



# Equalities Gathering Housing



This project is part funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union.

## Section 1 Event Details



Event Title	Equalities Gathering – Housing
Event organised by	Equalities Integration Officer
Event Venue	Calton Heritage Learning Centre, Glasgow
Event Date	Saturday 13th July 2019
Event Start – End times	10.00 – 3.30pm



## Section 2 Event Agenda

Time	Activity	Outcome
9.00 – 10.00 1 hour	Set up	Signs for outside Reg table, ready Refreshments ready Table discussion materials ready Equalities Mon. Box ready
10.00 – 10.30 30 mins	Registration	Welcome folk. People know how crèche works People allocated interpreters Photo permissions info rcvd People get info on NS in own languages & EMon. form
10.30 – 10.40 10 mins	<b>Welcome/ Housekeeping/ Intro – TF (community rep)</b> What the Equalities Gatherings are Aims of Equalities Gatherings Good and safe communication today	People informed about whole project People informed about Aims People aware of conduct and values
10.40 – 10.50 10 mins	<b>Meet someone new</b>	People learn about working group's responses on health and wellbeing and are inspired for following conversations
11.05 – 11.20 15 mins	<b>Presentation – Anas</b>	People understand asylum seeker key responses to NS asylum housing
11.20 – 11.35 15 mins	<b>Presentation – Grant</b> (Scottish Refugee Council rep for New Scots Housing implementation group)	People understand key NS actions on asylum & refugee housing; progress & challenges
11.40 – 11.50 10 mins	Instructions for table groups Time for people to move to tables	People hopefully seated OK!
12.00 – 1.00 1 hour 40 50 mins – 1 obj 50 mins – 2nd obj	<b>Discussion</b> x 2 tables on Needs of AS x 2 tables on Housing Could change depending on numbers/ interest	People get their views about housing actions heard & recorded People make recommendations
1.00 – 2.00 1 hour	<b>LUNCH</b> + Collation of small group discussions – prep key points on Powerpoint + Services reps prepare their info & set up	Summary of feedback ready for 2pm Services rep clear on role

## Section 2

### Event Agenda continued

Time	Activity	Outcome
2.00 – 2.10 10 mins	<b>Summary</b> Key points raised from AM discussions	People understand key points People know that New Scots will take points and feed back at a future event
2.10 – 3.10pm 1 hour	<b>Services information discussions</b> Input from agency for 20 mins, move round 3 times	People informed about purpose of various education and equalities services People know how to access them/know how to help others access them
3.10 – 3.30pm 20 mins	<b>Evaluation</b>	Data gathered on how well event met aims Target evals Graffiti walls Verbal evaluation

## Section 3

### Attendees

#### Total number of attendees

36 (22 refugee community members)

#### Identify organisations attending in an official capacity

- Scottish Refugee Council (6 staff & volunteers)
- Migrant Help
- Shelter
- ASH Project
- Youth and Community Support Agency

#### Identify 'groups' contributing to the event

Two independent childminders, Mismak caterers, Thenue Housing venue

#### Identify refugee groups from geographic areas

Glasgow

## Section 4

### Event Reporting

At registration: copies of the following were handed to attendees: New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy summary available in four languages; 'easy read' versions we had created of the Needs of Asylum Seekers and Housing objectives; copies of the guidelines for communicating at the event in English, French and Arabic (translations by refugee working group members), agendas.

The Equalities Gathering on Housing aimed to:

- Bring together refugee representatives to identify and analyse their collective issues and priorities for change for asylum housing and refugee housing;
- Bring together refugees and other third sector/ community organisations to learn from each other's experiences and explore possibilities for working together.
- Enable equalities groups to meet and get to know policy makers and service providers involved the New Scots Integration Strategy.

Summary of the outcomes decided by the refugee working group (members all represent one or more equality group) who co-designed the format and agenda for the Gatherings:

- Learn what New Scots Strategy is and what it is doing;
- Speak up and get my opinions heard and understood;
- Meet people and make new connections;
- Get useful information and services;
- Feel welcomed and respected.

H from the refugee-led working group opened the event. He gave housekeeping information, presented the background to the Equalities Gatherings project, explained the purpose of the event and presented the guidelines for communicating positively and safely that the working group had developed.

A from the working group then gave a presentation on the group's collective views and analysis of the New Scots actions on the Needs of Asylum Seekers relating to asylum accommodation, in order to stimulate ideas for the attendees before discussion.

The Housing Officer at Scottish Refugee Council who is also a member of the New Scots Housing implementation group, updated attendees on the New Scots' progress on housing for refugees.

