



## Building a compassionate refugee protection system

Since the passage of the 2022 Nationality and Borders Act and the 2023 Illegal Migration Act, over 500 charities, faith groups, local authorities, businesses, and unions, together with dozens of cross-party MPs and Peers, have signed a [national pledge](#) to fight these anti-refugee laws.

The **Fight the Anti-Refugee Laws Pledge** unites people across the UK who believe that people seeking protection from war and persecution should be welcomed, and that everyone's claim for asylum should be treated equally and fairly.

Signatories have committed to defend the right to seek safety from war and persecution in the UK, and to work towards a refugee protection system that treats all people with dignity and compassion.

After years of hostility towards people seeking safety and mismanagement of the UK's asylum system, we now have the opportunity to build a system that truly protects and supports people seeking safety.

Across the UK, local communities are committed to supporting people to rebuild their lives, while polls show that the public supports a [welcoming, fair migration system](#).

**As we approach a General Election, we are calling all candidates to commit to repealing the harmful anti-refugee laws, and commit to**

**building a refugee protection system built on the below principles.**

### 1) Commitment to the right to seek asylum in the UK

The UK must uphold our international responsibilities and obligations and recommit to the right to seek asylum in the UK. We must invest in building a protection system that makes just decisions in a timely way and ensures everyone has access to good quality legal advice.

Crucially, we must dismantle cruel and unworkable anti-refugee laws that fundamentally undermine the right to seek asylum, including:

- **Repealing the Illegal Migration Act** which effectively abolishes the right to seek asylum in the UK;
- **Ending the criminalisation of people seeking safety** under the Nationality and Borders Act, which punishes people for their journey to reach safety;
- **Upholding the universality of human rights** and abandoning plans to strip human rights away from people seeking asylum in the UK;
- **No offshore processing** The Rwanda-UK agreement must be scrapped, and the principle of 'offshore processing' should be abandoned. People seeking safety should never be forcibly removed to other countries to have their claims for protection considered.

## 2) Building an asylum system that treats all people with dignity and compassion

We must build an asylum system that supports, rather than hinders, people seeking safety to rebuild their lives, including:

- **Restoring the right to work** Allow people seeking safety to work and provide for themselves and their families after waiting for 6 months, unconstrained by the Shortage Occupation List;
- **Accommodation in communities** People seeking safety should never be forced to live in camps or institutionalised accommodation like hotels. Everyone seeking safety should be able to live in safe, dignified accommodation in our communities;
- **Pulling people out of enforced poverty** The Government must increase rates of asylum support to allow individuals and families to meet their essential living needs;
- **Expanding family reunion** Widen family reunion rules so that families can be together;
- **Ending No Recourse to Public Funds** The no recourse to public funds rule prevents many people from meeting their basic needs, and forces people into extreme poverty and homelessness. It must be abolished.

**At this crucial moment, we need as many candidates as possible to stand against anti-refugee laws, defend the right to seek safety, and commit to building a refugee protection system that treats everyone with dignity and compassion.**

Candidates can demonstrate their support by:

- Committing to meeting with constituents with direct experience of seeking asylum and local organisations to understand the reality of the system;
- Pledging to defend the right to seek safety in the UK at [www.fighttheantirefugeelaws.org](http://www.fighttheantirefugeelaws.org).