

Article

Refugees, Homelessness and the ‘Move-On’ Process

Sasha Eykyn 

School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University, Cardiff CF10 3WA, Wales, UK; eykynsn@cardiff.ac.uk

Abstract

In the UK, there are significant gaps in our understanding of the systems, processes and procedures that govern access to housing among refugees. Responding to these gaps, this paper presents research findings that offer insights into the institutional coordination of homelessness and housing insecurity in the lives of newly granted refugees navigating the ‘move-on’ process in Wales. Drawing on data from focus groups, peer research, practitioner interviews, observation and text analysis, this paper takes an approach informed by Institutional Ethnography (IE) to examine the gaps between refugees’ lived experiences of homelessness and housing precarity and what is happening institutionally in terms of homelessness prevention and response. In doing so, this paper shows the ‘move-on’ process to be a disruptive mechanism of forced displacement into homelessness and precarious housing. Meanwhile, the institutional preoccupation with private rented sector solutions shifts the focus away from what is politically ‘off the table’ for newly granted refugees in terms of state homelessness response. Ultimately, this paper calls for a reframing of homelessness prevention strategies to account for the institutional processes that variably condition refugee displacement following a grant of status in the UK.

Keywords: refugees; homelessness; housing precarity; prevention; ‘move-on’; institutions; bureaucracy; housing policy; housing justice



Academic Editors: Regina C. Serpa,
Qiong He and Anna Pearce

Received: 8 October 2025

Revised: 11 November 2025

Accepted: 14 November 2025

Published: 19 November 2025

Citation: Eykyn, Sasha. 2025. Refugees, Homelessness and the ‘Move-On’ Process. *Social Sciences* 14: 675. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14110675>

Copyright: © 2025 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Housing is generally recognised as a foundational cornerstone of refugee resettlement (Phillips 2006; Ager and Strang 2008; Allsopp et al. 2014; Brown et al. 2022, 2024b). However, refugees are typically disadvantaged and at an elevated risk of homelessness when navigating housing systems in the Global North (European Observatory on Homelessness 2016; Brown et al. 2022; Samari and Groot 2023). In the UK, there are significant gaps in our understanding of the systems, processes and procedures that govern access to housing among refugees, the diversity of experiences of homelessness among refugees, and what works when it comes to homelessness prevention (Brown et al. 2024a). Responding to these gaps, this article presents new research findings that offer insights into the institutional coordination of responses to homelessness and housing insecurity in the lives of newly granted refugees in Wales.

As set out in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951), a refugee is someone who has been granted leave to remain because they have demonstrated that they are unable or unwilling to return to their country ‘owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted’. There are several different routes to refugee status in the UK, but this paper is focused specifically on the experiences of people granted through the asylum system, many of whom experience particularly poor housing outcomes (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2024;

[NACCOM 2024](#)). Although I will use the legal term ‘refugee’ throughout, I wish to preface this by cautioning that refugee populations are incredibly diverse, progress through these legal processes is not always linear, and the term can oversimplify and obscure people’s humanity, resilience and experiences prior to arriving in the UK ([Crawley and Skleparis 2017](#)). Refugees have often endured a range of challenging experiences, including, but not limited to, fleeing war or persecution, separation from existing support networks, possible lengthy displacement prior to arrival in the UK, rights restrictions from time spent in the asylum system, and a loss of income and housing instability ([Trawver et al. 2019](#)).

When a person is granted refugee status in the UK (or limited leave to remain, indefinite leave to remain, humanitarian protection, leave outside the rules and discretionary leave status), they are expected to transition into alternative accommodation and find a different way of supporting themselves financially, whether through securing employment or accessing mainstream welfare benefits ([Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#); [Asylum Support Regulations 2000](#)). The prescribed period that refugees are given to make this transition, before their financial support payments are discontinued and they are evicted from their state funded accommodation, is commonly referred to as the ‘move-on’ period. Until December 2024, newly granted refugees were formally given 28 days to ‘move-on’. Following sustained campaigning by organisations and coalitions in the refugee and asylum support sector, in December 2024, this was temporarily extended to 56 days as part of a Home Office pilot ([Electronic Immigration Network 2024](#)). This extension has since been reversed for most single adults amid a wave of anti-immigration protests in the UK ([Homeless Link 2025](#)).

There is an existing body of academic and grey literature that considers the ‘move-on’ period, which I will now summarise. When ‘move-on’ is referenced, the focus is primarily on the significant risks of homelessness, destitution and housing stress at the very moment that a person should have access to a set of rights and entitlements that accompany their new legal status in the UK ([Dwyer and Brown 2008](#); [L. Smith 2019](#); [Provan 2020](#); [Mitton 2021](#); [Brown et al. 2024a](#); [UNHCR 2024](#)); systemic barriers, delays and uncertainty when accessing mainstream welfare benefits, employment and housing support during this short period ([Carnet et al. 2018](#); [Strang et al. 2018](#); [Dudhia 2020](#); [Local Government Association Research 2024](#); [UNHCR 2024](#)); the detrimental impact of this period on refugees’ mental health and wellbeing outcomes ([Rowley et al. 2020](#); [Brown et al. 2022](#)); and the importance of bridging support gaps across the transition from national to local authority level support, particularly in the context of a broader housing crisis ([Lindley 2023](#); [Brown et al. 2024b](#); [Local Government Association Research 2024](#); [UNHCR 2024](#)). The ‘move-on’ period has also been interpreted on a number of occasions as a period of crisis in an individual or family’s integration journey in the UK ([Stewart and Shaffer 2015](#); [Strang et al. 2018](#); [Provan 2020](#); [UNHCR 2024](#)). There is as yet no study that examines the processes underpinning ‘move-on’ with a critical focus on homelessness prevention and response during this period.

With some exceptions ([Stewart and Shaffer 2015](#); [Strang et al. 2018](#); [Lindley 2023](#)), this literature is predominantly grounded in research based in England and not in the devolved nations of the UK. Under the [Immigration and Asylum Act \(1999\)](#), the Labour Government in the UK introduced a system of state-funded accommodation known as ‘dispersal’ that distributes people seeking asylum on a ‘no-choice’ basis to local authority areas of surplus housing across the UK while they wait for a decision on their claim ([Darling 2022](#)). Dispersal was introduced to Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Wrexham in 2001 ([Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#)) and was expanded to include all local authorities in Wales (and England and Scotland) in 2022 under a policy of ‘full dispersal’. As immigration and asylum are powers reserved to UK Government, dispersal has implicated Wales in an increasingly exclusionary and racialised legal, social and political context to asylum in the UK ([Mayblin](#)

2017; Goodfellow 2019; Yeo 2020; Darling 2022; Bernhardt 2023). Yet, the political context in Wales is distinct. In 2019, the Welsh Government declared that Wales would become a ‘Nation of Sanctuary’ (Welsh Government 2019). This was underpinned by a political commitment to mobilising the devolved policy levers—including housing, health and social care and education—to promote a culture of welcome and mitigate the social consequences of hostile immigration law and policymaking on people seeking sanctuary in Wales (Welsh Government 2019, 2022, 2024). Progress has been made in many policy areas (Welsh Government 2020, 2024) and the language of sanctuary offers a powerful expression of humanitarianism, safety and solidarity to counter hostile and populist framings of forced migration (Wyn Edwards and Wisthaler 2023). However, tensions between devolved and reserved powers remain central to some of the most urgent challenges, including housing and homelessness, faced by refugees and people seeking asylum across Wales.

