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Governance and the Local Integration of Migrants and Europe's Refugees

Integration Governance in Scotland Accommodation, Regeneration and Exclusion

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Executive Summary

1. This report compares the experiences of local stakeholders involved in the accommodation of displaced people through (1) the Dispersal Scheme and (2) the Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme to investigate the extent to which issues of governance impact the provision of accommodation in Scotland.

2. Our work highlights three areas of particular concern related to the provision of Dispersal-pathway accommodation. These are:
    2.1 Housing standards and 'peripheralisation' in asylum accommodation.
    2.2 Operational issues relating to the 'Move On' Period.
    2.3 Issues of asylum seeker and refugee destitution relating to the status of No Recourse to Public Funds.

3. Concern relating to the provision of accommodation to refugees through the Resettlement pathway has been less pronounced. However, issues raised by stakeholders include:
    3.1 Local level concerns with location and type of accommodation offered to refugees.
    3.2 Delays and dysfunction in accessing welfare support for accommodation, though local-level systems have been developed to alleviate these.

4. The report acknowledges that operational and bureaucratic issues and local socioeconomic environments contribute to the provision of accommodation for displaced people in Scotland.

5. However, it also finds that governance – and the competing governance models of Dispersal and Resettlement – has impact on (1) displaced people's accommodation experiences and (2) the capacity of local and devolved stakeholders to shape, adapt or intervene in issues related to housing.

6. The report finds that the Dispersal-pathway operates on a model that has prioritised 'decentered' and marketised governance. This governance system has resulted in:
    6.1 The loss of planning capacity for local government.
    6.2 Complexity and dysfunction at points of transition.
    6.3 The paradoxical manner with which the pathway both relies on and disenfranchises the third sector.

7. Resettlement provides more room for manoeuvre in accommodation provision for local stakeholders. The Scheme has allowed local authorities to:
    7.1 Design accommodation options for incoming refugee populations.
    7.2 Balance this design with the existing needs of the local area.
    7.3 Coordinate between the provision of shelter for refugees and community planning needs.

8. Though Resettlement has therefore provided a relatively successful model of accommodation provision, uncertainty over what happens after the Scheme ends in 2020 raises questions over the sustainability of this model.

9. The report notes that the parallel implementation of Dispersal and Resettlement accommodation provision has created a 'two tier' system that has the potential to fragment existing local-level collaborative work between the public and third sectors.

10. However, the report also notes that multi-agency collaboration within Scotland has established a precedent which has, at times, overturned governance attempts to 'decenter' and 'depoliticise' asylum seeker and refugee accommodation. With further support, the report suggests, this local-level collaborative activity has the potential to either overturn or develop alternatives to prevailing models of accommodation governance.

1. Introduction

Enshrined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, access to safe, secure and healthy accommodation is considered a right by the international community. In the UK, accommodation is seen as integral to the integration of asylum seekers and refugees, understood variously as a (1) 'marker' of integration attainment (Ager and Strang, 2004, p. 8) and (2) as foundational to the integration process (Scottish Government, 2018, p. 62). Under UK law, the UK Government is obliged to provide accommodation to those seeking asylum, and those with refugee status (UK Government, 1999). The subsequent accommodation of asylum seekers and refugees interacts with a cross-section of government interests and policies, as well as social factors with complex knock-on effects for many other aspects of the 'integration' process. With its potential to impact on social connections, spatial dynamics, territorial occupation and economic activity, accommodation might be understood both as a tool for community-building and as a technology of government to 'control and regulate' (Foucault, 1991) the displaced migrant population.

In the UK, the status of 'asylum seeker' is distinct from that of 'refugee' and this is reflected in the various accommodation 'pathways' and programmes set up for displaced people. The two most influential pathways that we focus on in this report are the 'Dispersal pathway' that accommodates asylum seekers and the 'Resettlement pathway' which is for those identified as refugees by the UNHCR as 'most in need' and brought to the UK as part of a Resettlement Scheme. In 2015, the UK expanded the Resettlement Scheme in response to the crisis in the Mediterranean to host (mainly) Syrian refugees. More information about these two pathways is provided below.

The emergence of an increasingly complex asylum seeking and refugee accommodation field in Scotland poses a number of questions and challenges, including:

- How do different approaches to (1) integration (2) accommodation as part of integration policy, and (3) housing governance shape the experiences of asylum seekers and refugees?
- Are policies regarding asylum, immigration and integration, as Bevir (2011) suggests, 'less to do with efficiency than with the common goods of security, community and equity' ? Or to what extent can accommodation provision for displaced people be seen as 'a disciplinary mode of regulation' (O'Toole et al., 2016, p. 174)?
- To what extent are top-down governance structures contested? What is the role of the local here?
- Crucially, in current approaches, what works? Where are the sticking points?

In the following, we focus on the Dispersal pathway and the Resettlement pathway to discuss the implications of multi-level governance in a changing field for asylum and refugee housing in Scotland. To do so, we first consider accommodation provision in Glasgow, both long-standing and sole site of Dispersal in Scotland and a Resettlement area. Second, we consider accommodation provision in areas newly involved in hosting refugees through the Resettlement Scheme.

1.1 The Research

This report is based on qualitative research carried out between January and July 2018. We conducted 30 interviews with individuals representing organisations involved in accommodation provision for asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland including representatives from local and devolved government as well as those in the third sector[1]. Using ethnographic methods, we also conducted participant observation at a number of events organised by a cross-section of people from the public and third sector/civil society in different locations across Scotland. Informed consent was gained for all fieldwork undertaken.

