

Foreword by Julian Prior, Chair of Trustees

2015 was a significant year for anyone working with asylum seekers and refugees as we have seen the tragic scenes of people fleeing for their lives and their desperation to find a place of safety. However, many NACCOM members have also been very encouraged by the response from the media and general public moved by the plight of so many in Europe to do something practical to help in their own towns and cities. This has led to many opportunities for members to expand their services engaging new volunteer and funding support. Members have reported a particular appetite for hosting asylum seekers and a number of new initiatives have started as a result. NACCOM as an organisation has also been presented with a much larger platform to speak about the work of our members and Dave Smith and others have featured regularly in the media.

It is therefore very timely as the demand for our work is set to increase alongside the opportunities to support those with no recourse to public funds that NACCOM has become a Charity in order to build its capacity and engage on a much more strategic level. This has been very exciting as we feel well placed as a network to be able to co-ordinate activity on the ground and influence decision making within the wider homeless sector as well as policy makers and the media.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work, determination and generosity of funders, partners, member organisations (particularly Boaz Trust) my fellow trustees and particularly our dynamic co-ordinator Dave Smith. Thank you all for your continued support as we enter this next phase of NACCOM's journey to increasingly support, equip and encourage those who alleviate the suffering of so many asylum seekers and to ultimately seek to end destitution.

Overview

Since the last Annual Report in August 2014 NACCOM has undergone a number of significant changes. As mentioned last year, the steering group decided that we should apply for charitable status in order to be able to more effectively support our partner organisations and raise the profile of NACCOM.

Much of the work since then has involved developing an appropriate constitution, applying for charitable status, opening a bank account and securing funding. This has meant that some activities, like the focus meetings, have temporarily taken a back seat as we pursued the primary goal of becoming a national charity.

Charitable Status

After eight years operating on a shoestring as a network of loosely affiliated member groups, NACCOM was accepted as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) on June 26th 2015. Up until then its finances had been held within the Boaz Trust accounts in Manchester, so a new bank account was set up in the name of NACCOM. The accounts are now separate. A big thank you to the Boaz trustees allowing NACCOM to use the Boaz accounts and financial administration for so many years!

"When I was hungry you gave me food, when I was homeless you found me a place to stay, when I was alone you heard my voice"

Kamila* (who slept in a storeroom before being helped by Open Door North East).

Objects of NACCOM

Charitable status requires that a charity has 'objects'. Those we chose are deliberately wide-ranging, to ensure that NACCOM can respond to need in a flexible way.

The objects of NACCOM are:

- a) **To prevent or relieve poverty among refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants with no recourse to public funds living in the United Kingdom**
- b) **To advance the education of the public in general in the subject of asylum.** (This allows us to engage in campaigning -and awareness-raising, where appropriate)

The main means of achieving the objects is to “support its members (other charities and organisations) in the provision of accommodation and support services for their beneficiaries.”

NACCOM’s Vision and Mission statements explain in more detail what NACCOM aims to achieve.

Vision Statement

NACCOM is committed to bringing an end to destitution amongst asylum seekers, refugees and migrants living in the UK.

Mission Statement

NACCOM exists to promote best practice in and support the establishment of accommodation projects that:

- *reduce homelessness amongst asylum seekers and migrants with no recourse to public funding; and*
- *refugees facing barriers to accessing affordable housing.*

It does this by

- *providing networking opportunities for all those who provide accommodation to destitute asylum seekers and migrants*
- *providing opportunities to share knowledge and best practice*
- *working together to highlight the plight of those who are refused asylum*
- *garnering support for destitute asylum seekers and migrants*

Membership

NACCOM is now a membership organisation. The trustees decided, after much discussion, to offer Full Membership status to organisations already operating an accommodation scheme on behalf of destitute asylum seekers. Organisations and individuals who are in sympathy with the aims of the charity may be Associate Members, which gives the right to attend meetings but not to vote.

There is a sliding scale of *suggested* fees: realising that members may have different financial constraints, there is no compulsion to pay more than a small obligatory sum (currently £20). The aim is to enable everyone to take part, but at the same time a membership fee recognises the value of membership.