Discussion group tables were divided by theme: asylum housing and refugee housing. Attendees went to the themed table of their choice. Scottish Refugee Council staff facilitators took objectives in turn and asked discussion groups:

1. Are these the right actions? If not, why not?
2. Advice you would give New Scots;
3. Questions/comments.  
(See appendix 4 – facilitator's guide)

After lunch, the Equalities Integration Officer and the Housing Officer presented a summary of views and recommendations based on our initial reading of people's contributions and recommendations. We informed the participants that once we have fully analysed the emerging themes we will develop a fuller version of recommendations to be shared with New Scots. There will be follow up on this once there is feedback from agencies. Following this, Scottish Refugee Council (refugee housing), Migrant Help, Shelter, ASH Project, Youth and Community Support Agency set up information sessions on their services. Participants moved freely between them for information and discussion.

## Section 5

### Key messages/outcomes

**Full record of group discussions with equalities-specific examples that led to recommendations available.**

#### Asylum housing

- Help asylum seekers with physical support needs and mental health conditions to settle in an area or region where there are health and community services that are appropriate and easy to access.
- Pay particular attention to older people's need to be housed near members of communities that they belong to or trust – these communities help older people access local services and stop them from being isolated.
- Trial a project that matches asylum seekers with like-minded flatmates. Asylum seekers can safely talk about their identities when they apply for housing so the provider can match them according to identity (e.g. LGBT, age, religious background). If people can make friends with a flatmate because of shared identities, this can help increase safety, build connections, reduce isolation and loneliness and may reduce accommodation complaints about service or housemates.
- Establish 'first contact' peer groups of refugees and asylum seekers from different equalities groups trained in destitution policy. They can signpost, advocate for destitute asylum seekers from these groups because they know how destitution affects them.
- Review how you communicate with communities about your destitution work. Participants were not aware of this destitution report. Consider how you make this information accessible to refugee communities so they know and understand what you are doing, putting them in a better position to say what they think, and put resources into helping destitute people speak up and be part of the decision-making process.

- Scottish Government may not have powers over asylum policy but it must communicate clearly with communities how it can take a leading role to address known issues on asylum housing and destitution and explicitly mention equalities groups.
- Establish women-only emergency accommodation for destitute women.

#### Refugee housing

- Ensure that people from equalities groups access the right information at the point that they need it so they can understand systems, processes and terminology in time to make informed decisions.
- Organisations should ensure that they have a good understanding of how their service users' protected characteristics might impact their housing experiences before giving advice or referring onwards.
- Develop information sources that focus on housing advice which also link up the housing work of different statutory services and charities so that people receive accurate and consistent advice (so that people do not have to disclose sensitive/traumatising experiences linked to our protected characteristics multiple times).
- Housing advice must also include information on non-housing rights, entitlements and restrictions that can affect someone's housing or social security options.
- Support refugees to sit on housing association planning forums. Ensure these forums enable us to speak safely about our lived experiences we might otherwise not disclose (especially if LGBT or mental health issues). Help equalities groups organise peer-to-peer learning on housing information so we use our experience and knowledge to help other people like us.

## Section 6

### Scottish Refugee Council staff and volunteer debrief

#### What went well?

- Supporting refugee-led working group pre-event to produce a collective position on asylum housing – the group agreed on some different points and recommendations specific to equalities groups that were then endorsed by other refugee and asylum-seeking members who attended the event.
- Providing the opportunity for working group refugee reps to get practice in public speaking – both reps reported it was a good experience that developed their confidence.
- Pacing and content of the event maintained participants' energy: we limited the New Scots discussions to morning only and ensured people got practical 'take home' info from agencies in the afternoon post-lunch, as per the wishes of the refugee working group.

#### What did not go well/what could be done differently?

- No representatives from New Scots Strategy themed groups outside the Scottish Refugee Council or Scottish Government attended. The invited New Scots reps who could not attend fed back that this was because the event date fell on a weekend summer holiday date.
  - Need to secure New Scots reps involvement months in advance.
- Challenge to secure suitable weekend date. As most of May was Ramadan, the first good date recommended by community reps before the holidays clashed with the National Gathering, then the rest of June was Refugee Festival, where community members were organising or attending other events.
  - Book future Saturday events outside holidays much earlier.

- Facilitation plan for facilitators was quite complex: it presented too much detail on New Scots objectives and actions which was too much for participants to take in and too much for facilitators to go through. This made it complex to draw out the equalities group-specific information and analyse it, and to have time to get participants to analyse their experiences from an equalities point of view.
- Simplify further the New Scots main points – so participants can cover the broad points and have more time to explore their responses and provide deeper feedback.
  - Brief facilitators more clearly on asking equalities-specific questions.