Participant type	Location	Number of participants
Devolved Government	Edinburgh	2
	Glasgow	1
Local Government	Glasgow	2
	Edinburgh	1
	Aberdeenshire	1
	Argyll and Bute	1
	Inverclyde	1
NGOs and community groups	Glasgow	12
Women's groups	Glasgow	6
	Edinburgh	2
Registered Social Landlords	Glasgow	2

In this report, all research participants and organisations have by anonymised. Where participants are quoted, they are identified by a code indicating their organisational affiliation (see Appendix A). All of the interviews were conducted in English. Some of the quotations below include some Scots words and phrases, including:

- 'tae' (Scots) = 'to' (English)
- ''a' (Scots) = 'of' (English)
- 'mair' (Scots) = 'more' (English)
- 'oot' (Scots) = 'out' (English)
- 'wi' (Scots) = 'with' (English)
- 'gie' / 'gieing' (Scots) = 'give' / 'giving' (English)
- 'gonnae' (Scots) = 'going to' (English)
- 'aye' (Scots) = 'yes' (English)
- 'hoose' (Scots) = 'house' (English)

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[1] We made repeated attempts to contact the Home Office (UK Government) and Serco (responsible for providing asylum accommodation in Scotland) but were unable to secure their participation in this research.

1.2 Asylum and refugee accommodation pathways in Scotland

Accommodation provision for asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland is complex in part due to the different immigration pathways involved.
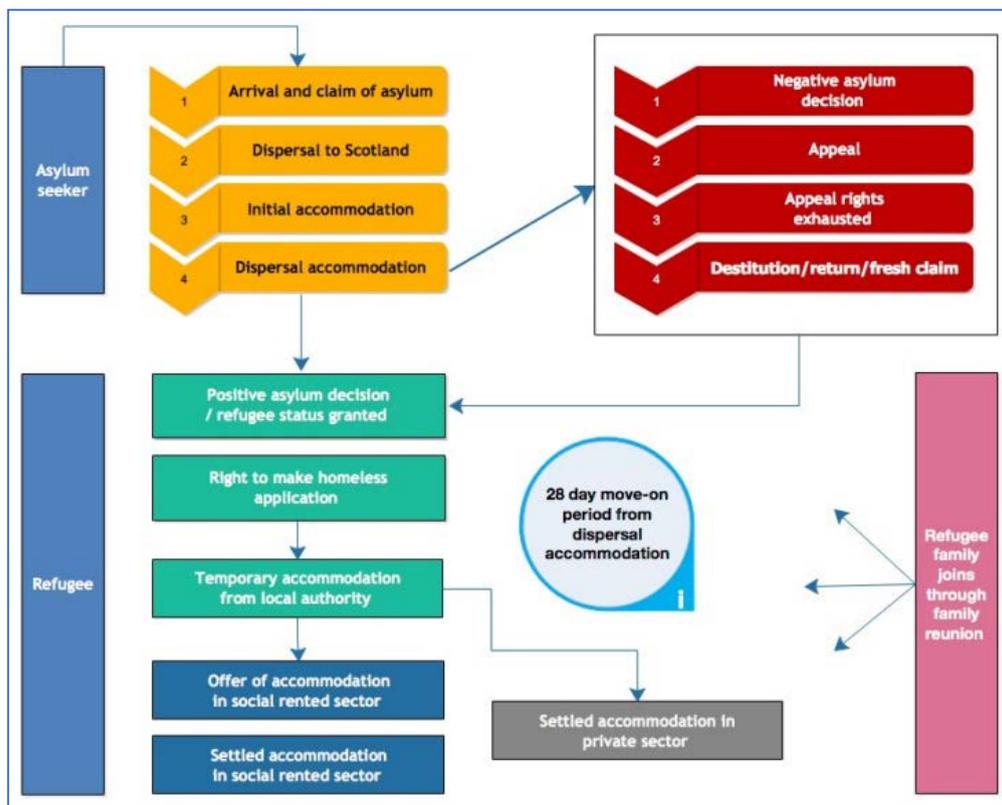

Figure 1: Disperal-pathway accommodation scenarios. Source: Stewart (2016)

The 'Dispersal pathway' (*Figure 1* above), refers to the process through which accommodation is provided for asylum seekers who have claimed asylum in the UK. Asylum seekers in the UK are not obliged to take the offer of accommodation. However, should they require accommodation, they are obliged to take the housing option in a location designated by the Home Office on a no-choice basis – this is referred to as 'Dispersal' because they are sent to different locations across the UK. In Scotland, Glasgow is the only recipient of Dispersed asylum seekers and receives the most Dispersed people in the UK (Darling, 2013).

In Glasgow, responsibility for the Dispersal contract is held between the Home Office (UK government) and a housing contractor. Glasgow City Council (local government) is a stakeholder which is consulted but with no effective control on decisions. At the beginning of the Dispersal Scheme in the early 2000s, the housing contract was fulfilled by the public and third sector; however, as of 2012, asylum accommodation in Glasgow (and the rest of the UK) has fallen under the COMPASS (Commercial and Operating Managers Procuring Asylum Support) contract, an agreement between the Home Office and multinational private housing and security companies (House of Commons, 2017). In Glasgow, the contract is currently fulfilled by multinational private landlord, Serco Group plc, which utilises (1) a small proportion of social landlord accommodation and (2) a majority of housing from the

private rental sector.[2] Though housing policy is devolved to the Scottish Government, asylum accommodation remains reserved, meaning that the UK Government has oversight on housing standards on COMPASS contracts. Operationally, Serco are responsible for the management and maintenance of Dispersal accommodation, which includes action once the Home Office has made a decision on an asylum application.

