norwich and Central Norfolk Mind, 50 Sale Road, Norwich NR7 9TP from 9.30am to 4.30pm.

PARCA announces dates of ESOL classes for 2015-2016 – Peterborough

Classes will start in the week beginning 7 September and end 18 December, starting in 2016 the week beginning 5 January, ending 26 February. Classes are available Monday to Friday, with classes available until 7pm on a Monday and Tuesday. For more information, please contact PARCA on t: 01733 563420 or e: info@parcaltd.org
Funding

Asylum, migration and integration fund (AMIF) programme – guidance from UK Visas and Immigration
This document provides information about the funds used to support initiatives which help integrate and protect vulnerable refugees by settling them in the UK and supporting programmes for voluntary returns. This document includes information about:
- legal migration
- voluntary return programme
- AMIF programme objectives
- resettlement
- integration
Please follow this link to read the document in full: Asylum, migration and integration fund programme - Publications - GOV.UK

Active Communities
Active Communities is a funding programme for community groups and not-for-profit organisations, with an income of less than £350,000 a year or an average of £350,000 over two years, seeking investment of between £5,000 and £50,000 for projects lasting up to two years. They are looking for small and local projects, designed and run by local people. By small, they mean a small group of people on an estate, in a few streets or villages. They are also looking for ideas from communities of interest - a group of people who have things in common and wish to come together to address something that is important to them. These ideas could be based in one neighbourhood, or cover a wider area. The application process is online with a step by step guide from start to finish. Using money raised by society lotteries through The Health Lottery, Active Communities will soon be open in these places:
- HealthCourage - Hertfordshire, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Bedford
For more information, please follow this link: Homepage | People's Health Trust

Jobs

Barnardo’s National FGM Centre - Senior Social Workers – Suffolk (SEA369) and Essex (SEA370), £27131 - £30968p.a. plus Outer Fringe Allowance: £574 p.a. for Essex post. Full time
Barnardo’s are now seeking two Senior Social Workers to work on a project funded by the DfE Innovations Grant and run in partnership with Local Government Association (LGA). The National FGM Centre will work to address and eradicate FGM in England. The post holder will work as part of a UK wide team of skilled and experienced staff providing a range of social work and support intervention to girls, women and their families affected by FGM. The post holder will work in a named geographical area but may also be required to work within the other pilot areas (currently Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk).

As an experienced social worker (to include 2 years post qualification experience) you will have a good knowledge of how FGM impacts on the lives of girls, women and their families and its links to child protection and Safeguarding. A qualified and experienced social worker you will have a good knowledge of legislation in your field and have experience of applying child protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures. You will have an ability to supervise staff. Barnardo’s considers that being female is a Genuine Occupational Requirement for this post under the Equality Act 2010. For more information please follow this link for the Suffolk post: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/jobs_current_vacancy_select?id=45022&type=Children%27s+Services&area=Head+Office+%28Greater+London%29&jobref=SEA369 and this link for the Essex post: http://www.barnardos.org.uk/jobs_current_vacancy_select?id=45024&type=Children%27s+Services&area=Head+Office+%28Greater+London%29&jobref=SEA370. The closing date for applications is 25 August.
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