

**No Recourse to Public Funds** (NRPF) is an immigration condition prohibiting access to the welfare safety net, including benefits and housing assistance. With the number of people subject to the NRPF condition more than doubling between 2020 and 2023, local authorities have found themselves under increasing pressure to juggle a 'parallel welfare safety net' for vulnerable destitute people. COMPAS' [Understanding Migrant Destitution in the UK](#) study estimates that around 18,000 vulnerable people facing destitution were supported by local authorities in 2021/22. If local government is expected to play a vital role in supporting, destitute vulnerable people, how can local authorities provide better support that meets people's needs and address wider strategic priorities such as ending child poverty and rough sleeping, improving public health, and tackling local inequalities? The following checklist provides practical steps to implement good practice within your local area.

## Data – understanding levels of need

- What data does the council hold on the numbers of people with 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) supported by the council and the annual expenditure on NRPF cases? Recording systems like [NRPF Connect](#) may help with systematically recording and evidencing the level of need.
- What data does the council hold on wider local need, including people who have been referred to the council but are not eligible or refused support?
- Who within the council can work on collating data/improving the quality of the data, evidencing local need and local authority provision?

## Council strategies for tackling destitution, child poverty and homelessness

- Is there a designated lead across cabinet/elected members whose portfolio includes tackling migrant destitution and NRPF?
- Is there a joined-up ending migrant destitution strategy covering policy and provision across children's social care, adult social care and housing?
- Does the local homelessness strategy specifically assess local homelessness and housing need related to immigration status, including people affected by NRPF and refugees leaving asylum accommodation, and sets out a plan?
- Do wider strategies, including housing, child poverty, public health and VAWG, include addressing the needs of people with NRPF and tackling migrant destitution?

## Referral pathways

- Do frontline services have accessible referral pathways for people with NRPF seeking support?
- Is there clear guidance for staff to ensure a consistent, standardised and sensitive assessment and case management process that treats people with respect and dignity?
- Has the council embedded [NRPF Network guidance](#) (endorsed by the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) into local policy and practice, and do they use the [Support for migrant families web tool](#) to establish available options for families?
- Have social care teams developed training to embed [best practice guidance for children's services social workers](#)?

## Provision of support

- How does the council ensure suitability of [accommodation](#) provided when social services' 'safety net' duties are engaged, including for out-of-area placements, minimising the use of B&Bs, and ensuring people have access to cooking facilities?
- Is there a subsistence policy for households with NRPF with minimum acceptable rates at a higher level than Home Office asylum support payments, following [guidance](#) from the NRPF Network and recent [case law](#)? How does the council ensure that rates adequately meet [children's welfare needs](#)?
- Are subsistence payments made regularly and on time and in a way that promotes financial independence (e.g. payment cards/bank transfers used instead of vouchers)?
- Does the council fund or commission services to help improve case-resolution rates? (e.g. a contract with an immigration advice provider/targeted employment support).

## Listening and learning to the voices of people with lived experience

- How does the council actively involve people with lived experience of NRPF in co-producing local strategy, policy and practice, ensuring people's time and contribution are financially acknowledged?
- How does the council actively seek anonymised feedback from service users to audit the quality of provision?

## Amplifying the voice of local government

- Have you considered joining movements or gaining accreditations which demonstrate commitment to the ongoing inclusion of migrants, such as the [City of Sanctuary \(COS\) movement](#) or the [Migrant Champions Network](#)?
- As part of your role, are you familiar with central government policy changes that [cross-party parliamentary committees](#) and [local government](#) argue are needed to reduce inequalities in communities, end homelessness and reduce the financial pressure on councils delivering support to households with NRPF? How can you engage with your local MP on these issues?

## UNDERSTANDING MIGRANT DESTITUTION IN THE UK

Understanding Migrant Destitution in the UK is a UK-wide research and knowledge exchange project (2022–2025), funded by abrdrn Financial Fairness Trust and focusing on local authority practice and provision for vulnerable people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) who are facing destitution.

[compas.ox.ac.uk/project/understanding-migrant-destitution-in-the-uk](https://compas.ox.ac.uk/project/understanding-migrant-destitution-in-the-uk)

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