Once a decision has been made on an outcome, responsibility for accommodation shifts. A positive decision on an application sees an asylum seeker become a refugee and gain leave to remain. This means that they have the same rights to social housing as British citizens; however, it also means they are no longer eligible for Dispersal accommodation, and are given 28 days to vacate and find alternative housing (APPGR, 2017). The majority of new refugees apply to Glasgow City Council for social housing (Glen and Lindsay, 2014). This is done through the 'homelessness pathway', which requires a refugee to present as 'homeless' to the Council. Since housing stock transfers (Kearns and Lawson, 2008), social housing in Glasgow is provided by Housing Associations – property management companies such as the Wheatley Group, which act as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) – with oversight by Glasgow City Council (Wheatley Group, 2014). When a refugee presents as homeless to the Council, the homelessness department completes a 'Resettlement Plan' which is submitted to up to six of Glasgow's 66 Housing Associations. Depending on the availability of suitable housing, a refugee might be offered accommodation in a Housing Association property.

It is unlikely, however, that a refugee will reach this stage without experiencing some difficulties. A new refugee might experience issues with the transition between Dispersal accommodation and that provided by the local authority – the 'Move On' Period – which may see them housed in temporary accommodation, or become homeless. UK Government designations of asylum seekers as having 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF, see section 2.3) further complicates this process and means that a refused asylum seeker is even more vulnerable to homelessness. Though Glasgow's third sector provides some support to asylum seekers and refugees facing homelessness and destitution, it is under considerable pressure and has limited resources.

The role of the third sector in supporting asylum seeker and refugee accommodation in Glasgow has grown since the early 2000s. Many NGOs now have significant experience in supporting asylum seekers and refugees in the city, and do so through a variety of roles, including pastoral support, service provision, advocacy, lobbying, research and policy making. The issue of asylum seeker and refugee accommodation featured in many organisations' work and while some organisations included it in a broad portfolio of issues (the Scottish Refugee Council, the British Red Cross), others made it a focus of their work (including Positive Action in Housing, the Asylum Seeker Housing [ASH] Project). Accommodation also strongly features in the work of anti-destitution organisations (including the Refugee Survival Trust and the Glasgow Night Shelter). These organisations represent a spectrum of positions, from the Scottish Refugee Council's role as a partner of the Scottish Government's *New Scots* strategy, to the British Red Cross' status as a UK-wide NGO, to the Glasgow-specific Integration Networks, to grassroots community organisations (see Appendix B for details). We discuss the role of the third sector in accommodation governance below.

The final stage of the immigration estate in Scotland is Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre, overseen by the Home Office and managed by private company, GEO Security. Refused asylum seekers can be held in Dungavel indefinitely. The UK is the only country (currently) in the European Union which holds immigration detainees

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[2] In January 2019 new asylum accommodation contracts were announced and from September 2019 housing in Scotland will be provided by the Mears Group. Serco were, however, awarded the contracts for the North West of England, the Midlands and the East of England (Diver 2019).

indefinitely, a practice for which it has been robustly criticised by the UNHCR (McKay, 2015).

The 'Resettlement-pathway' illustrated in the second flow chart below offers an alternative model of accommodation provision. Following national and international outcry after the publication of pictures of the body of Alan Kurdi on a Turkish beach, in September 2015, the UK Government pledged to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees over a period of five years. This was an extension to the original Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) which asked local authorities to host refugees identified by the UN as in most need in return for direct funding. All 32 Scottish local authorities volunteered for the Scheme in September 2015, and by the end of 2018, 2,650 refugees had been resettled in Scotland. Though the Scottish Government is not directly involved in the administration of the Resettlement Scheme, it is politically committed to hosting people on the Scheme and has established a series of working groups to support the process.
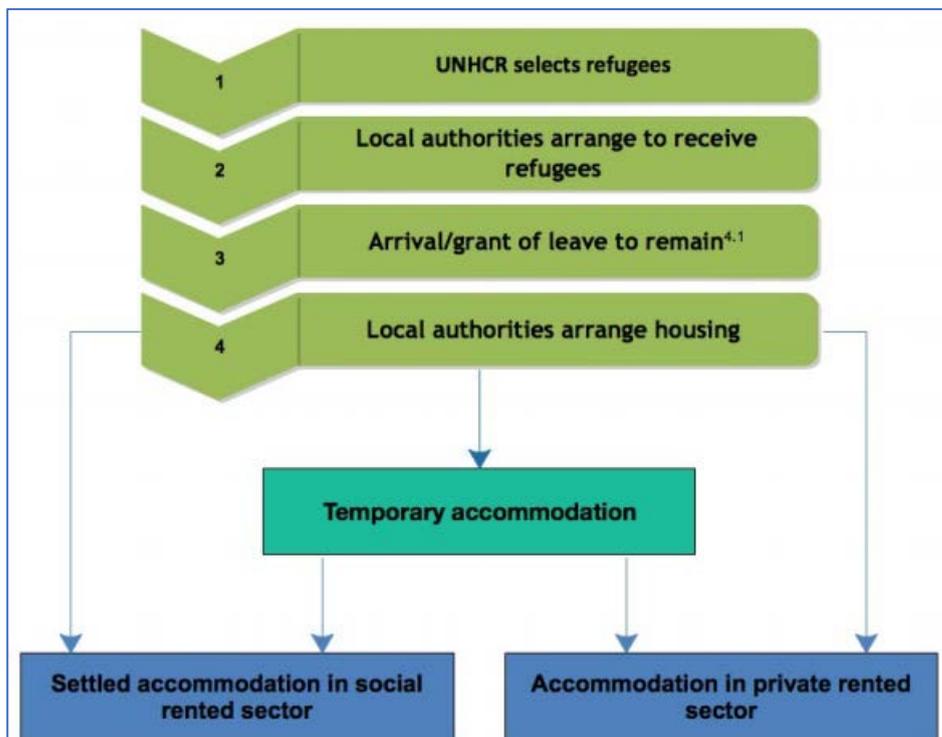

Figure 2: Resettlement-pathway accommodation processes Source: (Stewart, 2016)

Accommodation provision on the Resettlement pathway differs to Dispersal accommodation on several counts. First, the Scheme only accommodates people identified out of country by the UNHCR as refugees who are particularly vulnerable. Designated as refugees, those on the Scheme are guaranteed suitable accommodation, which is arranged and administered by local authorities (thus bypassing the 'homelessness pathway' taken by Dispersal pathway refugees). Second, local government – rather than the Home Office – is able to determine the model through which housing is provided. This means that accommodation provision on the Resettlement pathway is noticeably more diverse, so that though some local authorities have followed Glasgow's 'homelessness pathway', others have adopted different housing options, including use of the private rental sector.

