

# IAP NEWS

No 70

The newsletter for the Inter-Agency Partnership November

Welcome to the November Edition of IAP News. This edition features: Case Resolution Updates, BIA Pilot information, Section 4 leaflet launch, UK Borders Bill update and a Profile on the Welsh Refugee Council.

asylum  
support  
programme

## Case Resolution Updates

### 1. NINO application forms for granted families

In October the National Insurance Number (NINO) Fastpath was introduced. This means that all families granted status under the case resolution programme (CRP) will be sent NINO application forms alongside their grant of status letter.

BIA will send a NINO application form for every family member over the age of 16. Each person's form will contain their personalised reference number. A list of these unique reference numbers will be sent to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) so that they can ensure the correct people are issued NINOs under this fastpath system. DWP will not accept photocopied forms – it is important that applicants use the original form that they were individually sent.

The Borders and Immigration Agency (BIA) have confirmed that they will include a pre-paid envelope alongside the form. The forms will be processed by DWP in Scotland and a NINO will be issued directly to the applicant within 7 days.

All the documentation is in English only but the BIA will be including an information sheet in several languages which alerts the person that this is important documentation and that they should seek assistance and advice if they need it.

Any families who have received a grant letter before this process was introduced, or who are going through the NAM process, will need to apply for a NINO from the JobCentre Plus as normal. DWP will not accept forms from anyone who is not on the 'fastpath' list.

*continued:*

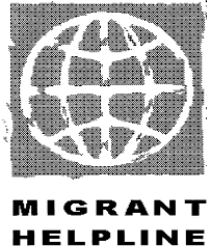
BIA advises that families should send their application form to:

- a. DWP in the prepaid envelope only if their letter states:  
*"A National Insurance number (NINO) application form...has been included in this pack..."*
- b. Or contact the JobCentre Plus, as normal, if their grant letter states:  
*" You are / Your client is permitted to work and does / does not need the permission of any Government Department before doing so. If you..[do] not already have a National Insurance Number [you] must contact the [DWP] in order to apply for one..."*

All supported families who have been granted ILR are exempt from the Habitual Residency Test, regardless of whether they fall under the old or new National Insurance number systems.

### **2. Timeframe for decisions**

The timeframe has been extended - all decisions should be sent out by the beginning of March 2008. BIA have agreed to phase grants across this period to help ease pressure on Local Authority Homelessness teams. Currently BIA there are a few decisions per LA area per week. This amount is likely to increase in November and January, decreasing slightly in December.



*Case resolution update – continued*

### 3. Status

Families that meet the CRD criteria will receive Indefinite Leave to Remain rather than Refugee status so will not qualify for an Integration Loan.

However ILR is permanent whereas at present someone's Refugee status can be reviewed after 5 years.

### 4. Section 4

Pre-NAM Section 4 cases will now come under the responsibility of the Case Resolution Directorate (CRD). If individuals have a NAM caseowner, their caseowner will continue to make all decisions related to their support including Section 4 applications and reviews.

Where cases fit the general CRD criteria, outstanding Section 9 cases will be reviewed by the CRD.

### 5. Contacting CRD

- **Telephone** - Details of a duty caseowner from each CRD team will be listed on the questionnaire sent to each family.

### **BIA pilot for refused asylum seeking families in Leeds - Clannebohr**

The Clannebohr Project is a pilot scheme run by the regional BIA Enforcement and Removals Team in Yorkshire and Humberside. BIA's stated aim is to address the removal of appeal rights exhausted (ARE) families in local authorities areas of Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees by looking at ways in which families who have no legal rights to remain in the UK can be encouraged to engage in voluntary return.

Its target group is families whose cases are 12 months old and who have reached the end of the asylum process. It was set up in July of last year and is due to end at the end of December 2007.

Local refugee services have raised concerns about the project with BIA directly. BIA state that support be not be withdrawn from families at any point during the process. The pilot will be evaluated but at the moment there are no plans to introduce it elsewhere in the UK. We will keep you updated on any developments.

### **Section 4**

A new information leaflet on Section 4 support has been written and translated into 18 languages and will be up on the Refugee Council's Multilingual site shortly.

Click here for info:

<http://languages.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

The Section 4 team is consulting stakeholders on additional support in exceptional circumstances for those on Section 4 support. The deadline for this is 6<sup>th</sup> November. We will keep you updated on this.

### **UK Borders Bill**

In January of this year the UK borders Bill was introduced to the House of Commons. The Government stated their intention to give the immigration service more powers to police the country's borders, tackle immigration crime, and make it easier to deport those who break the law. In practice the bill includes a raft of measures relating to immigration and asylum, including powers for immigration officers to monitor who comes in and out of the UK and reporting restrictions for those granted leave to remain.

The Bill has passed through the House of Commons, and Lords and has now been given Royal Assent. Several amendments were proposed throughout this process, including a repeal of Section 9 (not carried).

