

Questions raised by residents of Winford Parish about the use of Winford Manor as accommodation for asylum seekers

Despite this list of questions being sent to the hotel owner, the local MP and North Somerset Council, no official answers have been provided to date. In the absence of official responses, the following answers are the Parish Council's interpretations of verbal discussions with the hotel owner and some correspondence received from the Home Office:

1. Which agency is taking responsibility for managing the process of integration and liaising with local people. **Answer:** Not known, probably Clearspring, the agency providing the accommodation under contract to the Home Office.
2. Why has there been no consultation at all with local residents – is there any intention to inform them. **Answer:** It is not Home Office policy to consult with local people before housing asylum seekers.
3. How can any issues be reported by members of the public - is there a contact number that includes an out of hours number. **Answer:** Any issues should be reported to the hotel manager, Faiz 07778647739. Incidents can only be dealt with if there is sufficient detail, preferably photos if possible.
4. What planning permissions are in place to allow the change of use of the hotel to a hostel. **Answer:** North Somerset Council have said that having reviewed the planning history at the hotel they can find no breach of planning control.
5. When was the owner of the Manor contacted by the Home Office to assist in housing asylum seekers. **Answer:** Clearspring was already in conversation with the previous owner when the hotel was purchased by the current owner.
6. Was the Manor inspected prior to being used to house asylum seekers, by which organisation, and what were the requirements to pass. **Answer:** Clearspring is responsible for ensuring that all health and safety requirements are met. Everyone working at the site has to pass enhanced DBS checks.
7. How many people are at the Manor. **Answer:** It varies, there are 36 bedrooms given over to accommodate asylum seekers.
8. What is/are their nationalities. **Answer:** A mix of nationalities is being housed, including those from Georgia, Middle East, Syria, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somaliland.
9. How many families. **Answer:** It varies, but there are some families being accommodated at most times.
10. How many children and what ages are they. **Answer:** It varies, currently 18 children, ages 3 to 14.
11. How many single people. **Answer:** It varies.
12. What faith/s do they practice, do any of them follow Sharia Law. **Answer:** Not given as deemed not relevant.

13. What sort of turnover do the management expect, how long do they expect people to be there for. **Answer:** It varies, some people are there for a few nights only, others are longer term. On average, three weeks.
14. What are the stages of asylum seeking, and at what stage are these people, ie have they gone through any process whatsoever -such as eligibility to be accepted into the UK - or are they still waiting to have their eligibility agreed. **Answer:** All those accommodated are at an early stage in the process and still waiting for a decision on their applications for asylum.
15. What are the residents provided with. **Answer:** All food, toiletries, nappies. There are two on site laundries for their use.
16. Do they have any cooking facilities of their own. **Answer:** No.
17. How much money do they get & does it start as soon as they arrive. **Answer:** A small amount of spending money is provided but no definitive answer has been given on how much this is.
18. Will they be provided with suitable clothes for the winter. **Answer:** Apparently not, various charities have provided clothing etc.
19. What else do they need, eg toys. **Answer:** Some toys have been provided, but more would be welcomed.
20. What is known about the occupants' backgrounds – evidence of identity, criminal checks, will they pose any threat to the local community. **Answer:** The Home Office undertakes identity and criminal record checks.
21. What risk assessment was undertaken before introducing the asylum seekers into the community. **Answer:** No answer provided but assurances have been given that the asylum seekers pose no danger to local residents and that there are serious consequences to any rule breaking, including deportation if the issue is serious enough.
22. What measures are being taken to ensure the safety and security of local residents – what is in place and what is going to be put in place. **Answer:** Assurances have been given that the asylum seekers pose no danger to local residents and that there are serious consequences to any rule breaking.
23. How are the asylum seekers being briefed on local culture, expectations of behaviour and law. **Answer:** All new arrivals are briefed on these issues on arrival.
24. How is acceptable behaviour being enforced. **Answer:** The asylum seekers are subject to the same enforcement as any other resident, eg the police. Any incidents must be reported to the Home Office by the hotel owners.
25. What are the rights of the asylum seekers in terms of what they can and cannot do. **Answer:** Asylum seekers are not being detained and are free to come and go as they wish. They are not however permitted to work.

26. How are the liberties of the local residents to go about their day-to-day business being protected, especially after dark. **Answer:** Asylum seekers are not being detained and are free to come and go as they wish.
27. Who keeps track of where they have been, or are they allowed complete freedom to come and go. **Answer:** Asylum seekers are not being detained and are free to come and go as they wish.
28. How are the asylum seekers being provided with services such as education and health. **Answer:** Health services are provided in the first instance by Haven, a specialist primary healthcare service for asylum seekers and refugees. They assess and meet the initial health needs of asylum seekers and new refugees and help people to access health services and other services they need. School places have been provided in Bristol and the children are transported there every day.
29. Are they being provided with English learning support. **Answer:** There would not appear to be any official provision, translation services are provided via telephone. We understand that volunteers are providing some English lessons.
30. What transportation is being provided. **Answer:** The hotel has its own minibuss and driver and transport is provided into Bristol most days, as well as to school and anywhere else they need to go.
31. Have the relevant authorities been informed that there is no longer any public transport service running from and to Winford. **Answer:** Probably not
32. How will the asylum seekers be provided with appropriate cultural access (eg religious worship). **Answer:** The hotel has its own minibuss and driver and transport is provided to appropriate places of worship.
33. What is the process – how long do claims for asylum usually take. **Answer:** It varies.
34. What advice will be provided to those going about their normal activities should they be accosted or intimidated by those housed at the Manor. **Answer:** Any issues should be reported to the hotel manager, Faiz 07778647739. Incidents can only be dealt with if there is sufficient detail, preferably photos if possible.
35. How will incursions onto private property (trespass) and other civil matters be dealt with. **Answer:** Any issues should be reported to the hotel manager, Faiz 07778647739, who will ensure that the people involved are educated on appropriate behaviour in the UK.