The complexity of accommodation provision for asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland is readily apparent. Many of the issues that arise from the existing system are already well-documented – for instance, housing standards within Dispersal accommodation, the difficulties of the Move-On Period (APPGR, 2017) and the hole in public provision for people with no recourse to public funds (Equalities and Human Rights Committee, 2017, Gillespie, 2012). What is less well-documented is (a) the role of the Resettlement Scheme within the sector and (b) the role that accommodation and integration governance plays in creating cross-pathway issues. Below we discuss some of the accommodation problems highlighted with most frequency by our participants and consider the extent to which (a) governance infrastructures and (b) multi-level networks create, maintain, resolve or resist accommodation norms.

2. Dispersal-pathway accommodation

Dispersal-pathway accommodation for asylum seekers has been criticised for (1) problems with housing standards (2) gaps in the 'Move-On' Period, (3) no recourse to public funds (Glen and Lindsay, 2014). The latter two also impact on refugee accommodation. Below, we highlight the issues raised by participants that (a) impact people's lives and life chances and (b) make visible the impact of integration governance on asylum seeker and refugee accommodation.

2.1 Housing standards and asylum accommodation

Since 2012, the private contractors tasked with managing and maintaining asylum accommodation in Glasgow have been criticised for poor standards and discriminatory and intimidating behaviour towards residents (ASH Project, 2017). In 2016, the subcontracting company subject to most criticism, Orchard and Shipman, parted ways with contractor, Serco, which now maintains the accommodation directly. Despite some participants reporting improvements in accommodation management, NGOs and asylum-seeking residents still encountered problems both with housing quality and Serco's management team. One NGO reported that residents continued to be housed in poor quality accommodation, and that though Serco responded to complaints of (for instance) a broken boiler, the process was often very slow:

> We had one guy, just a couple a' weeks ago, one a' our clients, we actually donated a heater to him. I had tae actually drive up tae Drumchapel to give it to him because his heating was off or broken for two months and it's not been fixed. […] I mean it was really cold the last couple a' months.
>
> (NGO 3)

Other residents reported issues with Serco representatives continuing to let themselves into residences unannounced. Meanwhile, for those appealing asylum application refusals, the behaviour of Serco staff remained intimidating:

> They do get constantly harassed by Serco staff. They get sent letters, 'you should be gone, when will you be leaving. It's time you left. You should get out now'. So it's not a very pleasant stay [… but] some a' the individual housing officers are more compassionate than others
>
> (NGO 7)

At the time of research, Serco had started to work with the third sector to reduce the number of people evicted
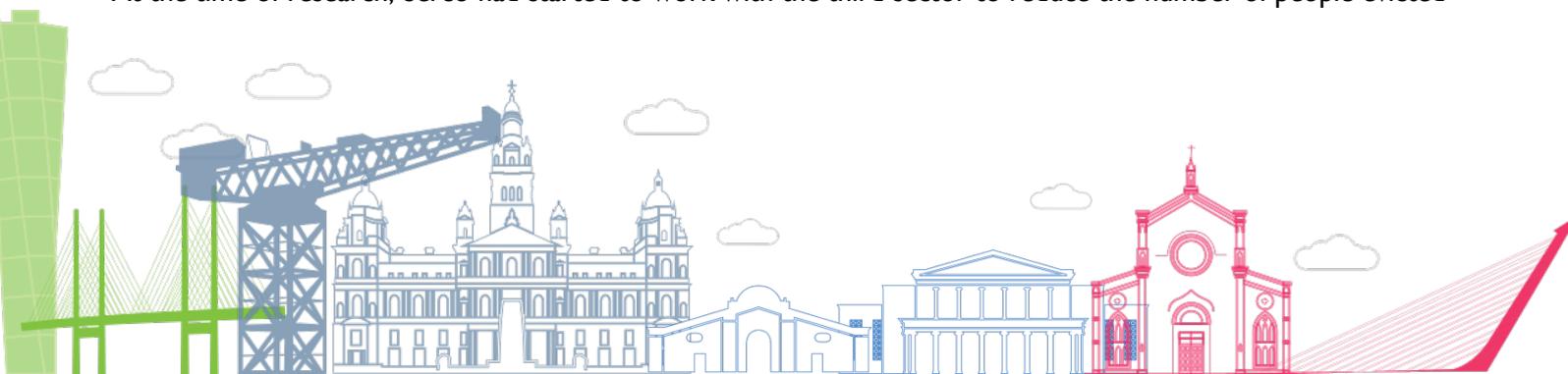
from Dispersal accommodation following a refusal. However, in the summer of 2018 controversy erupted when Serco announced plans to evict hundreds of asylum seekers from properties across Glasgow (see boxed text below).

Serco evictions, July 2018

In July 2018, Serco announced plans to evict from its accommodation 330 asylum seekers whose cases had been refused by the Home Office. [a] The announcement was made in an environment in which existing Dispersal contracts were under review by the Home Office, and due to expire in 2019.[b] Serco only receive funding for the accommodation of asylum seekers until the point of decision by the Home Office. In previous arrangements with anti-destitution networks, the company had been willing to accommodate some asylum seekers until alternative accommodation could be provided; however, the announcement of the evictions suspended this agreement.