**“Establish women-only emergency accommodation for destitute women.”**

## Section 6

# Refugee working group and equalities agencies debrief

### What went well?

- Sharing knowledge – everyone had a chance to share.
- People were nice and polite to each other.
- Organisations [Scottish Refugee Council Housing] listened to us about what we wanted in the Housing welcome pack for refugees.
- Helpful to know everyone's experience – learn from others about what may happen to me, or what could be useful for me.
- Learning and understanding others' [equalities groups] different experiences – some have it worse than me. [If] we can help the worst situations, we can help everyone.

### What did not go well/what could be done differently?

- It was unclear how well disabled people were represented – especially as many people have conditions that are not visible or which they don't want to disclose.
- Risk that people don't trust New Scots to make any change after these events.
  - Future event: New Scots rep gives an example of an existing problem and how New Scots changed it, what difference this made to people.

- People are disclosing the same issues as in 2014 – many equalities groups share the same issues that still haven't been solved. This is why Scottish Refugee Council may still be getting the same data.
  - For PM agency info sessions: Brief agencies to explicitly state in their inputs what rights and opportunities are available in their service for women, LGBT, disabled, older, younger people.
- Be clearer on confidentiality in group discussions/written feedback, so people know they cannot be identified by input they give in a group session. Even if info is anonymised, if the case is distinctive someone could be identified.

**“Ensure that people from equalities groups access the right information at the point that they need it so they can understand systems in time to make informed decisions.”**

## Section 7

# Attendee Evaluation

See Appendices 2 and 3 for target evaluation scores from attendees and event photos.

Attendees asked to comment on how well event did on the aims identified by the refugee working group (edit of comments)

### Speak up and get my opinions heard and understood

“I got many information about New Scots today – It's good opportunity to hear New Scots voices”

“It was well organized, that everyone was heard and spoke and expressed things from their perspective”

### Learn what the New Scots Strategy is and what it is doing

“It was very satisfying. I find something new about the Strategy and gave more details”

“Learn about New Scots plan is positive. I think it is going on to understand rights, responsibility about housing more. Thanks”

### Meet people and make new connections

“It was a great experience to meet new people and get new ideas and information”

“Loved making new friends”

“Nice welcoming and nice people I met”

### Get useful information about services

“I got to hear from different agencies that I had heard about but not met”

“So much useful ideas and practical in the way of thinking”

“They were useful and know how to deliver info in a simple way and they were very good listeners as well”

“It was very helpful in meeting new people and getting information in all the issues about what I might need”

### Feel welcomed and respected

“A very warm welcome”

“Feel at home”

“Everyone was very welcome and respectful”

### Feedback from an agency

#### General feedback

“I enjoyed seeing people's faces light up when they realised something helpful I was sharing/telling them”

“Consulting service users on what could/should be improved within the housing services very useful, perhaps how they can be implemented would be a nice addition”

“An accurate description of what would happen at the event was distributed beforehand”

“I got to meet different groups of people who may be potential service users”

“We got to discuss a lot of things”

**“It was well organised, that everyone was heard and spoke and expressed things from their perspective.”**

## Section 8

# Actual Expenditure

Please detail actual expenditure against the budget you produced for the event and highlight any discrepancies.

	Estimated cost	Actual cost
Event: Venue	£300.00	£244.00
Event: Refugee travel	£135.00	£117.80
Event: Catering	£400.00	£438.00 <sup>1</sup>
Event: Interpreters	£200.00	£187.50
Event: Childcare	£120.00	£100.00
Refugee prep workshops: Catering	£266.00	£327.60 <sup>2</sup>
Refugee prep workshops: Childcare	£90.00	£50.00 <sup>3</sup>
Refugee prep workshops: Travel	£184.00	£204.40 <sup>4</sup>
Materials/stationery	0	£21.93
Staff travel	0	£83.79 <sup>5</sup>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£1,775.02</b>

### Notes

1. Extra due to unplanned staff cost
2. Extra one workshop required: agenda too big to cover in planned two workshops.
3. Less childcare demand
4. One extra workshop needed for Event 1 as agenda too big
5. EIO transporting heavy items to and from event – taxi



Scottish Refugee Council  
(Glasgow – Main Office)  
6th Floor, Portland House  
17 Renfield Street  
Glasgow, G2 5AH  
0141 248 9799

Scottish Refugee Council  
(Dundee)  
10 Constitution Road  
Dundee, DD1 1LL  
01382 797881

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

Scottish Charity Number: SC008639  
Company Number: SC145067  
OISC Reference number: N200100084



This project is part funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union.

**WEA** Adult Learning  
Within Reach



SCOTTISH FAITHS  
ACTION FOR REFUGEES