

Number: WG34432



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation – summary of responses

Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum

November 2018

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Introduction

On 22 March 2018, the Leader of the House and Chief Whip launched a consultation on the draft 'Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan' ('the Plan'), to seek views on proposals which are intended to develop and improve access to help, advice and services for people seeking sanctuary across Wales. The consultation also included proposals aimed at tackling inequality and poverty experienced by our communities.

2. Proposals

The consultation included many proposals. The principles ones are listed below under the four main themes of the Plan, which are also the themes of *Prosperity for All*, the national strategy for Wales:

Prosperous and Secure

- Ensure newly recognised refugees are supported to access suitable accommodation.
- Promote good quality accommodation provided by the UK Government.
- Support asylum seeker tenants to advocate improvements to their accommodation.

Ambitious and Learning

- Support employability and entrepreneurship for refugees.
- Promote financial inclusion for refugees and asylum seekers to avoid destitution, mitigate the impact of poverty and improve conditions for those who are on low incomes.
- Promote the Welsh Government as a place for refugees to work (subject to nationality rules).
- Work towards preventing refugees or asylum seekers becoming human trafficking or modern slavery victims.
- Promote awareness of apprenticeship opportunities with refugees to enable increased employment and learning opportunities.
- Tackle bullying in schools experienced by refugee and asylum seeker children.
- Increase opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to access further and higher education.
- Support and challenge local authorities and regional education consortia on actions they are taking directly, and through support to schools, to improve educational outcomes for all learners.

Healthy and Active

- Ensure the health needs of refugees and asylum seekers are assessed and the results are fed into service planning.
- Ensure barriers to healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers are reduced.
- Establish mechanisms to promote sharing of good practice for the improved health outcomes of refugee and asylum seeker communities.
- Create the conditions for every child from these backgrounds to have a healthy start in life.
- Reduce the prevalence of mental health conditions experienced by refugees and asylum seekers and support more effective diagnosis and treatment.
- Support refugee and asylum seeker participation in sport and physical activity.

United and Connected

- Ensure access to independent counselling services for refugee and asylum seeking children.
- Explore ways to raise take-up rates of the Foundation Phase early education entitlement by refugee and asylum seeking families.
- Support engagement by refugee and asylum seeker families in Flying Start programs to give children the best start in life.
- Promote Essential Skills for refugees and asylum seekers to improve employability prospects, social cohesion and school attainment levels for children, with ESOL still being the priority.
- Ensure refugees and asylum seekers are made aware of and are able to access support services provided through the Families First Programme.
- Support unaccompanied refugee and asylum seeking children to ensure they have access to the advice and advocacy they need.
- Support local authorities to ensure unaccompanied refugee and asylum seeking children can be adequately looked after.
- Support local authorities to ensure their staff and partners are able to safeguard refugee and asylum seeking children and adults.
- Provide cohesion support around the widening of dispersal areas and the resettlement of refugees.
- Foster good relations between refugees and asylum seekers and wider society.

3. Consultation

The consultation period ran from 22 March 2018 to 25 June 2018. Online versions of the consultation document and response forms were provided. We also accepted some late responses to ensure the widest possible ranges of responses were considered.

Ten questions were set out in a document which was available online and which could be returned either in hard copy or by email. The ten questions are as follows:

- 1** Do you agree with the actions within the Welsh Government's 'Nation of Sanctuary: Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan'?
- 2** Do you agree with the priority actions identified in the Ministerial foreword?
- 3** We want to ensure that other organisations and communities across Wales take action to support the concept of Wales as a 'Nation of Sanctuary'. How can we best work with others to achieve this?
- 4** Our aim is that everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential and lead a healthy, prosperous and fulfilling life, enabling them to participate fully in their communities and contribute to the future economic success of Wales. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?

- 5 We want everyone to live in a home that meets their needs and supports a healthy, successful and prosperous life. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?
- 6 We want the Welsh social care sector to support people to lead independent lives. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?
- 7 We want to ensure that mental health problems are not a barrier to achieving potential in all areas of life. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?
- 8 Every person should be equipped with the skills they need to get a job and the opportunity to develop new skills through their working life. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?
- 9 Can you identify any additional effects of this document (positive or adverse) on the Welsh Language, Equality or Children's Rights? To assist with this you will need to refer to the Welsh Language, Equality and Child Rights impact assessments which accompany this questionnaire.
- 10 We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them

We received 35 written responses to the consultation from organisations and individuals, 25 of which are listed below. The remaining 10 chose to remain anonymous.