Trustees

There are currently seven trustees:

<i>Julian Prior (Chair)</i>	<i>Action Foundation, Newcastle</i>
<i>Paul Catterall (Treasurer)</i>	<i>Open Door N.East, Middlesbrough</i>
<i>Will Sutcliffe</i>	<i>Beacon, Bradford</i>
<i>Jochen Kortlaender</i>	<i>ASSIST, Sheffield</i>
<i>Caron Boulghassoul</i>	<i>Nottingham Arimathea Trust</i>
<i>Shari Brown</i>	<i>Hope Projects, Birmingham</i>
<i>Rachael Bee</i>	<i>Bristol Hospitality Network</i>

"Through BHN I've found a new life. ...without BHN everything is more complicated and I would find it hard to understand myself or my life if I wasn't hosted here."

K – Bristol Hospitality Network

Jean Demars from Praxis was on the steering group but unable to take up trusteeship due to a change of employment. We would like to thank Jean for his excellent contribution to the steering group and whole-hearted support of NACCOM. He will be missed! We hope to replace him with another London representative in the near future.

Employees

Dave Smith from the Boaz Trust in Manchester is currently employed as NACCOM coordinator two days a week. It is hoped to find continuation funding for this post for the foreseeable future, and, as NACCOM grows, then staffing will also need to increase.

Due to the pressure on member groups from media enquiries since the refugee crisis hit in late summer, trustees decided to employ a Communications, Media and Advocacy Worker, initially for one day a week. Lucy Smith took up this post in November 2015, and is now handling media enquiries and developing a communications strategy.

NACCOM is also looking for some part-time administrative support to ensure that we are able to keep on top of paperwork and finance, and deliver a good service for our member groups.

Network Development and Capacity Building

In order to effectively combat asylum destitution, every asylum dispersal city and town must have the means of accommodating those who are destitute. Over the past eight years NACCOM has grown from three member projects to 35 in 23 towns and cities, with several new groups about to launch.

At the same time it is vital to be able to help smaller projects to build their capacity. This can be done by sharing resources and best practice, arranging visits to more established projects, offering consultation visits and appropriate half day focus meetings and workshops at the annual conference. There were at least fifteen consultation or capacity building visits undertaken in 2015.

Over the past year we have been pleased to see the launch of three new projects - *One Roof Leicester*, *Host Oxford* and *Action Foundation* in *Sunderland*. Others have also started up or are in the process of doing so. We hope to add them to the NACCOM network in the near future.

Focus Groups

We aim to hold 3-4 half-day focus groups each year to tackle issues of concern within member groups, starting at a time that enables cheaper rail fares. By holding them in different locations it is easier for groups to attend at least one or two.

This year we were unable to hold quite as many due to charitable status taking precedence. However, we did hold very well attended and beneficial meetings on *Housing Management* in Manchester and *Empowering Residents* in Birmingham. We hope to hold four meetings in 2016.

"Before I found ASSIST, I had absolutely nothing. Things have changed now. Now my health problems are being sorted out and my legal situation is moving forward. This is basically because I can have somewhere to sleep and enough to eat"

ASSIST Sheffield client

National Conference 2015

This year the conference was held in Derby for the first time. Over 70 attended, from 24 different NACCOM groups and ten other organisations. Feedback suggests that it was the most successful conference so far, with the vast majority of delegates going away reenergised and encouraged.

This year there were presentations on three important new reports: *Homelessness and Destitution amongst migrants from non-EU countries*, *Models of Accommodation for people with no recourse to public funds* and *Legal Schemes for people with NRPF*. In addition there were seven other workshops and, as usual, plenty of opportunities to network. Most encouragingly there were hundreds of contributions from delegates during the feedback session, which will undoubtedly lead to an even better conference in Bradford in 2016.

Many thanks to all the contributors who gave up their time to make it such a success, to Karina Martin from Upbeat Communities for hosting the event, and to the Riverside Centre for their invaluable help on the day.

"Moving into Arimathea accommodation bridged the gap between the catastrophe of homelessness and having a safe, comfortable home. This was at a time when I needed shelter while picking myself up again to start a fresh asylum claim. Without somewhere to live, I would not have been able to continue fighting for my asylum case."

Virginia, Nottingham Arimathea Trust resident

Strategic Alliance on Migrant Destitution

Since 2014 NACCOM has been part of this new alliance comprising the following organisations:

Homeless Link (host organisation), Housing Justice, Refugee Action, Refugee Council, the British Red Cross and the Migrants' Rights Network. Dave Smith attends the regular steering group meetings. The aim of the group is to work together to tackle migrant destitution.