As their applications had been refused by the Home Office, the asylum seekers were considered to have no recourse to public funds, and thus ineligible for social housing. The planned evictions therefore had the potential to make 330 people homeless on the streets of Glasgow. The unprecedented scale of the evictions also had potential to place considerable pressure on Glasgow City Council's existing homelessness services, as well as the anti-destitution third sector organisations which provide housing and monetary support to destitute asylum seekers. The announcement swiftly gained considerable public attention. Protests in Glasgow against the planned evictions were well-attended. Additional actions, organised by Positive Action in Housing and other third sector organisations continued the following week.

Pressure was also applied to the Home Office and Serco across the government sector in Scotland. A letter, calling for the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, to intervene on the case gained cross-party support from Glasgow City councillors, as well as cross-party support from Scottish MPs (but without Conservative representation). The Scottish Government's Local Government and Communities Minister, Aileen Campbell, also wrote to the Home Secretary.[c]

The Scottish housing sector also expressed concern over the planned evictions. The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations condemned the decision, [d] whilst several of Glasgow's 66 Registered Social Landlords refused to uphold eviction notices on legal grounds. [e]

Following pressure from the public, political and private sectors, Serco announced a pause in evictions.[f] Home Office representative, Minister for Immigration, Caroline Noakes, met with the leader of Glasgow City Council to discuss the situation, resulting in an agreement that the Council could assess possible eviction cases on an individual basis.[g] In the meantime, two legal challenges to evictions have also been launched by (1) Govan Law Centre and (2) Shelter Scotland.[h] The legal challenge is ongoing.

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a: https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/16384920.glasgow-blindsided-as-refugees-face-mass-evictions/
b: researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2018.../CDP-2018-0207.pdf
c: https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/16387008.serco-considering-suspending-refugee-evictions/
d: https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/housing-associations-urge-serco-to-rethink-asylum-seeker-evictions-plan-57410 6
e: http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/tfn-news/serco-halts-evictions-as-housing-associations-offer-support
f: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/04/glasgow-protesters-rally-against-serco-plan-to-evict-asylum-seekers
g: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/08/uk-and-scottish-ministers-hold-talks-over-glasgow-asylum-evictions
h: https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/16401952.serco-legal-battle-begins-over-asylum-seeker-evictions/

The location of Dispersal accommodation was also cited as a continuing issue for residents. Since the beginning of the Dispersal Scheme in the early 2000s, the geographical profile of Dispersal accommodation has changed. Following the COMPASS agreement to reduce asylum accommodation costs by £140 million over 7 years (House of Commons, 2017), Serco have sought low-cost accommodation in Glasgow. Often, this has meant moving away from established Dispersal areas to parts of Glasgow unfamiliar with accommodating asylum seekers:

> What's happened with the asylum accommodation is that it's moved from low cost areas in the North […] to low cost accommodation first of all in Govan and then the East. That's where a lot of the accommodation is, in low cost low demand type accommodation. So, there are a couple of impacts on that, of course, where you have low cost accommodation and the quality suffers but it's also in areas where there's multiple deprivation which across the East of Glasgow is certainly true.
>
> (NGO 2)

Figure 3: Protest placards at July 2018 demonstration in Glasgow over Secro plans to evict 330 refused asylum seekers from Dispersal accommodation. (Photo Credit: E. Hill)

In addition to the issues with the management and maintenance of Dispersal accommodation, the new Dispersal sites meant that asylum seekers in Glasgow were likely to encounter (1) a lower baseline quality of accommodation (2) issues associated with living in an area of multiple deprivation, such as their impact on health and life chances (Walsh et al., 2016) and (3) peripherality, which brought accessibility and transport issues, and meant that people were often located at a distance from both support services and potential community networks. A Glasgow City

Council officer reflected,

> You get mair a' community if people are together. And if you're an asylum seeker and you're staying in a street and it's predominantly 99% Scottish people you're staying next tae, are you gonnae integrate? Are you gonnae know anybody else?
>
> (LA 2)

Women often felt particularly vulnerable in Dispersal accommodation housing and areas. This included issues such as:

- Vulnerability associated with unplanned housing officer inspections.
- Discomfort with the gendered dynamic of interactions with housing officers, especially if (a) the housing officer was a man or (b) the women came from cultures in which direct interactions with male officials was unfamiliar.
- A lack of a formal alternative communication channel through which women could raise concerns about housing standards without experiencing social and cultural anxiety.
- Vulnerability associated with the locations of Dispersal accommodation, which (a) experience higher levels of street violence and (b) have less ethnic and racial diversity. In these areas, women felt particularly visible and likely to experience both gendered and racialised harassment in public spaces. The lack of diversity in these areas meant that women struggled to find support networks following experiences of harassment and abuse.

Accommodating LGBTI refugees

The *New Scots* refugee integration strategy 2018-2022 explicitly mentions the needs of refugees and asylum seekers who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual and Intersex (LGBTI). The strategy recognises the fact that those seeking safety based on this identity may face particular challenges, including the difficulty of being open about this identity with other people, authorities or services. The strategy seeks to 'ensure that the issues faced by refugees and people claiming asylum on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity are understood, and that they are able to participate in society' (Scottish Government 2018). In terms of issues relating to accommodation, a consultation and engagement process for *New Scots* carried out in 2017 highlighted the fact that those from the LGBTI community had raised concerns about being accommodated with people who are homophobic. There has been a concerted effort to avoid such problems, particularly within the resettlement scheme. Those refugees who have signalled to the UNHCR that they identify as LGBTI have been designated and welcomed to local authorities all over Scotland. The City of Edinburgh Council and Glasgow City Council have been particularly vocal about their availability to accept refugees who identify as LGBTI. In an interview with a representative from one of these councils, they explained this decision by considering that it would be better for LGBTI refugees to come to one of the two big cities because there was more of a developed infrastructure that could cater for them and their specific needs as well as finding it easier to become part of a wider LGBTI community.