Written Respondents	
Action on Smoking and Health (ASH)	Public Health Wales
Bevan Foundation	Red Cross
Cardiff Council / Ethnic Minority & Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS)	Sam Parker
Griff Taylor	Vicky Moller
Children's Commissioner for Wales	South Wales Police
Children in Wales	Tros Gynnal National Participation Forum
Dyfed Powys Police	Wales Strategic Migration Partnership
Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)	Welsh Language Commissioner
Ethnic Youth Support Team (EYST)	Welsh Presbyterian Church
Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner	Welsh Refugee Coalition
Gwent Police	Welsh Refugee Council
Newport County Council	Wrexham County Borough Council
Oxfam Cymru	

In addition to written responses, we consulted through the Welsh Refugee Council with people seeking sanctuary. This approach was taken to increase the confidence of potential respondents, as we felt they may have been less comfortable discussing changes directly with Government. Anonymous responses are incorporated below.

Finally, we have incorporated the views of young people seeking sanctuary who participated in a parallel consultation aimed at ensuring adequate services are in place to support vulnerable young people. This approach was taken to avoid consultation fatigue and confusion. A summary of these responses is included in section 4.9 below.

4. Responses to consultation questions

These responses to proposals summarise comments from the written and online representations.

4.1 Q.1 Do you agree with the actions within the Welsh Government's 'Nation of Sanctuary: Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan'?

Summary of written responses

34% of respondents to this question indicated that they agreed, and 34% said they 'mostly' agreed with the actions within the draft. 16% of responses gave no indication of their preference and 11% of respondents disagreed with the proposals.

Of the 68% who agreed or mostly agreed with the proposals, there were a variety of observations about the draft Plan and various questions and recommendations about what might or might not be built-in to the final Plan. Respondents including Oxfam Cymru, Wrexham Council and EYST praised the Plan's focus on reducing destitution and homelessness. The intention to not adopt a 'one size fits all' approach in the Plan was also commended

Overall, therefore, the Plan is broadly supported and welcomed by the stakeholders who responded. The overriding message in the responses was that the Welsh Government approach to improving integration and mitigating the effects of UK Government policies is positive and much needed.

Some of the concerns relating to the overall message of the Plan is that it has an aspirational feel which could be strengthened with more detail around how the commitments will be carried out and who will be responsible for them. More detail on timescales was also requested by some. ASH criticised the Plan for not including enough anti-smoking messages. Other concerns about poverty experienced by those in Wales who are not refugees and asylum seekers were also expressed by two anonymous respondents.

Feedback from People Seeking Sanctuary

(Received via Welsh Refugee Council focus groups on consultation questions)

Regarding the proposal about promoting good quality housing, one focus group participant reported that there are constant hygiene problems in their shared accommodation and issues around other residents using threatening behaviour. Another participant said there should be more LGBT based accommodation as there is constant discrimination and LGBT people seeking sanctuary get treated differently to non-LGBT community members.

With regards to employability, one person who has been recognised as a refugee urged the Welsh Government to do more to alert employers as to what refugee status actually means.

They feel that the stigma attached to that term can cause their chances of employability to decrease and it is used against them.

4.2 Q.2 Do you agree with the priority actions identified in the Ministerial foreword?

Summary of written responses

54% of responses agreed or broadly agreed with the actions identified in the Ministerial forward. 11% of the respondents disagreed and 35% did not respond to this particular question.

Several respondents were pleased that the Ministerial Forward identifies the areas where Welsh Government would like changes to UK Government asylum policy.

The Ministerial Foreword highlighting the skills, experience and resilience of refugees and asylum seekers and the value that these have to Wales was also praised. Respondents suggested that promoting this message more widely would potentially aid community cohesion.

One local authority raised concerns around the two tier system that has been inadvertently created by schemes such as the Syrian Resettlement Programme and issues around trauma in asylum seekers. They state that not all asylum seekers are trauma sufferers and this distinction needs to be made upon arrival as it would better allow their needs to be met.