In research and practice, homelessness policy response is often conceptualised through a public health framing of prevention, grounded in a moral argument that we should take action as early as possible to minimise exposure to the trauma and additional health and social harms endured by anyone who is experiencing or threatened by homelessness (Culhane et al. 2011; Fitzpatrick et al. 2021). However, scholars have also questioned the construction of homelessness—socially organised in and through relations of power and poverty—as a technical problem solvable through better targeted and more efficient interventions (Farrugia and Gerrard 2016). In this vein, recent research on the ‘politics of prevention’ encourages researchers to pay attention to the competing political values and priorities that shape the disconnect between knowledges of homelessness as a ‘preventable’ problem and state (in)action to forestall it (Nichols et al. 2024).

This paper makes two contributions to the study of homelessness and housing precarity among refugees. First, it takes an approach informed by Institutional Ethnography (IE) to examine how the ‘move-on’ process is socially organised. In taking this approach, this paper reveals that the ‘move-on’ process—rather than a neat administrative transition—is in practice a disruptive mechanism of forced displacement into homelessness and precarious housing. Second, the paper combines insights from institutional sociology (Herd and Moynihan 2018; Ray et al. 2023; Sackett and Lareau 2023) and literature reflecting on the ‘politics of prevention’ (Mykhalovskiy and French 2020; Nichols et al. 2024) when tracing social relations linking refugees’ everyday experiences with the work of asylum case decision makers, community caseworkers, policy officers and professionals responsible for administering homelessness policy and law. In doing so, this paper suggests that the institutional preoccupation with facilitating access to the private rented sector shifts the focus away from what is politically ‘off the table’ (Nichols et al. 2024) for newly granted refugees in terms of state homelessness response: that is, action to address harms conditioned by the processes, practices and procedures that organise people’s experiences through and out of the asylum system directly into homelessness. Ultimately, this paper calls for a reframing of homelessness prevention strategies to account for the institutional processes that variably condition refugee displacement following a grant of status.

2. Methods

This paper takes a methodological approach informed by Institutional Ethnography (IE), as developed in the sociological thinking of Dorothy E. Smith (D. E. Smith 1987, 2005). The aim of an IE is to make visible the institutional forces that ‘enter into, organize and disorganize’ people’s everyday lives (D. E. Smith 1999, p. 32) as a basis for advocating and acting for change (Smith and Griffith 2022).

Inspired by Smith’s reading of Marx (D. E. Smith 1981), IE scholars and practitioners investigate the social world as a web of relational processes that emerge in and through

the everyday activities of people, as these are taken up by and coordinated with what others do and know elsewhere (Nichols and Ruglis 2021; Smith and Griffith 2022). In this, IE necessitates an ‘ontological shift’ away from abstract theoretical explanations of the social world to begin in material relations among and between actual people, and an ‘epistemological shift’ towards the authority of what people already know from inhabiting the material conditions of their everyday lives (G. W. Smith 1990; D. E. Smith 2004).

An IE inquiry is always anchored in the standpoint of people who share a common life experience or institutional positioning (D. E. Smith 1987). The idea is that people’s experiential and embodied knowledge of what they do—often from navigating an institutional process themselves or working within a particular setting—provides an entry point for investigating how their experiences are socially organised, in a way that might otherwise be misrepresented or hidden (D. E. Smith 2002; Rankin 2017a). IE pays close attention to a concept of ‘work’, understood broadly to include any physical or mental activity that takes time and energy (D. E. Smith 2005). This analytic focus on work is important because of how it can elicit rich narrations about how people think about and negotiate their everyday lives (D. E. Smith 2002).

IE scholars and practitioners trace and explicate empirical disjunctures, or ‘problematics’, between how people with experiential expertise describe and know their lived actualities, and sanctioned institutional accounts of what is happening (Rankin 2017a). Through this, they work to make visible ‘ruling relations’; that is, the social relations that actively organise, coordinate and shape people’s work from afar (Rankin 2017a). In IE, ‘ruling relations’ are activated and contested in and through the work and knowledges of generally well-meaning practitioners who are actively engaged in the ‘doings’ of an institution across specific local settings (D. E. Smith 1999; DeVault 2023). There is a particular focus on the organising power of institutional texts and talk, as these background and shape what people think, know and do across time and space (Smith and Turner 2014; Murray 2022).

Despite its ontological and epistemological critique of positivist sociology (G. W. Smith 1990), representing IE as a process of ‘discovering’ the everyday world to an extent allows practitioners to represent findings under the guise of objective, authoritative fact (Murray et al. 2023), and in turn, to bypass the need to interrogate how they themselves are embedded in ‘social relations of research’ (Walby 2007). It is therefore necessary to highlight that being White, English and positioned within a university institution heavily structured relations of access, knowledge, representation and trust throughout the research process. At a fundamental level, these identities allow me to benefit from the same capitalist and colonial relations of power that underpin the forced displacement of refugees globally and that constitute ‘refugee homelessness’ as a policy issue in the UK to begin with. I hope that research findings will be read and acted on, but it is not lost on me that, while this may happen, the people I am working *for* and *with*, whose stories have touched me so deeply throughout this process, continue to be subjected to a tirade of ongoing marginalisation, racism and precarisation in the country that I live in.

This research involved focus groups, a peer research project involving co-researchers with lived expertise, interviews with frontline workers and other relevant stakeholders, observation, and textual analysis of key policies, legislation and guidance documents. Since the goal is not to produce a descriptive account of a population, there is no formal population sampling approach in IE. The idea is rather to sample an institutional process by listening to informants with a range of circumstances and experiences within an institutional complex (DeVault and McCoy 2000; Rankin 2017b). This research therefore began in five semi-structured focus groups with 11 people in the asylum system and 14 people with refugee status who had a diverse range of institutional experiences and intersecting

social and political identities. Focus groups were organised by language—two in English ($n = 12$), one in Sorani Kurdish ($n = 4$), one in Arabic ($n = 4$) and one in Farsi ($n = 5$)—which were, because of my own limited language skills, facilitated and enabled by interpreters with lived experience of the asylum process in three instances.

These group discussions lasted between 1 h and 1 h 45 min and were attended by a mixture of men ($n = 16$) and women ($n = 9$) at different stages in their pathways to settlement in the UK; people who were at the time residing in hotel ($n = 3$) or shared ($n = 8$) asylum accommodation, private rented accommodation ($n = 3$), social housing ($n = 5$), temporary or emergency accommodation settings ($n = 4$) and privately owned homes ($n = 2$). Focus groups were held on the premises of refugee and asylum support organisations in the area, and recruitment was facilitated by gatekeepers within these organisations. The decision to conduct focus groups rather than individual interviews at this stage of the research was largely pragmatic: to open participation up to more people for whom, because of my language skills, language would otherwise be a barrier, while also ensuring that I could properly pay interpreters for their time, skills and contribution within budget.

Then, I worked with a team of four peer researchers—two people in the asylum system and two refugees—over a period of 12 months on the design, delivery and analysis of 15 individual interviews. Although IE is ontologically and practically distinct from the rubric of participatory methodologies, they share several similarities (Nichols et al. 2018). These include an emphasis on coproduction, access and reciprocity in research; an orientation towards translating knowledge into responsive social justice action and capacity building *for* and *with* underserved groups (Nichols et al. 2018); and a ‘respect for all people as experts of their own [lived and living] experiences’ (Ferdinands et al. 2022, p. 2). Placing IE in synergy with participatory methods can foster direct collaboration with people who have lived experiences of the processes under investigation, ensure that skills developed through IE are shared, and anchor work in a manner that is relevant and accountable to people’s lives (Nichols et al. 2018; Nichols and Ruglis 2021; Ferdinands et al. 2022).