The conditions, management and location of Dispersal accommodation for asylum seekers in Glasgow had consequences for their physical and mental health (Equalities and Human Rights Committee, 2017), access to language and education as well as social connections. The stress of unresolved asylum cases was often compounded by conditions arising from accommodation.

2.2 The 'Move On' Period

In circumstances where an asylum application is successful (and leave to remain is granted), the transition between asylum accommodation and social housing as a refugee is often difficult, as one council officer observed:

> I always say tae people when they get the letter saying they've got leave tae remain that the joy must leave them within ten seconds when they realise 'I'm getting put oot ma house and I need tae get intae a complicated benefit system that none a' us understand. […] Need tae get my biometric card. I need tae claim, I need tae get money'
>
> (LA 2)

Now within the remit of several UK Government departments (including the Home Office and the Department for Work and Pensions), under the administrative care of Glasgow City Council, the operational remit of Glasgow's Housing Associations and within the devolved policy area (housing) of the Scottish Government, accommodation governance for Dispersal-pathway refugees shifts away from the UK Government dominated infrastructure of the Dispersal Scheme. In the shift, gaps in provision arise in (1) the transition from private to social housing (2) the transition from reserved to devolved governance infrastructure, and (3) the local homelessness infrastructure administrated by Glasgow City Council.

The transition from asylum to refugee accommodation is marked by a 28-day period. Often, this process is made more fraught by poor bureaucracy that means that refugees are either informed late within the 28-day timeframe, do not receive documentation from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in time or do not get notice of their status at all. Even without the bureaucratic difficulties, the 28-day limit places very tight turnaround times for both refugees and the public sector. Glasgow City Council and *New Scots* partners (Scottish Refugee Council, Scottish Government, COSLA) all advocate for an extension to the 28-day period, so that it lasts for up to 64 days.

One of the main things that the City Council, practitioners and NGOs alike felt exacerbated the already-fraught 'Move-On' period was disjuncture between Serco accommodation and social housing. Prior to the COMPASS contract, when an asylum seeker gained leave to remain, Glasgow City Council developed a process whereby it 'flipped the flat' – i.e. with the agreement of the social landlords, it converted its 'asylum accommodation' designation to a social housing designation. This enabled a new refugee to stay in the same housing throughout the transition period. The COMPASS contract has made this more difficult to achieve because:

- Serco are funded only to house refugees for 28 days following a positive decision, meaning that they are liable to 'lose money' (NGO 7 interview) if they extend this period.
- The majority of its stock is private rental, meaning that the infrastructure for 'flipping' it to social housing is not in place.

- Many flats are shared between people with different asylum statuses, meaning that a flat cannot simply be 'flipped' when one person receives a positive decision.
- Serco has paid for the internal furnishings of asylum accommodation only, meaning that if a flat was 'flipped' they would lose the investment on the items for the duration of the new refugee's residence there.

Figure 4: View of Housing Association accommodation from a meeting on the Move On Period attended by Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Refugee Council and Glasgow Housing Association.
(Photo Credit: E. Hill)

The consequences of not being able to 'flip the flat' inevitably impacted the lives of refugees. The infrastructure meant that:

- New refugees are at a greater threat of eviction and temporary homelessness because of the 28-day funding deadline imposed on Serco by the Home Office.
- New refugees are obliged to move on from accommodation where they might have built up social connections, and in the case of children and young adults have education connections.

Unable to remain in accommodation that is ineligible for 'flipping', new refugees are obliged to apply for housing through Glasgow City Council. In the UK, access to social housing is provided through the 'homelessness' route, whereby a person must demonstrate to their local authority that they (a) have no access to alternative shelter and (b) have recourse to public funds. The homelessness model of social housing provision used by Glasgow City Council is derived from UK Government systems and adapted by the Scottish Government. Refugees are required to provide proof of recourse to public funds and submit a Resettlement Plan to up to six RSLs through Glasgow City Council. If an RSL has suitable accommodation, a new refugee may be offered housing within the 28 day 'Move On Period'. However, this is often not possible because:

- Places are dependent on available housing stock, which is under significant pressure.
- There is an acute shortage of properties in Glasgow that are suitable for families and people with mobility issues.
- Though housing may be available, it may be (a) outwith the areas a refugee has requested (b) in undesirable housing stock, such as high-rise accommodation. A new refugee may therefore refuse an offer – Glasgow City Council recorded a 40% refusal rate amongst new refugees (discussed further in 4.1 below).

If a refugee has recourse to public funds, Glasgow City Council is obliged to accommodate them. If the Council is unable to provide them with housing following the Move On period, refugees may therefore be placed in temporary accommodation. Temporary housing is sourced by Glasgow City Council from RSLs, local hotels, hostels and B&Bs. However, temporary housing is a particularly undesireable option as it is disruptive and has broader consequences for new refugees' access to education and employment. An NGO worker explained:

So you're an asylum seeker, you can't work. You are in accommodation that's not chosen for you. You may move around, you may set your roots down and be there for several years but then when you get your status you're then moving into temporary accommodation which might be on the other side of the city. There's very little choice in that which uproots you from your community. While you're in temporary accommodation, the expense of that temporary accommodation is certainly more than it would cost you to be able to get into education. It's very difficult to get employment while you're in temporary accommodation, particularly if it's a hostel because you've got the additional things about the rules while you're in hostels. You can't do shift work which a lot of people do. You can't, cause you can't get in after eleven. […] You can't get out before seven. So the homeless system itself and the fact that even though you've got your status and you have theoretical rights to take up education, take up work, do whatever, develop whatever social connections that you want, it inhibits that. […] It inhibits the people's ability to move on and, and do the things that they want to do. And there are enough barriers in education and employment anyway…

<div align="right">(NGO 2)</div>

Alongside the restrictions on people's movement, ability to gain employment or forge social connections, problems related to temporary accommodation also included displacement and disruption. Hotels and B&Bs raised additional issues for residents, as there were often no facilities with which to wash clothing or cook. Though temporary accommodation was ostensibly used as a stop-gap until more permanent housing became available, new refugees were frequently housed in hostels and hotels for lengthy periods. One of our participants and her daughter were housed in B&B accommodation for a period of three years. Women's groups highlighted concerns that this type of accommodation increased the vulnerability of women and girls because it (a) removed them from existing support networks and (b) potentially enhanced their vulnerability if they had to share communal space.