Among the three responses disagreeing with the priority actions one came from a local authority which believed that English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision should be included in the priority list.

4.3 Q.3 We want to ensure that other organisations and communities across Wales take action to support the concept of Wales as a ‘Nation of Sanctuary’. How can we best work with others to achieve this?

Summary of written responses

57% of the responses on this question agreed, or mostly agreed, with the notion of a Nation of Sanctuary plan being developed by other organisations.

While the majority of stakeholders are in favour of the Plan, there were varying opinions on how best to integrate the Plan with other organisations. Cardiff Council, for example, stated that this approach would make it easier to have an overview of the impact and delivery of Nation of Sanctuary. South Wales Police agreed with the Plan and responded by saying that seeking actions from other organisations and communities would help to reinforce and embed the intentions and approaches set out in the Plan. Wrexham County Borough Council commented that the Welsh Government should remain in charge of this plan, as asking local authorities to get involved in that capacity would be a struggle on their finances and they would prefer local authorities to feed into a Welsh Government-led plan.

EYST believed that having too many separate plans may lead to a disjointed approach, and difficulties in monitoring progress. The Welsh Presbyterian Church warned that this approach may result in the multiplication of plans across organisations, which would lead to too many complications and too much paperwork.

Feedback from People Seeking Sanctuary

One focus group participant in Newport said that, in order for Wales to become a Nation of Sanctuary, there should be free groups in communities provided by local authorities to help encourage people to come and speak English and hold ESOL classes. One or two families can come together to help each other.

Another member of the same group said that Wales could improve if access to information was more readily available. They said, *“In Wales, information is not very well structured, people are asking about things they already know because there is not a well-structured way to access information. We should not be asking questions that we should be able to access (the answers). This is simply information – I am educated to a certain level, but I still have to ask people where to find the information that I need”*

4.4 Q.4 Our aim is that everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential and lead a healthy, prosperous and fulfilling life, enabling them to participate fully in their communities and contribute to the future economic success of Wales. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?

Summary of written responses

There was substantial agreement with these objectives, with 69% of respondents agreeing to the Plan's content and commitments. 12% of respondents disagreed with the proposals, whilst 19% of respondents did not answer this question.

EYST's response highlighted the importance of ESOL provision, stating that it is critical to the ability of refugees and asylum seekers to contribute to the economic success of Wales. They also stated that the Welsh Government should explore every avenue to increase the availability and flexibility of ESOL classes.

This aligned with other responses (two local authorities & British Red Cross) which highlighted how crucial the role of volunteering is in enabling asylum seekers and refugees to gain vital skills, confidence and experience, as well as improving their health, wellbeing and employability.

In addition, Newport City Council suggested improving resources to the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) to enable people seeking sanctuary to have their 'foreign-acquired' skills, experience, education and qualifications certified to UK/Welsh standards.

The Bevan Foundation said there is also work to be done around educating potential employers to let them know that refugees have the right to work, as there can be some confusion between refugees, asylum seekers and other immigrants.

The Welsh Language Commissioner disagreed with the aim of the question, however, citing the lack of emphasis on learning the Welsh language in the Plan as the reason.

Feedback from People Seeking Sanctuary

The feedback from sanctuary seekers includes calls for more opportunities for asylum seekers to work. One respondent cited her 23 year old son who was a second year university student in Malaysia, previously leading an active life but who just stays at home all day now that they are seeking asylum in the United Kingdom. The feeling of worthlessness and having no sense of real purpose which happens as a result of this sort of societal isolation is also mentioned by other members (Feedback to the Asylum Rights Programme by Unity in Diversity & Bloom groups in Swansea). This mirrors what the Equality, Local Government and Committee's committee found, prompting the Committee to entitle its report, "I used to be someone."

4.5 Q.5 We want everyone to live in a home that meets their needs and supports a healthy, successful and prosperous life. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?

Summary of written responses

59% of written responses agreed or mostly agreed with improving the commitments to achieve this aim for refugees and asylum seekers. 9% of responses disagreed with the actions in the Plan. The remaining 32% of responses were nil returns on this question.