Members of the peer research team were recruited from the Welsh branch of a UK-wide network of refugees and people seeking asylum who advocate for changes to the policies and politics that affect them. Each member of the team had a prior interest in housing advocacy. Aside from during data collection itself, when contact was more frequent, we met online or in person on a monthly basis between April 2024 and April 2025. In the first few sessions we slowly got to know each other and discussed what had already come up in the research. Team members were also provided with essential training covering interview skills, consent, ethics and safeguarding. An interview guide—designed to learn from participants’ pathways through housing and homelessness and their experiences of accessing formal and informal support in the area—was then created together across two workshop sessions. Team members provided critical feedback on and revisions to its structure and content, grounded in their own experiences of navigating the UK asylum system and the housing system in Wales. Co-researchers brought their own unique skills, strengths and insights which were instrumental in shaping the research at each stage.

In October and November 2024, co-researchers took the lead on 15 semi-structured interviews with people in the asylum system ($n = 8$) and people with refugee status ($n = 7$). Participants were recruited from a mixture of team members’ personal networks and people accessing services provided by local refugee and asylum community organisations. Participants were a mixture of men ($n = 6$) and women ($n = 9$) with a variety of circumstances and experiences of homelessness and/or living in a range of different accommodation settings. Although there were some overlaps in discussions across focus groups and peer interviews, individual interviews facilitated a more in-depth exploration of key junctures

within people's trajectories through housing and homelessness, situated within the context of their other life priorities.

A decision was made for these interviews to take place in English over Zoom, due to a variety of travel, time and caring responsibilities and constraints faced by members of the research team. In a reflective session, team members were keen to emphasise that, while acknowledging the benefits to them, these factors placed limits on our capacity to overcome digital exclusion and language barriers through our research process. We also anticipated that participants may have previously experienced challenging, interrogative interviews with the Home Office during their asylum process ([Helen Bamber Foundation 2022](#)). With this in mind, co-researchers worked hard to centre understanding, empathy and trust during interviews, often drawing on their own experiential knowledge to ensure that participants felt safe and listened to throughout their involvement. Though I took a backseat, I was present in interviews to provide support and safeguarding if needed.

In listening to participants' accounts of their everyday work to find and secure housing and avoid homelessness, the social organisation of homelessness and housing precarity during the 'move-on' process emerged as a key focus of inquiry. To investigate key processes such as 'move-on', I also conducted interviews with 27 frontline practitioners and other professionals involved in the bureaucracy and administration of asylum housing and support, the homelessness system and charity and community organisations in the area about their 'work practice', or, how they carry out their work on a day-to-day basis ([Pence 2021](#); [Murray 2022](#)). In these interviews, I was looking to understand institutional language use; how key pieces of legislation, policy and guidance were 'activated' in people's day-to-day work ([D. E. Smith 2005](#)); and how their activities were connected into the broader 'ruling relations' of an institution ([Rankin 2017a](#)). When it was possible, interviews were complemented by observation to establish a 'fuller picture' of people's work as it actually happened within their particular setting ([Balcom et al. 2021](#)). I also conducted extensive textual analysis ([D. E. Smith 2005](#)) of key legislation, policies and guidance documents.

Focus group and interview data were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data were analysed through a combination of selective coding and indexing of linked work activities in NVivo 12, visual mapping of key institutional processes, reflective debriefs with individual peer researchers following interviews, and a collaborative analysis session with the full peer research team.

The research design was approved by the Ethics Committee in the School of Geography and Planning at Cardiff University. To protect the identities of participants and peer researchers, all names used in this article are pseudonyms.

3. Results and Discussion

In the results and discussion that follow, I will problematise the gap between refugees' lived experiences of homelessness and housing precarity following a grant of status, and what is happening institutionally in terms of homelessness prevention and response. I explore 'move-on' as process through a focus on three key areas: the bureaucratic disorganisation of housing insecurity, homelessness prevention and the power of the eviction notice, and the institutional focus on private rented sector solutions.

3.1. The Bureaucracy of Housing Insecurity

When a person is granted refugee status in the UK, they or their legal representative receive a decision letter from the Asylum Casework team in the Home Office—the UK Government department responsible for borders and immigration—via email or in the post confirming asylum has been granted ([Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#); [Asylum Support Appeals Project 2023](#)). These documents are written in English and contain information

about the decision outcome, length of leave granted, the expiry date for permission to stay, rights, and the termination of state funded asylum accommodation and financial support ([Home Office 2023](#)).

Mixed feelings of happiness, shock or worry in response to a positive asylum decision were regularly articulated within focus groups and peer interviews. As discussed and interpreted with the peer research team, these feelings constituted a reaction to the end of institutionally coordinated precarity and restrictions on agency—such as in relation to the right to work—conditioned over months or years in the UK asylum process, but also, an awareness of the sudden material threat of homelessness at the intersection of asylum support and a set of new and unfamiliar systems in Wales. Here, Husam, an Iranian refugee, describes what happened for him when he received his asylum decision letter:

Yeah, on [date] of February, I received my grant letter. And then, I, I feel very happy to be granted as a refugee. But, at the same time, I feel worried. (Husam)

Until December 2024 when it was replaced by the eVisa, the Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) was the crucial identity document constituting legal proof of status for refugees. It contained information about a person's identity, right to study, right to access public services and benefits, and National Insurance Number, if they had one. As a result, the BRP was normally required for a refugee to access essential state services such as housing, open a bank account, and apply for employment ([UNHCR 2024](#)). In implicit recognition of this ([Goddard 2024](#)), at the time of fieldwork, a positive asylum claim was only labelled as 'determined' 28 days after this document had been served ([Home Office 2024](#)). The BRP was expected to arrive within 10 days of an asylum decision ([Migrant Help n.d.](#)). However, Hana, a Syrian refugee who was living in local authority temporary accommodation with her two teenage children at the time of interview, describes experiencing a significant delay:

(Hana) In December, I got my decision, but I didn't receive any BRP. I wait five months [. . .] I stayed five months here.

(Sasha) What was the impact of that for you?

(Hana) Yes, bad because you are not clear. Tomorrow, after tomorrow, what do you do? You don't have any plan. This is not good.

Without access to this key document, therefore, Hana was effectively excluded from the rights and entitlements in Wales that her new legal status was supposed to automatically confer ([Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#)), and without a plan for her future in the UK. Yet, the onus for doing the corrective work to resolve bureaucratic errors on the part of the Home Office falls on individuals like Hana and people working within the organisations supporting them. They had to contact the Home Office for replacement BRPs and get in touch with Migrant Help—the charity contracted by the Home Office to provide advice and assistance to people seeking asylum until 2029 ([Home Office 2019](#))—to reinstate asylum support if it was stopped while waiting for this document to arrive ([Migrant Help n.d.](#)). While volunteering for a charity supporting refugees alongside this research, I also witnessed many instances of incorrect personal information on BRP cards and grant letters, which could take weeks or months of back and forth to resolve.

In a context in which the minimum legal period for an eviction notice to leave asylum accommodation is seven days ([Asylum Support Regulations 2000](#)) and the service of a BRP signalled the beginning of the 'move-on' period, these delays could be intensely stressful. This caseworker describes how newly granted refugees' experiences of homelessness and housing stress were connected to and given shape by bureaucratic errors and inconsistencies on the part of the Home Office:

(Caseworker) So, we have so many cases like that, lost BRP, or there are mistakes in the BRP. People are getting six or seven BRP. And there's a complete wrong information in the grant letters. Well, there's so many things, like, okay, the grant letter says something else in a different name, the biometric card is a different name.