Figure 5: Placard at a July 2018 demonstration in Glasgow about Serco treatment of asylum seekers.
(Photo Credit: E. Hill)
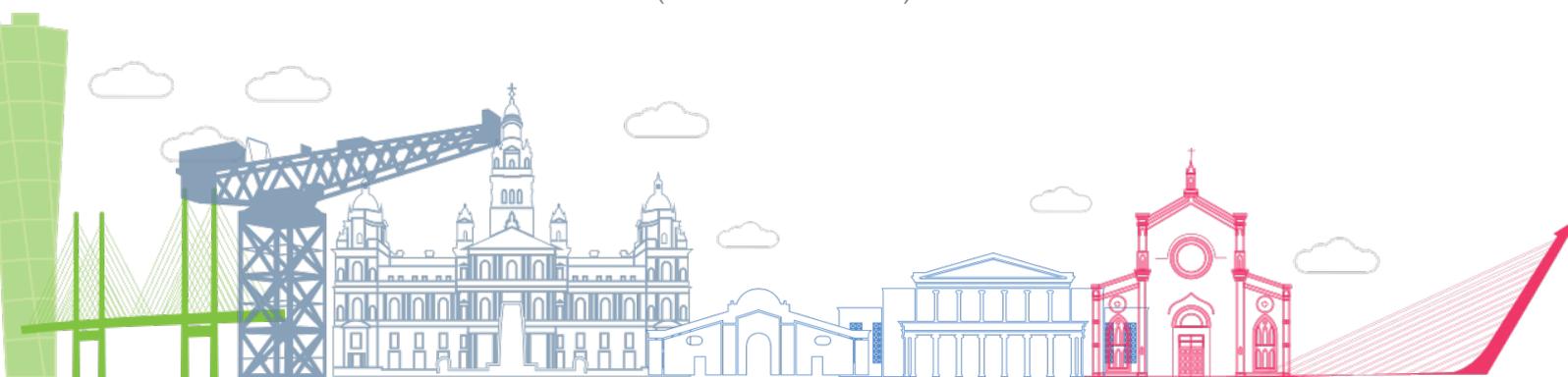
Accumulatively, people's experience of accommodation on the Dispersal pathway, even if they had received a positive decision on their asylum application, included at least three moves (into Dispersal accommodation, to temporary housing and to permanent housing). Until new refugees were able to access permanent accommodation, Dispersal pathway housing options carried a number of potential risks, was disruptive and was of detriment to people's physical and mental health, social connections and life chances.

2.3 Homelessness, Destitution and No Recourse to Public Funds

The status of 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) refers to a point at which a person is not eligible for welfare funding from the state (NRPF Network, 2017). In the UK, asylum seekers do not have recourse to public funds, which, should a problem with their asylum application arise, means they are particularly vulnerable to homelessness and destitution. Asylum seekers might experience homelessness and destitution at several stages of the asylum process. However, though asylum seekers are made particularly vulnerable by the NRPF policy, NRPF remains a possibility throughout the Dispersal-pathway process. This means that new and established refugees are also vulnerable to destitution.

Figure 6: Mural in the New Gorbals area of Glasgow. (Photo Credit: E. Hill)

Destitution through NRPF has serious implications for both asylum seekers and refugees. Even as it creates urgency for individuals to resolve the situation that has led to their destitution, it removes the safeguards, resources and space for them to do so. An officer in an anti-destitution organisation explains:

> But if you're destitute, all your time and energy is spent on finding somewhere to eat, finding somewhere to sleep and your legal case gets put aside. […] When they [destitute asylum seekers] come to us they're exhausted. The first thing they do is basically sleep for two weeks. So they have the time and the space to improve their health, get back into kind of mixing with people because when you're destitute you don't want to do that cause you just feel dirty and ashamed and all the rest of it.
>
> (NGO 7)

Destitution takes a significant mental and physical toll on people who are (1) already made vulnerable by the experiences that caused them to seek asylum (2) placed under substantial pressure by the Home Office's 'hostile environment' policy and (3) do not have support networks on which to rely if publicly-funded support is removed. By removing a person's access to publicly-funded subsistence, education and (in the case of refugees) employment, destitution inhibits a person's access to basic living standards. By inhibiting a person's access to stability, privacy, sanitation and safety, the removal of access to accommodation exacerbates all of these conditions. In Glasgow, the implications of destitution were noticeably gendered. Though a Night Shelter in Glasgow is available for destitute men, a similar facility is not available for women.[3] The lack of a Night Shelter for women means that destitute women have no access to an informal, safe space if they are unable to find alternative accommodation unless they have children, in which case Glasgow City Council social services is expected to intervene. Meanwhile, destitution and homelessness was likely to put women at greater risk of violence and exploitation than if they remained in stable accommodation:

> You could argue that there are particular dangers for women. Women are more likely to get involved in prostitution. They are more likely to find themselves in very exploitative relationships, to be forced into domestic servitude or transactional relationships where they have to sleep with people to keep a roof over their head.
>
> (NGO 7)