Criticism of the Home Office's 28 day 'Move On' rule featured significantly in consultation responses. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) stated that the rule of someone having to find accommodation in only 28 days after receiving refugee status is one of the biggest difficulties facing people who are in the 'Move On' period. Whilst it is recognised that 'Move On' timescales are a matter of UK Government policy it is recommended that Welsh Government seek an increase in the time refugees are allowed before moving on from their original accommodation.

Adequate funding of support for refugees through the 'Move On' process would also be very beneficial to both community cohesion and to the health and wellbeing outcomes of the individuals.

The Welsh Presbyterian Church said that Welsh Government should do all it can to assure local communities who are concerned about the arrival of asylum seekers and refugees that there is no shortage of housing for local individuals and families. They also believe that people who are fleeing religious persecution should not be housed with people who would be in conflict with their religious beliefs.

Feedback from People Seeking Sanctuary

Respondents highlighted the detrimental impact of poverty and the delays to the asylum process on their mental health.

"What would help with my mental health is to speed up the delays in the asylum process; some people are in the asylum process for 3 years now" (focus group participant, Cardiff)

One refugee who was interviewed in Wrexham explains how transport costs can affect mental health and stress: *"Wrexham is a small town with not enough housing available in the town centre area, so people are sent to outer villages to live, making travelling expensive. £10 a week per person for bus for the three of us is making me stressful. I have to find over £128 a month for bus to travel from my village just to do school runs"*.

4.6 Q.6 We want the Welsh social care sector to support people to lead independent lives. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?

Summary of written responses

41% of respondents support the Plan in relation to improving social care for refugees and asylum seekers. 9% disagree and 50% of the responses did not include a specific response to this question.

TGP Cymru's National Participation Forum responded that early opportunities should be increased for asylum seekers and refugees to be able to integrate into Welsh Communities and feel valued by being offered volunteering opportunities. Support should be offered and they should be guided to learn how things work and to have the chance to play sport, learn new skills and improve their wellbeing in ways which empowers them. Young people say they would like to take part in sporting activities and to go to the gym to look after their physical and mental health; however, the cost of bus travel is a barrier to access.

The issue around discounted travel was also included in the consultation response received from TGP Cymru. Another common theme that appeared in the responses to this question is the issue about access to ESOL. Public Health Wales stated that people need to be able to have a good command of English and have good, supportive social networks in order to be able to live independent lives. Increased access to ESOL courses and 'integration/induction/orienteering' courses are likely to contribute to this, but there needs to be acknowledgement that a combination of arriving later in life, limited acknowledgement of previous learning and experience, trauma and a period of NRPF are likely to provide an ongoing adverse impact on people's ability to fully reach their true potential.

There were four negative comments received. One came in the form of a warning from the Welsh Presbyterian Church which urged the Welsh Government to re examine and redraw local government boundaries so as they fully align with health board boundaries. The other three were anonymous responses received online which all shared the same theme of prioritising domestic individuals over people seeking sanctuary.

4.7 Q.7 We want to ensure that mental health problems are not a barrier to achieving potential in all areas of life. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?

Summary of written responses

This question gained a large amount of positive feedback, with 69% of respondents agreeing or mostly agreeing with proposals and ideas laid out in the Plan. Eight respondents did not answer this question and there were two negative responses.

Suggestions and contributions from respondents included that of the Bevan Foundation who warned that the Welsh Government needs to ensure that mental health services in Wales have the funding and resources they need to support people with mental health problems, especially within the four asylum dispersal areas. The Bevan Foundation also believe that the Welsh Government needs to ensure that mental health practitioners are adequately trained to support the needs of refugees and asylum seekers and are culturally sensitive.

As asylum seekers and refugees are more likely to suffer from mental health issues relating to specific sets of circumstances, EYST suggested Welsh Government should work with local health boards to ensure there is increased training for health practitioners to help them understand the specific impact of surviving war and displacement, including PTSD.

Respondents suggested that timeliness and accessibility of mental health support are also of utmost importance. The Welsh Refugee Coalition said that regular long term mental health checks would be wise as many of the symptoms of adverse mental distress suffered by asylum seekers and refugees can take months to manifest. Early engagement with refugee and asylum seeker children was also encouraged in the responses.