(Sasha) And what happens when information like that is wrong?

(Caseworker) They get stressed out, isn't it, like, if you see that someone have to go through that, okay, you know that you are going to be kicked out in six, seven days. And they definitely get kicked out, like, they get stressed out by that. [...] Let's say we wanted to extend someone's stay for some various reason. We have to contact Migrant Help; Migrant Help have to contact the Home Office. By the time that comes back, the family's already been evicted. We've had that kind of cases.

In these instances, there was a temporal disjuncture between the legal and material urgency of resolving a BRP issue for people who had been notified that their asylum support would be discontinued—particularly in light of the crucial functions of the BRP discussed above—and the protracted institutional timelines that this process operated on. Social scientists have used the term 'administrative burden' (Herd and Moynihan 2018; Ray et al. 2023) to draw attention to the time and energy that is put into the research, compliance and psychological work required to untangle bureaucratic 'knots' (Sackett and Lareau 2023). These 'knots' (Sackett and Lareau 2023), often triggered by one small error or mishap, can create problems in institutional procedures and impede access to key services across different settings. In reflective analysis, several members of the peer research team related strongly to stories shared by participants about hours spent on the phone to caseworkers at Migrant Help, frustrated and disempowered by the pace of action to resolve issues that had real material and psychological impacts in their everyday lives.

In the context of 'move-on' as process, the 'administrative burden' (Herd and Moynihan 2018; Ray et al. 2023) of correcting bureaucratic errors is further complicated by possible language barriers, technological exclusion, and additional and competing demands on people's time—such as the need to secure alternative accommodation—that are created by a grant of refugee status. The recent transition to eVisas was intended to resolve some of these issues (Home Office News Team 2025). However, there have been reports of people struggling to gain access to and prove their status using the new digital system (Lenegan 2024; Bancroft 2025).

3.2. Homelessness Prevention and the Power of the Eviction Notice

From August until December 2023, the Home Office implemented an operational change to the point at which asylum financial and accommodation support ended for people granted refugee status. During this period, refugees were notified when they received their positive decision that asylum support would come to an end in 28 days, regardless of whether or not their BRP had arrived. Meanwhile, people who had already spent more than 28 days in their accommodation after receiving a positive asylum decision were given a legal minimum of seven days' notice of eviction (Asylum Support Regulations 2000).

Yeah, they give me just one week. They give me one week. In the same week, we have my elder son, he has GCSE, I have a writing exam, but I didn't pass because I don't have a time to study. Just... I collect them, I came to here to Council. (Hana)

The Notice to Quit is a legal eviction notice confirming the date by which a newly granted refugee must leave their state-funded accommodation, served by hand or email by staff working for the accommodation provider (Home Office 2024). For Hana, a sudden eviction notice functioned to forcibly reorient her everyday priorities away from the

demands of the education system on her and her son, towards a focus on resolving the imminent threat of homelessness to her family.

Education is recognised by Welsh Government as a key component of ‘integration’ for refugees and people seeking asylum in Wales (Welsh Government 2019, 2024). However, at the Welsh Government level, the term ‘integration’ is largely articulated in relation to actions that can be taken in the devolved policy areas to support people to fully contribute to Welsh life (Welsh Government 2019, 2022, 2024). This politically decentres policies that are operating at the level of UK Government—for instance, in relation to sudden eviction from state-funded asylum accommodation—to disrupt and place boundaries on what people are practically able to do to build a material safety net in, and contribute to, their host community. For one peer researcher involved in the research, stories such as Hana’s illustrated a gap between institutional expectations on ‘integration’ and how this works ‘when people fundamentally do not know where they are going to sleep that night’.

Although since 2020 there has been a greater reliance on hotels to accommodate people seeking asylum (Migration Observatory 2025), people in the asylum system and newly granted refugees who have not yet been evicted have often spent months or years in houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in the private rented sector (PRS). As recipients of ‘temporary’ state housing support (Immigration and Asylum Act 1999), their evictions are constructed very differently to those of ‘contract-holders’ in the PRS in Wales, who have a legal right to six months’ notice before they are evicted on a ‘no fault’ basis under Welsh legislation (Renting Homes (Wales) Act (2016)). The exclusion of refugees from this legislative commitment to six months’ notice facilitates the institutional construction of people like Hana as administrative cases to be processed and closed, rather than human beings for whom we should be trying to prevent homelessness. This reflects an existing racialised institutional and political framing that has historically contoured policy responses to and media engagement with people seeking asylum as primarily a ‘burden’ and a ‘drain’ on public resources (Darling 2016).

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act (2016) recognises that people need time in order to find suitable alternative accommodation to avoid homelessness when they are evicted. However, although newly granted refugees are at significant risk of homelessness, destitution and housing stress during ‘move-on’ (Dwyer and Brown 2008; L. Smith 2019; Mitton 2021; Brown et al. 2024a; UNHCR 2024), there is no institutional mechanism in place to secure access to suitable, stable housing following a very short eviction notice period from asylum accommodation. One person seeking asylum who participated in an early focus group described this as a process of ‘automatic homelessness’. Reflecting this, many caseworkers I spoke with during fieldwork had accepted that homelessness was just part of the process that begins when a person is granted refugee status. Many participants in this research had transitioned directly into the Welsh homelessness system following a grant of status and/or had been sofa surfing with friends or acquaintances in asylum accommodation in order to avoid sleeping on the streets.

At the time of his interview, Husam, who had young children, had been waiting to be issued with a Notice to Quit his accommodation for three months after receiving his asylum decision. This was still the case when we spoke again informally after six months. Reliant on Universal Credit for financial support and without a UK-based guarantor, Husam had tried but had not been able to secure accommodation in the PRS. Here, he describes how his work to find and secure employment was shaped and constrained by uncertainty around when he would need to move out of his accommodation at very short notice:

...yeah, a new refugee, when he start looking for a job, they don’t have enough money to buy car or any other way to transport. So, they prepare to look for local

jobs. Yet... you don't know when and where you will move. So, you'll prepare to stay without work until you have moved. (Husam)

However, for one Policy Officer at an organisation supporting refugees, the seven-day notice period had limited additional impacts. Despite a temporary policy change to the asylum support discontinuation period and known issues with the administration of BRPs at the time, they suggested that people still had 28 days to 'move-on':

And we also... last year we had to deal with that reduced seven-day period kind of thing, Notice to Quit, which, even though realistically had a very little impact in terms of people's lives, it did create a lot of anxieties [...] People were... still had 28 days from when they were granted status till the end. And that's one of the things [...] going back to some of the information we give to people... I think that was part of the impetus, saying, don't wait till you get a Notice to Quit letter to get support. The day you're granted status, you need to get support. (Policy Officer)

Hana's account offers insight into the significant disruptions created by a sudden Notice to Quit in the context of people's everyday life priorities. Meanwhile, Husam's experience demonstrates that even when left for longer than expected without a Notice to Quit, it is extremely challenging to build a life when the threat of sudden and unpredictable eviction is looming. Crucially, in the quote above, the Notice to Quit is positioned as incidental to the engagement work recommended to refugees during the 'move-on' process, whereas for Hana and Husam, it is central.

