

I have been asked to talk about JRF's report 'How to improve support and services for destitute migrants' published recently and which is rooted in the expertise of many of you in the room - THANK YOU all, co-authors Sue Lukes and John Perry, several lawyers including a leading immigration and public law barrister at Garden Court - and scoping work and action research that I have conducted for JRF over two years.

The report focuses on non EU migrants with no resource to public funds and is designed to inform and equip funders, investors and other supporters - as well as providers - to act confidently and lawfully. I hope to help you think about how to use this report in seeking support.

It is structured as a response to questions I am asked by funders and potential supporters time and again .....

1. Who we are talking about? And how do migrants become "undocumented", how does this lead to destitution and homelessness. There are 14 case histories developed by Sue with input from a lot of front line advice workers;
2. What does experiencing destitution mean to those affected, where do they get help and what are its limits?
3. What interventions are needed to tackle destitution and what are some of the existing services and initiatives that need support? – we used seven case studies – all involving NACCOM members to illustrate the services needed and how these are being delivered.
4. Is it legal to support this work? And what is the legal framework for bodies interested in providing or supporting services?

Starting with the last question first .....

1. JRF and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust [John Hocking, JRHT's exec director is here today] joined with the Association of Charitable Foundations (ACF) to secure from Adrian Berry of Garden Court Chambers Counsel's opinion with input from senior lawyers at BWB and Devonshires Solicitors – experts in charity and housing law. Overall, they concluded that there is no impediment to funding and supporting projects that are helping non-EU migrants as long as this is in good faith, for humanitarian purposes, in line with charitable objects and compliant with the Immigration Act 2014 which is now to be rolled out (nationwide) beyond the West Midlands. A copy of the full and detailed Counsel's opinion can be accessed on the ACF website – [www.acf.org.uk](http://www.acf.org.uk) There is also a very brief synopsis of it in the summary and a fuller explanation plus information about how it affects different forms of housing is in the full report. And Sue Lukes (far more expert than I) and Julian Prior are running a workshop later on which will look at these and other related issues in more depth this.
2. In terms of who we are talking about .... I appreciate that most of you focus your support on asylum seekers but in looking at the data we identified that the majority of people with no recourse to public funds are not asylum seekers and that increasingly many of this group are becoming destitute and homeless, so for example the majority of the 1000 non EU migrants identified in the CHAIN data as sleeping rough in London are not asylum seekers. And interventions by Street Legal, a case study in the report and involving NACCOM member, Praxis, has found that a significant number of this group may have status but haven't got the documentation to prove it and that others may not previously have made an asylum claim but have grounds to make one. So the first question – who are these people – are they economic migrants or refugees - does not lend itself to a simple answer.

3. What are the needs? Is a question most of you can answer better than I can, as well as the limitations of support such as Section 4.
4. I would however like to spend more time on the interventions that exist – many provided by you – and where some of the development needs and gaps might be. And to urge you to think about how you present these to funders and supporters to get them on board in helping you to support routes out of destitution because that is the ultimate goal.

It was Hope Housing (which last year provided housing and advice to 78 adults and 5 children in 9 properties in Birmingham) that inspired JRF to want to do more to help destitute migrants.

This picture is of one of Hope's residents being welcomed into one of their properties last year by one of the 4 part time workers, Sarah Taal.

Most of the properties are provided by 4 HAs – one biggie and 3 smaller ones.

The resident would have been referred by one of their referral partners.

And this partner agency would have agreed to work with her to seek regularisation of her immigration status and a therefore a route out of destitution.

JRF were struck by the impact of Hope's model (see pic in SLIDE 1) , its effective use of a small amount of resource – mainly its small team of committed workers and volunteers, its donations – including use of 9 properties at a peppercorn rent and overall its focus on getting people out of destitution using partnership and an empowering approach which recognises that most support comes from within migrant communities – that's where most people are housed and supported - and it now supporting the establishment of a Migrants' Union.

As many of you know I was asked by JRF to scope the potential for replicating the Hope model and initially looked to find other models and came across the amazing NACCOM network.

- All of you rely on varying degrees of good will and partnership working.
- All of you recognise the need to help people access immigration advice, advocacy and representation but all of this is in short supply due to cuts and legal aid changes. Gina Clayton's excellent report, supported and commissioned by the Future Advice Fund, which is launched today looks at the variety of ways you and others are providing immigration advice and support and urges coordination and cost effective use of the different types of input which can support asylum and immigration cases at differing stages. Gina's here today and will be running a workshop later on. If you can't go or even if you can I strongly advise reading her report.
- All also ensure that people's support and basic needs are met.

- Small cash hands outs food and toiletries etc are provided by some groups themselves and most also link up with the British Red Cross who provide these sort of things from 48 centres.
- Specialist, culturally appropriate is needed and may be provided by Freedom from Torture or other agencies providing specialist services.

Our initial scoping flagged up the challenge of being sustainable when so reliant on charitable resources. But over the last few years many of you have developed housing for rent with other migrants in need but able to pay rent. An impressive leap for charities which began begging and borrowing. And Sue Lukes will be talking more about her and Ceri Hutton's report on accommodation models in a moment (commissioned by NACCOM, Praxis and Housing Justice and funded by the Homeless Transition Fund).

Right from the outset in getting to know many NACCOM members, I have been impressed by your boundless energy, faith, commitment and the ongoing growth in your services. In my initial scoping study for JRF I identified a need to increase capacity, collaboration and cross-fertilisation. People's needs and cases are complex and the range of expertise needed to respond adequately is great – be it in procuring properties, managing shared houses and most importantly supporting people in finding routes out of destitution.

So in addition to this report JRF has invested in supporting the new Strategic Alliance on Migrant Destitution. It aims to increase the number of bedspaces available to destitute migrants as well as routes out of destitution, including immigration advice and representation. Members of the alliance are national bodies including the British Red Cross, Migrant Rights Network, NACCOM, Refugee Action, Refugee Council and Homeless Link which is hosting the Alliance, as well as Housing Justice who are leading the a London sub-group which has held the first of a series of local events.

A national launch event took place back in May and a further five locally events will be held over the next few months in Birmingham, Manchester, the North East (probably Middlesbrough), Yorkshire and the East Midlands. They will utilise the reports to frame discussion and coordinated by Patrick Duce the new Innovations Manager who will support SAMD's work based at Homeless Link. Importantly we hope all of you will attend and many of you will support Patrick in setting local agendas.

I'd like to end by sharing a metaphor which you may be familiar with and which was used training I recently undertook with JRF colleagues - the elephant metaphor. [SLIDE] ... you initially see the rider as rational, planning ahead and in control, while the elephant is driven by emotion and instinct. But we have to utilise both and find the balance between the two. In our training a third element was added – the path which is the environment we're operating in and has to be explored and which makes information and data absolutely critical.

There are lots of amazing elephants in NACCOM and we all love elephants but we need some riders too to move forward and do our very best to support people out of destitution as quickly as possible and to demonstrate these outcomes to funders and supporters. This needs capacity and collaboration and drawing on the resources of expert partners to help.

N.B. I urge you – if you haven't already done so – to read at least the first part of The EU President's State of the Union address. Who'd have thought that someone who many of us may have thought of as a Eurocract would deliver a speech up there with some of Obama's finest – a speech so full of compassion, humanity and stories of hope – of the Austrian

students travelling daily to assist refugees across the Hungarian border and the welcome groups at Munich station. Using the refugee crisis he paints a picture which gets to the heart of what many of us would hope the European Union is about.....