Feedback from People Seeking Sanctuary

Mental health featured prominently in community feedback. Feedback from the Unity in Diversity & Bloom groups in Swansea included the following moving contribution from a person seeking sanctuary: *“Living in constant limbo is not good for us and makes us feel unhappy and stressed... We are deeply distressed and want the Welsh Government to speak to the Home Office about this situation. Our friend was so stressed that he committed suicide. We don't want this to happen again.”*

Another emotional account of life as an asylum seeker was also garnered from the Newport focus group: *“My family of six cannot do anything as asylum seekers and it is impacting on our mental state, I cannot take them to a leisure event because I cannot afford it. I can't take them to the park everyday because they want a change. My children are suffering. On their birthday, they sometimes tell me they do not want anything because they know I cannot afford anything and this makes me feel embarrassed. They also tell me they don't want to go outside of the house because they know I cannot afford it as well.”*

There is also feedback from young people regarding this issue under section 4.9 below.

4.8 Q.8 Every person should be equipped with the skills they need to get a job and the opportunity to develop new skills through their working life. How can we better achieve this for refugees and asylum seekers?

Summary of written responses

59% of respondents agreed with the commitments in the plan and, as with other questions, the responses contained advice and suggestions such as Welsh Government focussing on removing financial barriers to accessing education for refugees and asylum seekers; extending the concessionary travel scheme to asylum seekers and new refugees to enable them to access employment opportunities; and increasing support for volunteering programs which support refugee and asylum-seeker volunteers. 9% of the responses were negative and 31% did not respond to this particular question.

Gwent Police suggested more information and clarity should be provided around the restrictions for refugees and asylum seekers regarding education, volunteering and other related opportunities. Gwent Police force are engaging with refugees and asylum seekers who are keen to seek employment and/or volunteering opportunities with them, however the residency and vetting criteria has prevented this.

Newport County Council expanded on the issue of ESOL by stating that part of the 'Nation of Sanctuary' plan could be to encourage or work with private and voluntary sector organisations to provide more, and more meaningful, volunteer opportunities for asylum seekers, and the provision of basic employment related training – preferably combined with ESOL related to the topic of training.

Among the less positive responses to this part of the Plan was feedback from the Welsh Language Commissioner who states that not enough Welsh for Speakers of Other Languages (WSOL) opportunities are present and that the Plan does not do enough to resolve this.

4.9 Q.9 Can you identify any additional effects of this document (positive or adverse) on the Welsh Language, Equality or Children's Rights?

Please explain your view and any suggestions for how the document could be revised so that positive effects could be increased and negative effects mitigated?

Summary of written responses

Of all the questions asked, this one received the least feedback, with 65.5% of stakeholders not having any comment to make on the document in relation to the Welsh Language, Equality or Children's Rights.

The responses which were received were varied, including a suggestion that a child friendly version of the plan would have been useful to allow young people to feedback on the consultation. Some schools are implementing the school of sanctuary initiative and may have valuable contributions to make to the discussion. It would have also been desirable to see the voice of young refugees and asylum seekers evident within the consultation document itself.

The Welsh Language Commissioner criticised the Plan, stating that the document does not do enough to promote the Welsh language. The Welsh Presbyterian Church fully supported programmes to provide refugees and asylum seekers the opportunity to learn Welsh and to learn about Welsh culture as did another local authority.

There was also a suggestion that the Plan should have done more to include information on the Home Office's 'Compliance / Hostile Environment' policy.

Views of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children living in Wales on their experiences of service provision.

(Taken from the WLGA Strategic Migration Partnership report, March 2018)

Background

This report was commissioned by the WLGA Strategic Migration Partnership (WLGA SMP) in recognition of the fact that increasing numbers of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) have arrived in Wales, via a variety of routes, and are being looked after by local authorities. Some local authorities have had little experience of caring for UASC before, and the complexities this can bring, including language barriers, engagement with the immigration process and understanding rights and entitlements of UASC. Thus there was a need to better understand the needs and experiences of UASC arriving in Wales.

The WLGA Strategic Migration Partnership met with 29 young people in total and recognised that the comments contained within this report are not necessarily representative of the experiences of all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Wales.

Sessions were held at three locations during February 2018.

Asylum and Immigration

The report indicates that young people in Wales are happy to be here. However, young people, on their arrival and in going through the asylum process, have requested greater availability of interpretation services, e.g. in respect of help to understand correspondence from the Home Office/UKVI. Those interviewed also expressed frustration about the lack of information available upon arrival such as information about Wales, its culture, what is acceptable to people and how public services work.