In working to try and understand how it happened that there was this divergence between the perspectives of people with experiential expertise and practitioners, I was told by multiple people working in the refugee and asylum support sector that through some 'back and forth' dialogue, there had been an agreement established with the local authority that they would accept the duty (to prevent homelessness) for newly granted refugees once they had received their status letter, even if they had not yet received their BRP or been issued a Notice to Quit:

Once they've got the grant letter... everyone knows that they're not allowed to live in the Home Office accommodation. They have to accept the duty. They were not accepting the duty in the past. So, we had to... it took me like two years to explain them. (Caseworker)

However, when I asked people working for the local authority about the Notice to Quit, I was, repeatedly, told something different:

We've got somebody contacting people saying, right, have you had your Notice to Quit? So, we've got a fair few on that list. So, those are the, yeah, that pre-prevention. So, technically, we can't offer a duty until they've had a... a Notice to Quit. But, yeah, we will provide them with lots of information, say, right, this is what you need to start doing. And they can come in at any time... we offer workshops to show people, right, if you're looking for private rented, listen, we can help you do that. So, they run all over [the area]. And they can come in at any time and speak to a Housing Solutions Officer who will give that advice. Generally, we haven't had many of those. I really want to say I could count on the one hand. So, generally people aren't that proactive. (Local Authority Housing Practitioner)

Here, the concept of 'prevention' is textually mediated by the [Housing \(Wales\) Act \(2014\)](#), where it is defined in relation to a legal duty to support 'eligible' people who are threatened by homelessness within 56 days. This usually involves activity on the part of people working in the local authority housing team to support people in crisis to stay in their current or source suitable new accommodation. In taking on this narrow legislative definition of prevention,

this practitioner temporally reclassifies outreaching contact with newly granted refugees; the provision of free information, advice and assistance; and workshops to support people to find accommodation in the PRS as ‘pre-prevention’ work ([Housing \(Wales\) Act \(2014\)](#)). However, this descriptor functions to misrepresent the process under investigation ([Pence 2021](#)): that is, the exclusion of refugees navigating the ‘move-on’ process from local authority action to prevent homelessness until after they have produced a Notice to Quit, which could only be for seven days. In our collaborative analysis session, one member of the peer research team described this as ‘a total failure’ of prevention.

Statutory guidance urges local authority staff working on allocations and homelessness to ‘be aware of the benefits in identifying and working with an applicant as soon as possible and potentially much earlier than the minimum 56 days set out in legislation’ ([Welsh Government 2016](#)). However, in practice, the institutional significance assigned to the Notice to Quit can facilitate a form of ‘institutional gatekeeping’ ([Sackett and Lareau 2023](#)) that gives shape to a tension between the experiences of newly granted refugees, who are ‘begging’ to be issued with a Notice to Quit before showing up in the homelessness system, and the institutional construction of their experiences as cases that are ‘accommodated’, ‘not homeless’ and not an ‘obligat[ion]’ until there is an eviction notice:

We wouldn’t accept a duty because they are accommodated by the Home Office still, subject to a Notice to Quit. And you are, you’re not homeless because you’re still supported by the Home Office, which did, I think, create a certain situation where, like, certain families were, like, begging the Home Office to get them their cards so they can be evicted. But then, they also ended up coming through homeless services afterwards, so, you know, that was, yeah, I dunno, it did create a bit of a situation, maybe not a major one for us, because, you know, we’re not obligated to. . . (Homelessness Assessor)

Looking ahead, the proposed [Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation \(Wales\) Bill \(2025\)](#) would, if passed, extend the statutory prevention period from 56 days to 6 months. While other groups would, in principle, stand to benefit from access to six months of prevention assistance, newly granted refugees may in practice remain restricted to seven days where a Notice to Quit is required. Coupled with what we already know from English data about the numbers of people who immediately require local authority homelessness assistance upon being granted refugee status ([Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2024](#)), this divergence brings focus to the politics of inclusion and exclusion embedded within state-led efforts to prevent homelessness ([Nichols et al. 2024](#)).

3.3. The Institutional Focus on Private Rented Sector Solutions

Here, Omar—a single man from Syria who was working full-time in the charity sector when we spoke—describes his efforts to find accommodation in the PRS after he was granted refugee status. Like Hana and Husam, Omar also waited several months before he was issued with a 12-day eviction notice:

Then I got my refugee status six months ago, or something like that. They forget me in the house for five months. Then I got eviction letter. . . on the. . . was, was, 12 days’ notice to leave the house. And then I started looking for a house and it was very difficult because I’m a single person and I’m still young. They asked for lots of things, guarantor, full time employment and how much your salary. I applied for the job after one week from. . . I, I. . . from last time I got refugee statement, and I got the job. But the salary is too low. So, most of the landlords didn’t accept my offer. I offered to pay two months in advance, three months in advance. [. . .] The time come to leave the house, and I didn’t find anything. (Omar, refugee)

Despite presenting as a reliable tenant who had secured full-time employment and offered to pay several months' upfront rent to landlords as leverage, Omar's account makes visible a number of key institutional challenges that can make access to the PRS particularly difficult for newly granted refugees (Brown et al. 2022; Lindley 2023; Brown et al. 2024b). There is currently a UK-wide housing crisis and an acute shortage of affordable PRS accommodation in Wales, which is a particular challenge for people under the age of 35 who receive a lower, shared accommodation rate of housing benefit (UK Government 2014; Bevan Foundation 2022). Overcoming the particular institutional 'hurdles' (Sackett and Lareau 2023)—or rules and requirements that are often bureaucratic in nature (Sackett and Lareau 2023)—created by the need to procure a UK-based guarantor and meet minimum salary thresholds can be complicated because newly granted refugees often have no savings, previous formal employment history in the UK, familiarity with the housing market or established social networks to draw on (Brown et al. 2022; UNHCR 2024).

For Sackett and Lareau (2023), these 'hurdles' can be simple for some, but more challenging for others, particularly people who are new to a country and/or facing language barriers. In their book, they suggest that many of these rules and requirements disproportionately disadvantage and threaten access to resources for people of colour (Sackett and Lareau 2023). Indeed, of a total of 90 newly granted refugee households seen by caseworkers at a Welsh Refugee Council office between August and December 2024, only 11% had moved into PRS accommodation, while the rest were either homeless (11%) or living in local authority temporary accommodation (77%) (Welsh Refugee Council 2025). The minority of participants in early focus groups who did manage to successfully secure PRS housing after they received their refugee status all shared that they had only been able to do so through financial and guarantor support from friends, colleagues, family or community members.

During fieldwork, I attended a number of housing workshops for refugees and people seeking asylum. In the session that I formally observed, delivered in English to a turnout of around 20 people, the facilitator presented the differences between social housing and the PRS. Social housing was situated in the context of long waiting lists. In contrast, the PRS was described as 'relatively quick to find and move into'; something that enabled choice and flexibility:

Why not take some answers into your own hands and try to find something in the meantime, because you're going to have more flexibility, you're going to have more options. So, I think it's about, yeah, I think the main thing I want to get out those [workshops] is empowering people to make decisions for themselves. . . (Facilitator)

People were warned that the PRS can be expensive, but also, informed that there are various forms of individualised state support available to facilitate access, including housing benefit and deposit assistance from the local authority. Bureaucratic 'hurdles' (Sackett and Lareau 2023) created by complexity around guarantors and minimum salary thresholds were not discussed during the workshop. Meanwhile, proactive engagement with the PRS, or 'tak[ing] some answers into your own hands', was established as something that provides people with choice and flexibility when navigating 'move-on'. This hooks into a neoliberal logic that promotes market housing solutions as a response to homelessness and housing insecurity (Nichols et al. 2024).