After several meetings to work out the terms of reference and plan ahead, the alliance was officially launched in July 2015. As a partnership between refugee and homeless sector organisations, the alliance has the potential to deliver significant benefits to NACCOM members. Already we have seen Housing Associations taking more interest in asylum destitution and offering some bed-spaces. In addition it has led to a bigger profile for NACCOM in the wider homelessness sector and the reports mentioned in the conference summary.

"I would like to thank you for all your help over the last 2 years when I was homeless. ...thank you for your friendly and respectful manner. I could never pass that days of hard time without you. I will never forget Beacon wherever I go. God bless you."

Iranian asylum seeker accommodated by BEACON in Bradford, now granted LTR

Funding

Since obtaining charitable status we can apply for larger grants from charitable trusts. We are grateful to the *Hilden Charitable Fund* and the *Allen Lane Foundation*, both of whom have funded us in the last year, and enabled us to make a smooth transition during the change-over. The *Lush Charity Pot* is also funding a

festival stall next summer, which will help to raise the profile of NACCOM further. In addition we have recently been given a large anonymous donation to support emerging projects, in particular hosting projects with potential to grow: the first two to benefit from this were *London Hosting Network* and *Host Oxford*.

Now that NACCOM accounts are separate from Boaz Trust accounts, we will be able to publish full NACCOM accounts in the future.

Accommodation Survey 2015

Despite hard financial times NACCOM continued to grow during 2015. Most of the growth in bed-spaces is accounted for by more housing for refugees: accommodation for destitute asylum seekers remained static. While this appears disappointing, it reflects the desire of organisations to become more sustainable, which will ultimately lead to better long-term growth. It also reflects the reality that more refugees are being made homeless after obtaining their leave to remain, due to the lack of available housing and delays in benefits that often leave them with no money at the same time as they have to leave asylum accommodation.

Of the 36 organisations contacted only one did not reply. 28 responded with statistics: one had no current residents: two had ceased to offer accommodation and two were not yet operating.

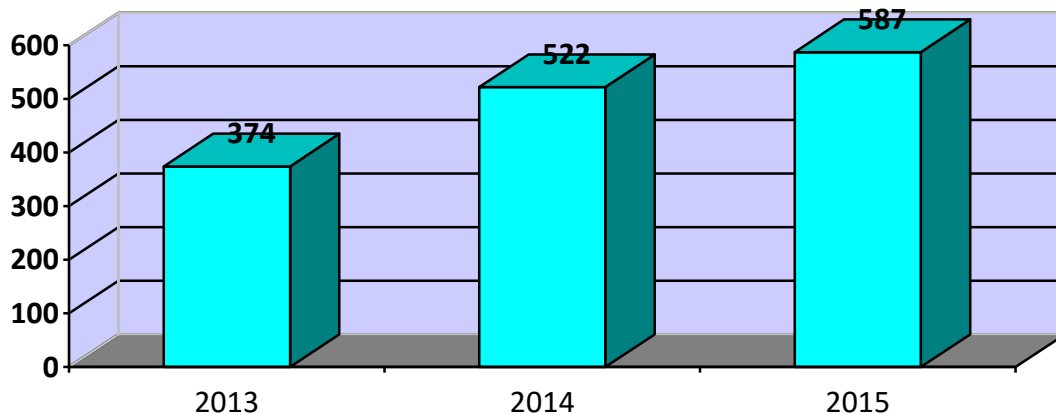
Questions were changed slightly from previous years to give more accurate results in what is a complex area with a plethora of schemes, many of which are unique in the way they operate. Standardising the results in a way that reflects reality but is decipherable to the reader is not easy.