For a full list of amendments, please click here: [http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200607/uk\\_borders.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/pabills/200607/uk_borders.htm)

# IAP Profile

## The Welsh Refugee Council

It has been an exciting year for us at the Welsh Refugee Council, firstly with the appointment in January of Aled Eirug as our new Chair and secondly with the new Chief Executive, Mike Lewis starting in post in June- just in time for Refugee Week.

May saw the Assembly Elections here in Wales and WRC, together with its key partners, produced a manifesto for refugees and asylum seekers which all four party leaders signed up to. The manifesto named "We'll Keep a Welcome" contained five key pledges to improve the lives of asylum seekers and refugees in Wales:

1. Welcome people seeking safety from persecution
2. Empower refugees to rebuild their lives
3. Provide fair and equal access to services
4. Protecting children and young people
5. Develop a strong evidence base

Since the election we have been busy pushing for the realisation of the action under pledge 3 which will ensure that refused asylum seekers have access to free secondary health care by the National Health Service. Having gathered evidence, a detailed briefing on the issue has been prepared and sent to the new Minister for Social Justice, Brian Gibbons and a response should be imminent.

Linked into our work around this is the All Wales Destitution Taskforce- a group which promotes the aims of the national Still Human Still Here campaign in Wales. Over the summer the group held an "Eat and Greet" event where politicians were invited to come along to hear about the experiences of some destitute asylum seekers. The event was followed by a sleep-out outside the BIA office building in Cardiff City Centre with the aim of raising public awareness of destitution. Around 60 people took part in the sleep out and over £1000 was raised for the Asylum Justice and WRC Hardship Fund which gives small amounts of cash to destitute asylum seekers.

The summer also saw the launch of the first WRC website. The long awaited website includes sections on news and events, policy and publications and much more. It can be visited at [www.welshrefugeecouncil.org](http://www.welshrefugeecouncil.org)

Last month, WRC's Equal Team launched a report into refugee employment in Wales at a conference in Cardiff. The Refugee Skills Audit Report is the first of its kind in Wales and the results were astounding. The research found that of the refugees that took part in the audit:

- 64% were currently unemployed
- 60% had a further or higher education qualification
- 78% were working for employers, were self-employed or working in a family business before they were forced to flee their country of origin

Speakers at the launch event included Eluned Morgan MEP and refugees who told the audience of their experiences in trying to enter the world of employment in Wales and the barriers they faced. The Equal Team are touring Wales during November with a series of seminars which details the findings of the report.

With the new leadership and direction it has been a busy and exciting time for Welsh Refugee Council and there is no sign of slowing down yet. Watch this space!

## Bulletin Board

### **ADVERT FOR REFUGEE COUNCIL CONFERENCES**

Building Communities: Equality and diversity in action

**Wednesday 7 November 2007, Leeds**

**Wednesday 28 November 2007, London**

The past year has seen massive developments in the fields of refugee integration, community cohesion and equality and diversity, including Home Office proposals for national refugee integration services and the Commission on Integration and Cohesion's report, *Our shared future*. This creates new challenges for those working with refugees and asylum seekers to facilitate integration, at a time when Government efforts to speed case-resolutions are increasing pressure on the capacity of service providers to meet demands.

Looking at examples from education, employment and housing, these two distinct conferences will call for the distinct needs and experiences of refugees to be reflected in these developments and captured in policy making.

Speakers include:

- **Donna Covey**, *Chief Executive, Refugee Council*
- **Inderjit Bhogal**, *Director, Yorkshire and Humber Faith Forum and Founder and Chair*
- **Professor Simon Lee**, *Vice Chancellor, Leeds Metropolitan University*
- **Patrick Wintour**, *Director, Employability Forum*
- **Meg Hillier MP**, *Parliamentary Under Secretary of State*
- **Danny Sriskandarajah**, *Director of Research Strategy and Head of Migration, Equalities and Citizenship, IPPR*
- **Roger Kline**, *National Head of Equality and Employment Rights, UCU*
- **Jon Williams**, *Senior Project Manager, LORECA*
- **Heather Petch**, *Director, Hact*

Rates

- Full: £339.00 (central government/business)
- Reduced: £299.00 (public/educational body/local government)
- Supported: £130.00 (voluntary organisation)
- 10% discount for attending both events

For more information, please email [marketing@refugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:marketing@refugeecouncil.org.uk), telephone 020 7346 6737, or visit: [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/conferences](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/conferences)

**Please send articles that you would like to appear in the December edition of IAP News to:**

Lucy Yallop

Information & Research Co-ordinator

Inter-Agency Co-ordination Team

Refugee Council

240-250 Ferndale Road

London SW9 8BB

Tel: 020 7346 1156

Fax: 020 7737 3306

Email: [lucy.yallop@refugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:lucy.yallop@refugeecouncil.org.uk)

**Closing date for submissions is Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November.**