In fact, there was a repeated focus on the PRS as the best option for newly granted refugees from frontline professionals and people involved elsewhere in the institutional chain of action. This institutional framing diverges majorly from what we know about Omar and others' lived experiences of exclusion from the PRS. This was directly discussed in a focus group with a number of caseworkers working for an organisation in the refugee and asylum support sector in the area, who each had personal experience of navigating

the housing system as refugees. Grounded in a discussion in which they had shared their own and their clients' experiences of negotiating PRS access in the area, Asmin and Sozan make visible tensions in their professional work to 'train' and 'convince' people to find accommodation in the PRS during 'move-on':

(Asmin) . . . the meetings and trainings, just to train people, okay, to convince them to go for privates, you know, private sector is better. Don't. . . don't waste your time, okay, to be registered with [the local authority] to go for social. And you know it decrease the demands from the clients, but the thing is, the private sector has problems!

(Sozan) Yeah this is the thing! They expect us to go to private, but what is private? You are not eligible for private.

The focus on facilitating proactive engagement with the PRS—as this is linked to efforts to manage pressures on an overstretched statutory homelessness system—functions to reconfigure housing as the responsibility of the self-sufficient and 'empowered' refugee. This diverts attention away from what is politically 'off the table' (Nichols et al. 2024) in terms of state homelessness response: that is, for newly granted refugees, early preventative work to avoid homelessness, and access to sustainable long-term housing.

4. Conclusions

In this paper, I have used an IE-informed approach to examine the institutional coordination of homelessness and housing insecurity in the lives of newly granted refugees navigating the 'move-on' process in one local authority area in Wales. In problematising the gap between refugees' lived experiences of homelessness and housing precarity following a grant of status and what is happening institutionally in terms of homelessness prevention and response, I have attempted to make visible relations of power that are obscured in popular and political debate on housing and migration. This is particularly important in the rapidly changing context of anti-immigration populism that has swept the UK in 2024 and 2025. In this context, conversations around who has and should have access to adequate housing and homelessness assistance are highly politicised (Powell and Robinson 2019).

During the 'move-on' process, newly granted refugees are expected to transition rapidly from an institutionalised legal dependency on the Home Office and its subcontractors for financial and accommodation support into a set of new and unfamiliar systems that regulate access to state support. This process is constructed institutionally as a neat, temporally defined transition period. However, the organising power of identity documents and eviction notices can leave people suspended in uncertainty, ineligible for the rights and entitlements that their new legal status is supposed to automatically confer, and vulnerable to homelessness. These experiences are connected to and given shape by bureaucratic errors and inconsistencies on the part of the Home Office, which, at a time of acute stress and change, demand time and energy from refugees and the people supporting them to resolve.

Previous research is clear that newly granted refugees are at significant risk of homelessness, destitution and housing stress during 'move-on' (Dwyer and Brown 2008; L. Smith 2019; Mitton 2021; Brown et al. 2024a; UNHCR 2024). Although we know this, there is no institutional mechanism in place to alleviate these conditions of precarity and secure access to suitable, stable accommodation following a short and unpredictable eviction notice period. Moreover, the significance assigned to the Notice to Quit facilitates a form of 'institutional gatekeeping' (Sackett and Lareau 2023) of the duty to prevent outlined in Welsh homelessness legislation (Housing (Wales) Act (2014)). As such, findings suggest that the social relations un-

derpinning the ‘move-on’ process constitute a disruptive mechanism of forced displacement into homelessness and housing insecurity for newly granted refugees.

Meanwhile, there is a disjunct between exclusions from the PRS experienced by participants like Omar, and the professional framing of proactive engagement with the PRS as the key solution to homelessness among newly granted refugees. Here, housing is discursively reconfigured as the responsibility of the self-sufficient and ‘empowered’ refugee, which hooks into a ruling discourse that reifies market housing solutions in response to systematic homelessness and housing insecurity. This diverts attention away from pressing questions of PRS access, and what is politically ‘off the table’ (Nichols et al. 2024) in terms of state homelessness response—that is, for newly granted refugees, early work to support people to avoid homelessness—and the need to prevent harms conditioned by the systems, processes, practices and procedures that organise people’s experiences through and out of the asylum system.

This article provides new insights into the ‘move-on’ process, but it is important to recognise several limitations. Firstly, in focusing in on housing and homelessness, I have deprioritised or ignored other key dimensions of disruption to people’s lives that follow a grant of refugee status. Second, as I have entered into the social relations organising ‘move-on’ through the experiential accounts of a few key informants, I do not seek to claim that this paper provides a comprehensive overview of all the options that people have available to them following a grant of refugee status. Lastly, constraints on time and resourcing meant that the peer research team was not involved at every level of data collection. It is likely that their involvement in interviews with practitioners would have strengthened insights into, and challenges to, taken for granted knowledges that came into view during analysis.

Funding: This research was supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), grant number ES/P00069X/1.

Institutional Review Board Statement: This study was approved by the School of Geography and Planning Research Ethics Committee at Cardiff University (2324-005, 5 December 2023).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in this study.

Data Availability Statement: The datasets presented in this article are not readily available due to privacy and ethical restrictions.

Acknowledgments: I sincerely thank every single person who participated in this study and generously shared their lived/living/professional expertise. I am particularly grateful to members of the peer research team for their involvement in and contributions to this research. I would also like to thank members of the partner steering group for this project and staff from partner organisations who supported this work and connected me with participants. Special thanks to Peter Mackie and Andrew Williams for their encouragement, comments and constructive feedback when drafting this work.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- Ager, Alastair, and Alison Strang. 2008. Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21: 166–91. [CrossRef]
- Allsopp, Jennifer, Nando Sigona, and Jenny Phillimore. 2014. Poverty Among Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK. IRiS Working Paper Series (1). Available online: <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2014/working-paper-series/IRiS-WP-1-2014.pdf> (accessed on 21 September 2025).
- Asylum Support Appeals Project. 2023. Discontinuation Periods for Asylum Support. Available online: <https://migrationpartnership.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Discontinuation-periods.pdf> (accessed on 29 August 2025).