The Citizens Advice Bureau ... told me about SWVG. I made an appointment and was told about the group's activities. I felt a great sense of relief. I was put in touch with a visitor who has supported and helped me with some problems. The group has obtained the services of a solicitor and I have been able to pursue an asylum claim. SWVG helped with my medical and accommodation problems, and has even found a lovely bike for me

David, SWVG (Southampton & Winchester Visitors Group)

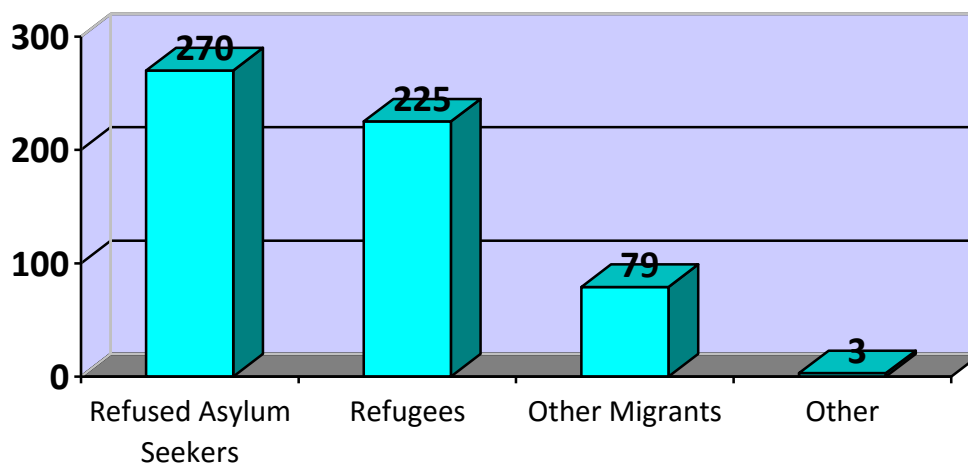
Results of the Survey

■ Total Number of Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants accommodated by NACCOM Projects



Growth in 2015 was slower than in previous years, largely due to projects consolidating during difficult economic times. Nevertheless the increase in bed-spaces was still, at 12%, above our 10% target.

■ Total Number by Status



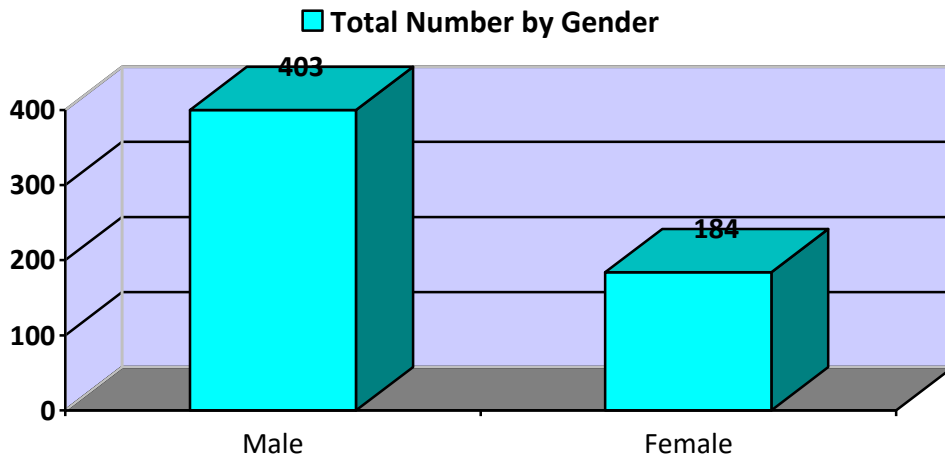
As predicted last year, the increase in numbers came in refugee accommodation. As pressure on local housing increases, refugees are increasingly being made homeless after obtaining their leave to remain. NACCOM projects are stepping in to fill the gaps in provision, at the same time bringing in some revenue through rents and housing benefit.

Next year we are likely to see a rise in both refugees and destitute asylum seekers being accommodated, as new hosting schemes begin to take effect on the back of the good will generated by the refugee crisis.

