

Appendix 2

VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR QUESTIONNAIRE (May/June 2017)

From your perspective, and those of asylum seekers using your service, what are the key asylum seeker issues/concerns/gaps in provision?	
Organisation	Response
Purple Rose Health & Wellbeing	Lack of awareness in the community about FGM especially among men because the focus is on women. Many Asylum Seekers are single and nobody is doing anything about it formally. Issues of illegality and consequences – the affected community hardly gets mainstream support on this issue. Lack of knowledge health problems associated with bad health. Funding to engage with the men is a problem.
One Community Link	Feeling vulnerable especially in this current political climate. Lack of adequate support to learn English. Inability to sustain current levels of support and the challenge of not getting support to further develop our community centre because there is no one doing that. We have gone to SCRAGA and there is nothing there.
Stockton African Caribbean Association (SACA)	Unfortunately, some members of our community are, through circumstances, beginning to engage in criminal activities, especially around driving and financial fraud. There is no one pro-actively doing work to reduce criminality amongst our members. Some of these people are less aware about the impact of this on their whole futures – such as future prospects of employment. Other than by word of mouth there is no formal programme to teach new arrivals and those who have been here longer about the options for a better life other than crime. So more and more crimes will potential happen.
Pro-Immigration Skills Project	If a group is predominantly run by Asylum Seekers it seems there is pretty little they can deliver given that the restrictions are increasing by day. Depending on others to do things for them is a problem. Being threatened with deportation when asylum seekers express a willingness to do more volunteering.
Open Hands North	Mental health illness in the RAS (refugee and asylum seeker) community is not being addressed adequately. Asylum seekers are struggling to handle the asylum system which promotes idleness and it is very limited what one can actually do. Asylum seekers in shared accommodation are exploding against each other but there is no one really doing anything about it. Lack of support that adequately address the RAS issues. When it has become too much people either go to the police or housing provider but it's largely ineffective. For Asylum seekers, the main thing to look forward to is the Drop-in which promotes interaction with others in a similar situation. The community's lack of understanding of services available for them. Elderly Asylum Seekers and Refugees are in a worse situation because most of them struggle with language, and nothing to do and the stress of isolation is too much for them. As more and more RAS are getting challenges our service is going to require more support but there is no adequate support. At the moment no one is actually helping us to establish our organisation well – the is no infrastructure support in Stockton.
Stockton Sudanese Community	Community safety is the major concern in our community: both as victims of hate and also to prevent risks of radicalisation of our children. The community fears negative attitudes developing because of unresolved community safety issues.
Self-Advancement Foundation & Education (SAFE)	Lack of a comprehensive hand holding support for people who are really into setting up business. Lack of visible and flexibility from council to support entrepreneurship. Stockton Council not taking advantage of the international links that has been brought by refugees in the area. Focus should not be on Riverside Festival only. Concerned about sustainability of our projects because everything so far is done by volunteers. Lack of resources to promote and deliver to more people.
Stockton Baptist Tabernacle Church	Delay in getting Home Office response for some people. Difficulty of managing a transition from Asylum Seeker to Refugee status in a 28 day time scale - it's a major change, and not easy getting everything in place for independent living, including moving out of Jomast accommodation. Could some joint training be organised to help volunteers/voluntary organisations support people through this process?
Christians Against Poverty (CAP)	Refugees sometimes have difficulties accessing ESOL provision at Stockton Riverside College (Free) and SBC Learning and Skills (Chargeable) courses. Many Refugees have attained a high level of education in their birth country, but those certificates are not recognised here by educational establishments for further education. NARIC provides a chargeable service, but some no longer have access to their transcript/certificates. They find it hard accessing loans to go to university to start employment in their previous careers here. I understand that the DWP has a pilot with Syrian resettlement program not sure what this entails? Maybe Refugees could have a language assessment and be allowed to concentrate on ESOL classes and reach a certain level before having to attend Job Centre Plus on such a regular basis and risk being sanctioned if they do not keep to their job seekers agreement due to language misunderstanding. Formal volunteering opportunities for Asylum Seekers so that when they get Refugee status they have some UK experience on their CV to help them get paid employment.