- Asylum Support Regulations. 2000. Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/704/contents> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Balcom, Sarah, Shelley Doucet, and Anik Dubé. 2021. Observation and Institutional Ethnography: Helping Us to See Better. *Qualitative Health Research* 31: 1534–41. [CrossRef]
- Bancroft, Holly. 2025. Refugees ‘at Risk of Destitution’ and Struggling to Access Services After eVisa Switch, Charities Warn. Independent. Available online: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/evisa-uk-refugee-digital-change-visa-b2689805.html> (accessed on 29 August 2025).
- Bernhardt, Franz. 2023. “In Wales . . . we do things differently”. The politics of asylum dispersal in the UK and emerging national (self-) imaginaries of hospitality in Wales. *Political Geography* 103: 102886. [CrossRef]
- Bevan Foundation. 2022. Wales Housing Crisis: An Update on the Private Rental Market in Wales in Summer 2022. Available online: <https://www.bevanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Wales-Housing-Crisis-summer-2022-update.pdf> (accessed on 28 August 2025).
- Brown, Phillip, Santokh Gill, and Jamie P. Halsall. 2022. The impact of housing on refugees: An evidence synthesis. *Housing Studies* 39: 227–71. [CrossRef]
- Brown, Phillip, Santokh Gill, and Jamie P. Halsall. 2024a. *Refugees and Housing: Policy, Practice and Lived Experience*. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland AG; Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brown, Phillip, Santokh Gill, Jamie P. Halsall, Tom Simcock, and Akosiwa Agbokou. 2024b. Homelessness, Refugees and Resettlement in the UK. Centre for Homelessness Impact. Available online: <https://www.homelessnessimpact.org/publication/homelessness-refugees-and-resettlement> (accessed on 28 August 2025).
- Carnet, Pauline, Catherine Blanchard, and Fabio Apollonio. 2018. Still an Ordeal: The Move-On Period for New Refugees. British Red Cross. Available online: <https://naccomm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Move-on-period-report-5.pdf> (accessed on 19 February 2025).
- Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. 1951. Available online: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/1951-refugee-convention-and-1967-protocol-relating-status-refugees> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Crawley, Heaven, and Dimitris Skleparis. 2017. Refugees, migrants, neither, both: Categorical fetishism and the politics of bounding in Europe’s ‘migration crisis’. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44: 48–64. [CrossRef]
- Culhane, Dennis P., Stephen Mettraux, and Thomas Byrne. 2011. A prevention centered approach to homelessness assistance: A paradigm shift? *Housing Policy Debate* 21: 295–315. [CrossRef]
- Darling, Jonathan. 2016. Privatising asylum: Neoliberalisation, depoliticisation and the governance of forced migration. *Transactions-Institute of British Geographers* 31: 230–43. [CrossRef]
- Darling, Jonathan. 2022. *Systems of Suffering: Dispersal and the Denial of Asylum*. London: Pluto Press.
- DeVault, Marjorie L. 2023. Revisiting the Ruling Relations. In *Critical Commentary on Institutional Ethnography: IE Scholars Speak to Its Promise*. Edited by Paul C. Luken and Suzanne Vaughan. Cham: Springer International Publishing; Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 119–36.
- DeVault, Marjorie L., and Liza McCoy. 2000. Institutional ethnography: Using interviews to investigate ruling relations. In *Handbook of Interviewing*. Edited by Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- Dudhia, Priscilla. 2020. Will I Ever Be Safe? Asylum-Seeking Women Made Destitute in the UK. Women for Refugee Women. Available online: <https://www.refugeewomen.co.uk/not-safe/> (accessed on 19 February 2025).
- Dwyer, Peter, and David Brown. 2008. Accommodating ‘others’?: Housing dispersed, forced migrants in the UK. *Journal of Social Welfare & Family Law* 30: 203–18. [CrossRef]
- Electronic Immigration Network. 2024. 28-Day Refugee ‘Move-on’ Period Doubled to 56 Days in New Home Office Trial. Available online: <https://www.ein.org.uk/news/28-day-refugee-move-period-doubled-56-days-new-home-office-trial> (accessed on 19 February 2025).
- European Observatory on Homelessness. 2016. *Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Homelessness: The Humanitarian Crisis and the Homelessness Sector in Europe*. Brussels: European Observatory on Homelessness.
- Farrugia, David, and Jessica Gerrard. 2016. Academic Knowledge and Contemporary Poverty: The Politics of Homelessness Research. *Sociology* 50: 267–84. [CrossRef]
- Ferdinands, Alexa R., Tara-Leigh F. McHugh, Kate Storey, and Kim D. Raine. 2022. Reflections on Applying Institutional Ethnography in Participatory Weight Stigma Research with Young Women. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 21: 1–13. [CrossRef]
- Fitzpatrick, Suzanne, Peter Mackie, and Jenny Wood. 2021. Advancing a Five-Stage Typology of Homelessness Prevention. *International Journal on Homelessness* 1: 79–97. [CrossRef]
- Goddard, James. 2024. HL Bill 25 of 2024-25 Asylum Support (Prescribed Period) Bill. 9 December. Available online: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602e3783d3bf7f7221aad81d/English_only_-_web_accessible.pdf (accessed on 28 August 2025).
- Goodfellow, Maya. 2019. *Hostile Environment: How Immigrants Became Scapegoats*. London: Verso.

- Helen Bamber Foundation. 2022. Home Office Asylum Interviews—Research Findings. Available online: https://helenbamber.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/HBF_Interviews%20research%20briefing%20Final%20December%202022.pdf (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Herd, Pamela, and Donald P. Moynihan. 2018. *Administrative Burden: Policymaking by Other Means*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Home Office. 2019. Schedule 2: Statement of Requirements. Available online: https://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2018-1112/AIRE_Contract-Schedule_2-SoR_-_HOC_Published.pdf (accessed on 28 August 2025).
- Home Office. 2023. Drafting, Implementing and Serving Asylum Decisions. Available online: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/654b71b2e2e16a001242ab77/Drafting_+implementing+and+serving+asylum+decisions.pdf (accessed on 17 March 2025).
- Home Office. 2024. Ceasing Section 95 Support Instruction. Available online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66c345b967dbaeb97a13e3a2/Ceasing+Section+95+Support+Instruction.pdf> (accessed on 19 March 2025).
- Home Office News Team. 2025. Media Factsheet: eVisas. *Home Office in the Media*. February 17. Available online: <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2024/12/04/media-factsheet-evisas-2/> (accessed on 28 August 2025).
- Homeless Link. 2025. Home Office Reverts to 28-Day Move-On Period for New Refugees. Available online: <https://homeless.org.uk/news/home-office-reverts-to-28-day-move-on-period-for-new-refugees/#:~:text=The%20move-on%20period,%20after,decision%20has%20now%20been%20reversed> (accessed on 31 August 2025).
- Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Bill. 2025. Available online: <https://laiddocuments.senedd.wales/pri-ld17178-en.pdf> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Housing (Wales) Act. 2014. anaw 7. Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/7/contents> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Immigration and Asylum Act. 1999. Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/33/section/95> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Lenegan, Sonia. 2024. Concerns Raised by Refugee Council about Impact of eVisas on Refugee Homelessness. Available online: <https://freemovement.org.uk/concerns-raised-by-refugee-council-about-impact-of-evisas-on-refugee-homelessness/> (accessed on 1 April 2025).
- Lindley, Anna. 2023. Supporting Sanctuary Seekers Needing Housing in Wales: Mid-Term Evaluation of Tai Pawb Refugee and Asylum-Seeker Housing Project. Tai Pawb. Available online: <https://www.taipawb.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-Tai-Pawb-EVALUATION-REPORT-updated-for-publication.pdf> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Local Government Association Research. 2024. *Moving on from Asylum Accommodation: The Impact and Learning from Councils on the Asylum Backlog Clearance*. London: Local Government Association.
- Mayblin, Lucy. 2017. *Asylum After Empire: Colonial Legacies in the Politics of Asylum Seeking*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd.
- Migrant Help. n.d. When Will I Receive My Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) Card? Available online: <https://www.migranthehelpuk.org/faqs/when-will-i-receive-my-brp-card#:~:text=You%20should%20normally%20receive%20your,claim%20benefits%20in%20the%20UK> (accessed on 18 March 2025).
- Migration Observatory. 2025. Asylum Accommodation in the UK. Available online: <https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/asylum-accommodation-in-the-uk/> (accessed on 10 November 2025).
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. 2024. Statutory Homelessness in England: Financial Year 2023-24. Available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2023-24/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2023-24#:~:text=Local%20authorities%20made%2094,280%20main,homelessness%20duty%20in%202023-24> (accessed on 20 March 2025).
- Mitton, Lavinia. 2021. The Newly-Recognised Refugees Most at Risk of Homelessness in England. *Journal of Social Policy* 50: 59–78. [CrossRef]
- Murray, Órla Meadhbh. 2022. Text, process, discourse: Doing feminist text analysis in institutional ethnography. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 25: 45–57. [CrossRef]
- Murray, Órla Meadhbh, Liz Ablett, Gráinne Kearney, and Adriana Suárez Delucchi. 2023. Are We Proper Institutional Ethnographers? Available online: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/highereducation/2023/11/17/are-we-proper-institutional-ethnographers/> (accessed on 23 September 2025).
- Mykhalovskiy, Eric, and Martin French. 2020. COVID-19, public health, and the politics of prevention. *Sociology of Health & Illness* 42: 4–15. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
- NACCOM. 2024. A Data Briefing from the NACCOM Network: Understanding Destitution and Homelessness in the Asylum and Immigration System 2023/2024. Available online: <https://naccomm.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/FINAL-NACCOM-Annual-Survey-Briefing-2024.pdf> (accessed on 6 March 2025).
- Nichols, Naomi, Alison Griffith, and Mitchell McLarnon. 2018. Community-Based and Participatory Approaches in Institutional Ethnography. In *Perspectives on and from Institutional Ethnography*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited, vol. 15, pp. 107–24. [CrossRef]