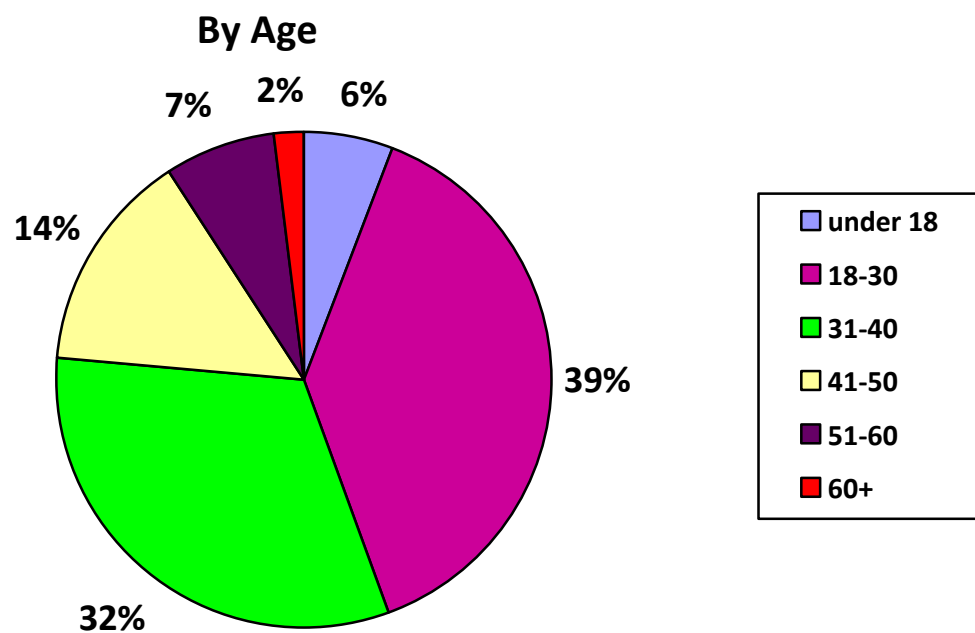
The difference it made having the house how can I explain it? Words cannot express what I get from Boaz. Now I can stand like a person and think about my future. Without Boaz, with all of these problems and the stress, perhaps I would not be alive today.

When I get refugee status, I want to help others as much as I can. I want to be able to speak out about people's problems. I want to tell the truth and help bring freedom. I want to give back to Boaz, so I'm starting to volunteer for the night shelter to help others, either in translating or any other work.

David, Boaz Trust resident

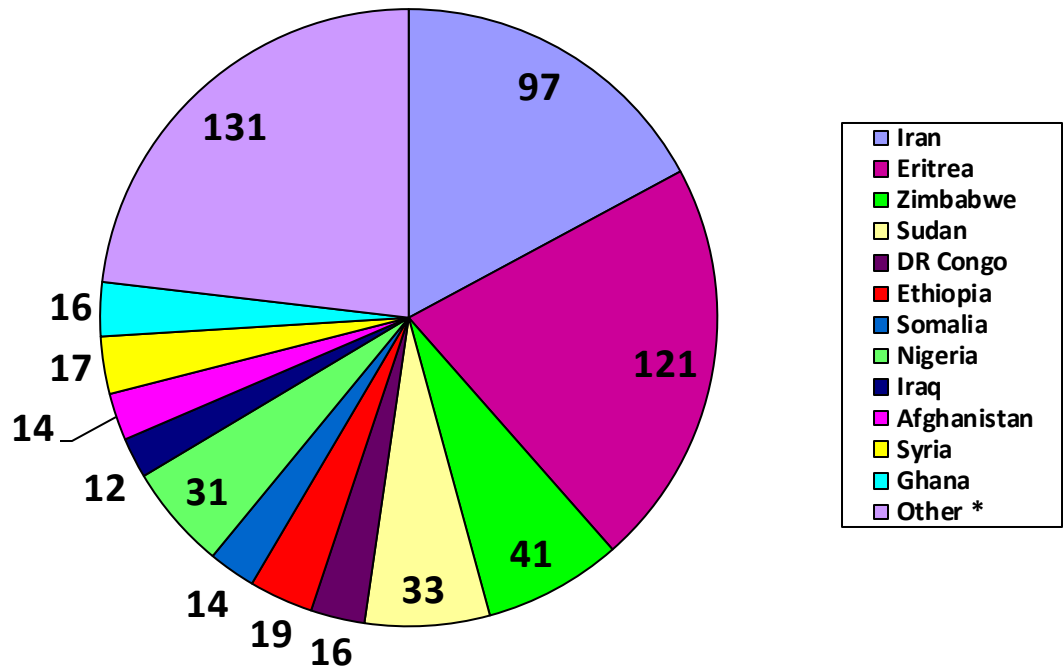


These figures are roughly in line with the percentages of men and women seeking asylum in the UK. There are approximately two men for every woman. The discrepancies are much higher in South Asian countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, where the percentage of women can be as low as 10%. In African countries like Zimbabwe and Eritrea it is more likely to be 50 / 50.



