Request Details – FOI5482

In line with your public access publication scheme, I would be really grateful if you could help to provide me with some BCC related information to help with my social history research work. I need as much useful information as possible on BCC policies regarding refugee/asylum seeker communities. The kind of material this might include would involve:

- What are BCC policy documents published in the past 12 months?
- What data is available on size of community etc?
- What support / information does BCC make available?
- Is there any specific information available on housing policies?

Response Details– FOI5482

I am writing in respect of your recent enquiry for information held by the Authority under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please find herewith the following:

Copy of your request dated 29th April 2011 is attached.

An asylum seeker is someone who has come to the UK and has applied to stay in the country due to fear of persecution etc. Asylum seekers have no recourse to public funds so the Local Authority would not fund services for them. The Home Office does provide accommodation and support to those who need it while they are waiting for their decision.

A refugee is an asylum seeker who has been given the right to remain in this country and be treated as a British citizen in accessing services. The difficulty is that once they have UK status we would only gather information about their ethnicity and would therefore be unable establish from our records, who was a refugee and who wasn't. Therefore we are unable to provide information regarding Community sizes for Refugees and Asylum Seekers. However, you may wish to contact The Home Office (UKBA) who will keep information about the number of asylum applications and the outcomes. They should also have the most accurate information on where the new communities are settling.

Quarterly data is available on the website address below. This is extracted from reports that are publicly available on the Home Office website. Unfortunately, there is too much information for us to print.

http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/

However, in order to assist we enclose copies of:-

- The Service Standards for supporting refugees.
- Data relating to asylum seekers receiving subsistence in Birmingham, West Midlands, England and the UK between quarter 2 2005 to quarter 2 2010. However, please note that there are no reliable estimates of the overall size of communities that may have arrived as asylum seekers or refugees. The data on those receiving support are snapshots of more dynamic flows. Once people leave there is no tracking of their movements. Also we do not know the turnover in the supported accommodation: e.g. how many people appear in more than one quarter's figures.
- The April 2010 report (Newly Arrived Migrants) which attempted to quantify the size and location of recently arrived communities. Carried out for a Council Scrutiny Committee, it has some detailed information about asylum seekers receiving support.

However, please note that this was not entirely successful, but did explore the available data sources.

- The Housing Needs and Aspirations of Asylum Seekers and Refugees Living in the Birmingham Sandwell Pathfinder Area – 2004

- Urban Living (Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder) did some detailed work on their area and enclosed are four reports summarising UK Borders Agency (UKBA) numbers on Asylum Seekers in the Urban Living and surrounding area between 2004 and 2009.

- Asylum Seeker Update – May 2008

- Asylum Seeker Update - March 2009

I have also been advised by the Children, Young People and Families Directorate that they hold the following records:-
As at 31st March 2011, there were 37 unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) in care, none of whom have a child protection plan.

Due to the volume of documents contained within this response, it has not been possible to publish all the documents on our website. If you require further information on this, please contact the Corporate Information Governance Team quoting the request reference number.

Telephone: 0121 303 4876
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