- Nichols, Naomi, and Jessica Ruglis. 2021. Institutional Ethnography and Youth Participatory Action Research: A Praxis Approach. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Institutional Ethnography*. Edited by Paul C. Luken and Vaughan Suzanne. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 527–50.
- Nichols, Naomi, Sarah Cullingham, and Jayne Malenfant. 2024. The Politics of Prevention and Government Responses to Homelessness. *International Journal on Homelessness* 4: 171–84. [CrossRef]
- Pence, Ellen. 2021. The Institutional Analysis: Matching What Institutions Do with What Works for People. In *The Palgrave Handbook of Institutional Ethnography*. Edited by Paul C. Luken and Vaughan Suzanne. Cham: Springer International Publishing: Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 329–56.
- Phillips, Deborah. 2006. Moving Towards Integration: The Housing of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Britain. *Housing Studies* 21: 539–53. [CrossRef]
- Powell, Ryan, and David Robinson. 2019. Housing, ethnicity and advanced marginality in England. In *Class, Ethnicity and State in the Polarized Metropolis*. Edited by Flint John and Ryan Powell. London: Palgrave, pp. 187–212.
- Provan, Bert. 2020. Extending the 'Move-On' Period for Newly Granted Refugees: Analysis of Benefits and Costs. Available online: <https://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cr/casereport126.pdf> (accessed on 6 October 2025).
- Rankin, Janet. 2017a. Conducting Analysis in Institutional Ethnography: Analytical Work Prior to Commencing Data Collection. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16: 1–9. [CrossRef]
- Rankin, Janet. 2017b. Conducting Analysis in Institutional Ethnography: Guidance and Cautions. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16: 1–11. [CrossRef]
- Ray, Victor, Pamela Herd, and Donald Moynihan. 2023. Racialized Burdens: Applying Racialized Organization Theory to the Administrative State. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 33: 139–52. [CrossRef]
- Renting Homes (Wales) Act. 2016. anaw 1. Available online: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/1/section/173> (accessed on 22 September 2025).
- Rowley, Lauren, Nicola Morant, and Cornelius Katona. 2020. Refugees Who Have Experienced Extreme Cruelty: A Qualitative Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing after Being Granted Leave to Remain in the UK. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 18: 357–74. [CrossRef]
- Sackett, Blair, and Annette Lareau. 2023. *We Thought It Would Be Heaven: Refugees in an Unequal America*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Samari, Davood, and Shiloh Groot. 2023. Potentially exploring homelessness among refugees: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Social Distress and Homelessness* 32: 135–50. [CrossRef]
- Smith, Dorothy E. 1981. On Sociological Description: A Method from Marx. *Human Studies* 4: 313–37. [CrossRef]
- Smith, Dorothy E. 1987. *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Smith, Dorothy E. 1999. *Writing the Social: Critique, Theory, and Investigations*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Smith, Dorothy E. 2002. Institutional ethnography. In *Qualitative Research in Action*. Edited by Tim May. London: SAGE.
- Smith, Dorothy E. 2004. Ideology, Science and Social Relations: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Epistemology. *European Journal of Social Theory* 7: 445–62. [CrossRef]
- Smith, Dorothy E. 2005. *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*. Lanham: AltaMira.
- Smith, Dorothy E., and Alison I. Griffith. 2022. *Simply Institutional Ethnography: Creating a Sociology for People*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Smith, Dorothy E., and Susan Marie Turner. 2014. *Incorporating Texts into Institutional Ethnographies*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Smith, George W. 1990. Political Activist as Ethnographer. *Social Problems* 37: 629–48. [CrossRef]
- Smith, Lucy. 2019. Mind The Gap One Year On: Continuation Report on Homelessness Amongst Newly Recognised Refugees. NACCOM. Available online: <https://nacom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/NACCOM-Homelessness-Report-2019-06-18-DIGITAL.pdf> (accessed on 19 February 2025).
- Stewart, Emma, and Marnie Shaffer. 2015. Moving On? Dispersal Policy, Onward Migration and Integration of Refugees in the UK. Available online: https://migrant-integration.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2018-06/Moving_On_Final_Report_2015.pdf (accessed on 20 February 2025).
- Strang, Alison B., Helen Baillot, and Elodie Mignard. 2018. 'I want to participate.' transition experiences of new refugees in Glasgow. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 44: 197–214. [CrossRef]
- Trawver, Kathi R., Stephen Oby, Lauren Kominkiewicz, Frances Bernard Kominkiewicz, and Kelsey Whittington. 2019. Homelessness in America: An Overview. In *Homelessness Prevention and Intervention in Social Work: Policies, Programs, and Practices*. Edited by Larkin Heather, Amanda Aykanian and Calvin L. Streeter. Cham: Springer, pp. 3–41.
- UK Government. 2014. Local Housing Allowance: Guidance Manual. Available online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a758238ed915d6faf2b38a2/lha-guidance-manual.pdf> (accessed on 26 September 2025).

- UNHCR. 2024. An Uncertain Future: A Journey Through the Move-On Period. Available online: https://www.unhcr.org/uk/sites/uk/files/2024-10/an_uncertain_future_a_journey_through_the_move_on_period.pdf (accessed on 20 February 2025).
- Walby, Kevin. 2007. On the Social Relations of Research: A Critical Assessment of Institutional Ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry* 13: 1008–30. [CrossRef]
- Welsh Government. 2016. Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness. Available online: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/allocation-of-accommodation-and-homelessness-guidance-for-local-authorities.pdf> (accessed on 22 February 2025).
- Welsh Government. 2019. Nation of Sanctuary—Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan. Available online: https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-03/nation-of-sanctuary-refugee-and-asylum-seeker-plan_0.pdf (accessed on 28 July 2025).
- Welsh Government. 2020. Nation of Sanctuary—Refugee and Asylum Seeker Plan: Progress Report Update June 2020. Available online: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-06/progress-report-update-june-2020.pdf> (accessed on 10 November 2025).
- Welsh Government. 2022. Race Equality Action Plan—An Anti-racist Wales. Available online: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2022/7/3/1658919769/anti-racist-wales-action-plan-contents.pdf> (accessed on 22 February 2025).
- Welsh Government. 2024. Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan: 2024 Update. Available online: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2025/5/3/1746643744/anti-racist-wales-action-plan-2024-update.pdf> (accessed on 26 February 2024).
- Welsh Refugee Council. 2025. *Homelessness, Temporary Accommodation and PRS Casework Data*. Welsh Refugee Council.
- Wyn Edwards, Catrin, and Verena Wisthaler. 2023. The power of symbolic sanctuary: Insights from Wales on the limitations and potential of a regional approach to sanctuary. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 49: 3602–28. [CrossRef]
- Yeo, Colin. 2020. *Welcome to Britain: Fixing Our Broken Immigration System*. Hull: Biteback.

Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.