Only a few projects take minors, mainly because those under 18 are usually looked after by local authority Social Services and / or the Children's Society. Those over 60 are comparatively few. As many have additional health needs, and are therefore more likely to be granted Community Care accommodation. The slight change from last year is the rise in the percentage of those in the 31-40 age bracket, probably due to accommodating more refugees, who would tend to be slightly older.

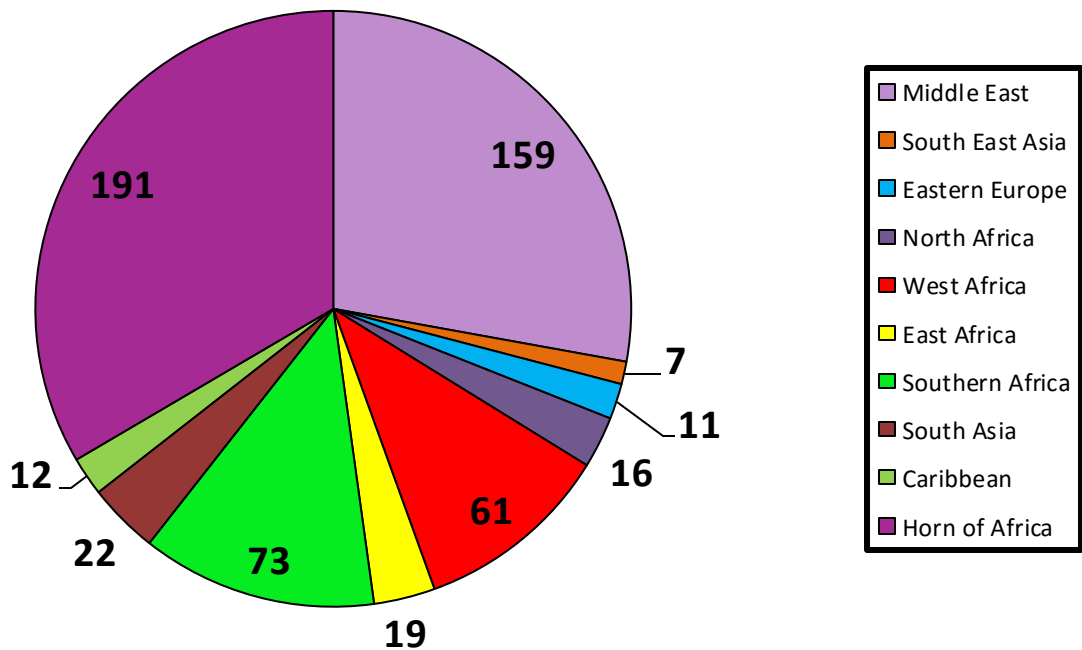
By Nationality



In total there are 63 nationalities represented in NACCOM accommodation, which shows how much of the world is currently in turmoil. The largest increase in numbers came from Eritrea, which took over from Iran as the largest cohort. Nigeria, Ethiopia and Syria also saw increases: there are still relatively small numbers of Syrians, as few are being refused asylum and made destitute.

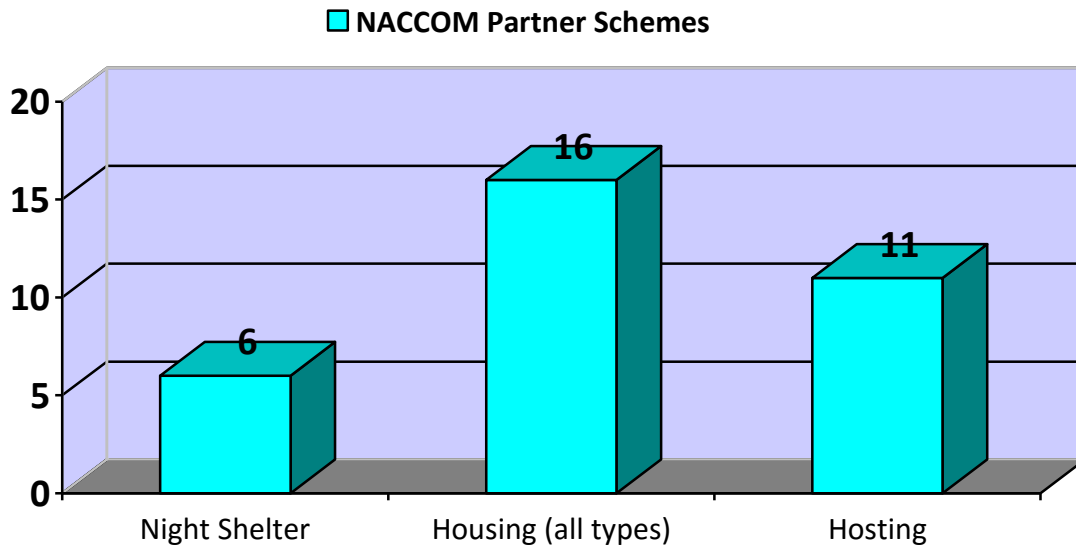
'Other' came from almost everywhere except the Americas and Western Europe. Adding them into the mix with the countries above, the chart looks like this –

