A safe place to be? The quality of life of asylum-seekers in Sheffield and Wakefield

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Aims

To explore the feelings, hopes and experiences of asylum seekers' arrival, induction, access to services, contact with local residents and hope for the future.

Methodology

The research, commissioned by Wakefield and Sheffield City Councils, included mapping asylum seeker populations, local agencies and refugee community organisations; interviews with 57 asylum seekers and seven discussion groups and interviews with local authority policy officers.

Key issues

The report provides an overview of the regional and local contexts of dispersal in Wakefield and Sheffield. Findings from asylum seeker interviews are presented on arrival and induction experiences - powerlessness, choice and control, services on arrival, and social relationships; and about accessing services including housing, destitution, health, legal advice; and on restrictions to work, good and bad experiences and press coverage. Feelings about safety and security; involving asylum seekers in policy and service development, and hopes for the future are also addressed.

Conclusions

Tendencies to treat asylum seekers as a homogeneous group can be dehumanising and disempowering.

Recommendations

Recommendations are aimed at central and regional government, local authorities, housing providers and the voluntary and community sector and relate to dispersal policy and practice, rights to welfare and to work, quality control, improving induction and involving asylum seekers in consultation.

Migrant Group
Asylum seekers
Topic

Dispersal
Housing and welfare
Housing needs
NASS
Place
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
Wakefield
West Yorkshire
Year
2005
Resource Type
Report
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