Education

There was a mixture of feedback in the report with regards to education. Some participants gave a positive view of their experience in the Welsh school system, with reports of warm, respectful and caring teachers who are sensitive to the child's journey into their care. Young people talked positively about speaking, reading and writing in English in relation to school.

On the other hand, some young people talked about the need for more resources, particularly in relation to IT and the lack of computers and text books. Another young person conveyed worries about his future in the country and these worries getting in the way of his learning. There is also confusion relating to what support is available to pupils with some displaying confusion about who is able to access free school meals and some not actually knowing what support is on offer and as a result missing out on services that would be available to them.

Social Care

Some young people described positive experiences of living with foster families conveying gratitude to the families supporting them.

However, there is also a feeling among some young people that they are not being listened to or prioritised by the social care system. Some complained that social workers were not sufficiently supportive in helping them make their claims for asylum and that some social workers seemed more keen on saving the local authority's money.

The young people did suggest that, if social workers had lighter workloads, they might have more time, be more sympathetic to their individual situations and thus be more supportive.

The young people also asked for more interpreters to aid their discussions with social workers, so they can properly express their needs and be understood in a timely way.

Health

The young people expressed that they are pleased with some aspects of health care in Wales. There are comments in the report regarding how respectful the nurses are, with one comment from someone who was experiencing serious dental problems and who was able to receive treatment soon after arrival. They also reported adequate interpretation services at health appointments.

Although there are positive reports about the health service there are also negative anecdotes included in the report, which centre on the length of decision making in the asylum claiming process and the extreme stress this can cause.

The report concludes that there needs to be greater awareness among young people about their rights, entitlements and support available to them. The people interviewed talked about receiving varying quality of support from professionals. This could be addressed through:

- i. Awareness of, and access to, advocacy services
- ii. Ongoing training for professionals; cultural awareness, entitlements, immigration process etc.

The young people questioned whether there is equal access to support for all UASC. They were aware of various levels of support depending on their personal circumstances, immigration status etc. For example, a young person with discretionary leave can claim Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), but a young person without it can't. To counter the sense of inequality there should be a simplified approach to entitlements.

The lack of social support to integrate and meet other young people leads to feelings of isolation. There should be more efforts to raise awareness about opportunities in the local community for young people to meet and socialise.

Feedback indicated that the inability to work not only prevents individuals from having what they regard as enough money to live on, but also the social network and the opportunity to develop soft skills that employment can offer. It could be beneficial to explore opportunities for young people to discuss this with decision makers.

4.10 Q.10 We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Multiple respondents mentioned discounted travel not being featured more prominently or having a high enough place of priority in the Plan. The issue of expensive travel costs are one of the biggest barriers faced by people seeking sanctuary in accessing education, training and employment opportunities.

EYST referred to the uncertainty caused by Brexit, citing the status of EU migrants. The Plan being widened to encompass EU Migrants is something to consider in their opinion.

A police force made a vital point about communication, cohesion and hate crime. Good communication with the public at large is going to be very important. There is a likelihood that far right groups and individuals will try to portray refugee and asylum seekers in as bad a light as possible. Unless awareness-raising is taken seriously then we can expect an increase in hate crime and anti-social behaviours.

5. Concluding remarks

Overall, the consultation responses demonstrate substantial support for the draft Nation of Sanctuary proposals. The issues raised above have provided the Welsh Government with many opportunities to improve the final version of the document. Although some conflicting suggestions were received, there were many areas of consensus such as greater access to ESOL opportunities, concessionary travel, more prospects to work and volunteer and mental health improvement.

We would like to thank all respondents who have taken the time to respond to the consultation by sending in a written response, participating in the on-site consultation or by attending a consultation workshop. We are very grateful to everyone for their contributions.

6. Next Steps

A copy of this consultation summary will be sent to each of the respondents to the consultation. The consultation summary will also be published on the Welsh Government's website.

The Welsh Government will utilise the consultation responses to consider what changes should be made to the draft document. It is anticipated, the final Nation of Sanctuary – Refugee and Asylum Seeker plan will be published in late 2018.