By Geographical Area



"Being hosted really helped me in my life. It changed my life from depression to feeling all things were going to be ok. It really helped me very much"

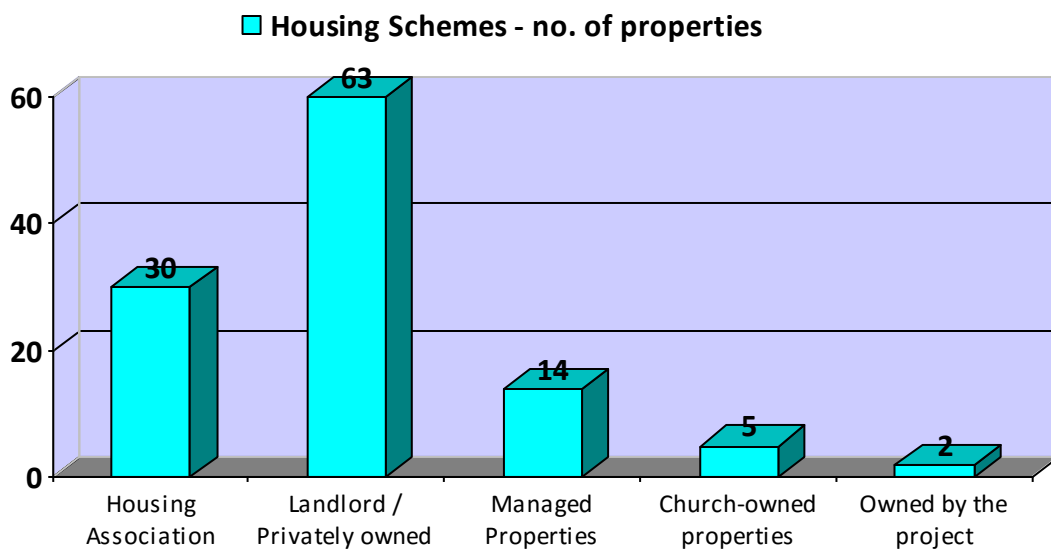
Charles, 50, Zimbabwe, resident with CAST (Communities and Asylum Seekers Together) Southend



In 2015 the number of projects shrunk slightly, but the amount of accommodation grew. This was primarily in refugee housing: hosting schemes struggled to maintain growth and momentum. This is likely to look very different in 2016, as the good will engendered by the refugee crisis is reflected in many new hosts across the UK.

"I was very lucky to get such nice hosts. I feel they are now like my family, as they helped me a lot and still offer friendship and advice. They have provided me with so much emotional & mental support and have helped me to stand up on my feet."

Abdullah, Grace Hosting, Leeds

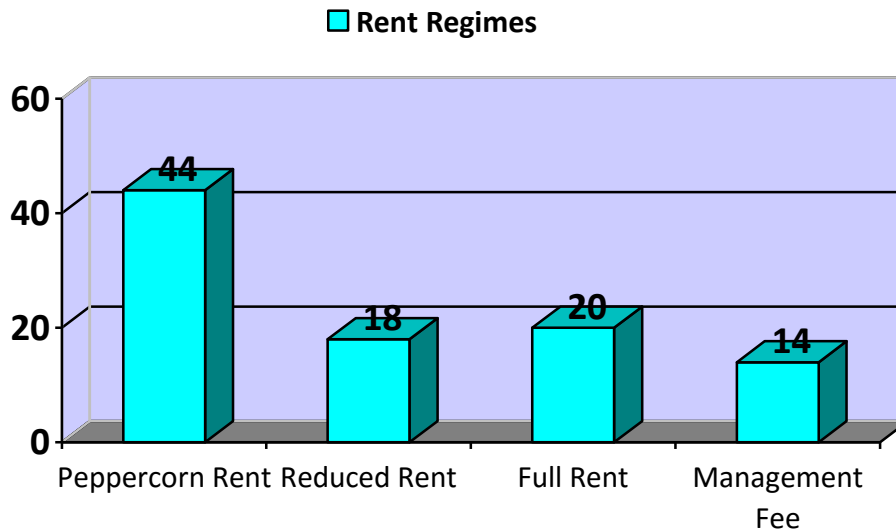


The area of growth was in landlord / privately owned properties (up from 44 in 2014). All other areas remained at a similar level. With new partnerships with Housing Associations developing through the Strategic Alliance, it is likely that there will be a modest rise in HA properties being used in 2016.

We may also see growth in managed properties, as successful schemes such as the one at Open Door North East are replicated.

"I don't have any words, just to say thank you, I am very blessed [moved to tears]. You've been a family, I don't have family around. I didn't have a house but you gave me a house, shelter to live in."

'Alea', Action Housing Resident



Some NACCOM members have been able to obtain exemption from Local Housing Allowance: this enables them to charge more for their refugee housing, and considerably enhances their ability to be sustainable. Working with Mark Goldup (HGO Consultancy Ltd), NACCOM has been able to develop a modelling tool which will help new and existing projects assess the viability of their housing schemes.

Financial Statement for 2014-15 (taken from the Boaz Trust Accounts: financial year beginning April)

Carried over from 2013-14	£160
Income during 2014-15	£10,820
Expenditure	£6,907
Carried forward into 2014-15	£3,993

Conclusion

2015 was a hugely significant year for NACCOM. Moving from an informal network to a National Charity was a big step. We believe that it will prove to be the catalyst for a more powerful and effective movement in tackling destitution amongst refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the UK. By working together, both within the growing network and with those of good will outside the network, we expect to see great advances in the provision of accommodation for this most vulnerable group, and a stronger voice to influence those with the power to make destitution a thing of the past.

Dave Smith, NACCOM Coordinator

“I would like to say on behalf of both of us that we’re so glad we’ve become hosts... It’s such a great way of getting some more understanding about the issues people face whilst doing a little thing to help them, and it just seems so obvious now we’re doing it – why wouldn’t we when we have a spare room sitting there empty??

It certainly helps keep things in perspective when you’ve got someone there who’s slept in a bus shelter a couple of nights before.”

Volunteer Host LASSN

The following NACCOM member groups took part in the 2015 accommodation survey -

Abigail Housing, Leeds & Bradford	Action Foundation, Newcastle
Asylum Link Merseyside (ALM), Liverpool	ASSIST Sheffield
Austin Smith House, Birmingham	Beacon Hosting, Bradford
Bristol Hospitality Network	BIRCH (Birmingham Community Hosting)
Boaz Trust, Manchester	CAST (Communities. & Asylum Seekers Together), Southend
Coventry Night Shelter	Coventry Refugee & Migrant Centre
DASH (Destitute Asylum Seekers Huddersfield)	DASS (Destitute Asylum Seeker Service) Glasgow
Fresh Start Leicester	GLADAN (Night Shelter) Glasgow
Grace Hosting (LASSN) Leeds	Home4U, Cardiff
Hope Housing, Birmingham	Host Nottingham
Ipswich Town of Sanctuary	Just Homes Women's Project (NRPF), Newham
Giuseppe Conlon House (London Catholic Worker)	Nottingham Arimathea Trust
Open Door North East, Middlesbough	Open Doors Hull
One Roof Leicester	PRAXIS Community Projects 'Temporary Homes'
Share DYDD, Cardiff	Share Tawe, Swansea
Spare Room for Forced Migrants, London	St.Monica's, Leeds
SWVG (Southampton & Winchester Visitors Group)	Upbeat Communities, Derby

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