Where women faced increased risks to their safety through the precariousness of destitution, destitute men also experienced barriers to emergency shelter. Because of the increased dangers to destitute women's safety, many third sector organisations prioritised spaces for women. In addition, though third-sector refugee hosting schemes offered accommodation for both men and women, they often struggled to find hosts for single men. One NGO officer noted:

> If there wasn't a male night shelter I'd struggle because a lot of the hosts tend to want to host women and children, you know. So we have that, it kind of balances it out.
>
> (NGO 3)

The (lack of) access to accommodation for both men and women who had been made destitute in Glasgow was made additionally complex by a diffuse governance infrastructure associated with the NRPF status. The designation of NRPF is determined by the Home Office, and as it relates to a person's immigration status is considered a reserved matter by local and devolved government in Scotland. Nominally, if a person has NRPF, local authorities

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[3] Though a fundraising campaign for a Women's Night Shelter is currently underway.

are not able to give them access to social housing. This is also the case for other organisations that rely on public funding for accommodation provision. A number of our participants highlighted the case of Scottish Women's Aid, which provides refuge accommodation for women experiencing domestic violence. However, because Scottish Women's Aid's refuge accommodation is supported through (UK Government derived) public funding, in the majority of cases they are unable to offer places to women with NRPF. As a result, asylum seeking women and destitute refugee women experiencing domestic violence were ineligible for the support that Women's Aid otherwise provides.

The destitution of asylum seekers and refugees was a concern for all third sector organisations with whom we spoke. Several organisations had developed specialisms in providing destitution support. Meanwhile, housing was provided through the initiatives of a number of third sector organisations. These include:

- The 'Room for Refugees' Scheme, a programme set up by the charity, *Positive Action in Housing*, through which the public can volunteer spare rooms for destitute refugees and asylum seekers.
- Emergency housing provided by the *Refugee Survival Trust* (RST). This housing was a mix of (a) properties donated to the RST by private individuals, and (b) housing made accessible to the RST through faith-based social enterprises. Through these donations, the RST could offer 10 spaces for destitute refugees.
- Bed space at the Night Shelter, which provides up to 25 spaces for destitute migrant men backgrounds (including asylum seekers and refugees).
- In rare circumstances, refuge accommodation provided by Women's Aid to destitute refugee women.

Reliant on (a) volunteers (b) private donations (c) social enterprises and (d) third sector grants, the housing had a broad provenance and was administrated by individual organisations and anti-destitution networks. However, due to the indefinite nature of NRPF and to the finite number of spaces the third sector could access, the housing provided by the third sector to people with NRPF was limited and under constant pressure.

Because housing is considered as a 'devolved matter', that is in the control of the Scottish Government, this situation offers some potential to create a fairer and more workable system in Scotland compared to the rest of the UK. Yet it remains something of a grey area because asylum seeker accommodation is classed as immigration policy and is therefore a 'reserved matter'. So in effect, only homelessness and destitution is devolved and the Scottish Government has its hands tied as a representative explained:

> And so we don't get involved in their [Home Office] accommodation issues. But obviously if somebody's gone through the system and hasn't got a positive decision then the destitution sort of aspect of it will be [...] within the remit of Scottish Government but it throws up issues [...] But the position of the Scottish Government can't be that we fund directly provision for people with no recourse to public funds. It's a reserved matter therefore we've got no locus or remit to actually act on it.
>
> (GV 3)

Recent reports by the Scottish Parliament (Equalities and Human Rights Committee 2017) and the Government's own Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HRSAG 2018) have made recommendations for the Scottish Government to address more fully the issue of NRPF. The issue has subsequently been subject to a careful negotiation of reserved/devolved competences by the Scottish Government. In some cases, individual cases of asylum seeker and refugee destitution had been addressed by the Scottish Government's work on providing

emergency winter shelter for rough sleepers (Interview: GV3). However, more comprehensive action – such as providing funding support for displaced people with NRPF – involved additional considerations, as an anti-destitution NGO worker suggested:

> Accommodation, I think, is the stickiest part of this whole thing because even in the Hidden Lives[4] report they [the Scottish Government] don't cover accommodation. It's like they don't want to go there because of the cost implications. And in an area where there is so much demand for housing, again how would you politically argue that people who have no status in the UK, should be accommodated. It's a really difficult one.
>
> (NGO 7)

3. Resettlement pathway accommodation

The decision by the UK government in 2015 to take in 20,000 refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria changed the landscape of reception and accommodation of displaced migrants in Scotland. The significant uptake of the VPRS across all 32 local councils is remarkable. This can be explained not simply due to the political will to offer sanctuary to Syrian refugees by local councillors and residents alike, but also because, unlike participation in the dispersal scheme, there is a possibility to select who will come as well as significant funding attached. The first 12 months of a refugee's resettlement costs (just over £8000) are fully funded by the UK Government using the overseas aid budget and local authorities receive this money to assist with costs incurred to provide support to refugees under the VPRS (Home Office, 2017). Funding from years 2 to 5 is allocated on a tariff basis over four years, tapering from roughly £5,000 per person in year 2 to £1,000 per person in year 5.[5] This financial aid was crucial in convincing local government to take part as they are already working under significant budgetary constraints, as a local authority officer noted:

> This wasn't going to be something that was going to stretch local authority budgets even further, however much the humanitarian response was there
>
> (LA 3)

The financial incentives offered by the Home Office for participating in resettlement schemes, particularly the VPRS, provide a clear economic rationale for local authorities in addition to humanitarian concerns. Many of the Scottish local authorities had not hosted displaced migrants before, and this brought additional challenges of hosting resettled refugees in rural and remote areas.

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[4] Equalities and Human Right Committee (2017)
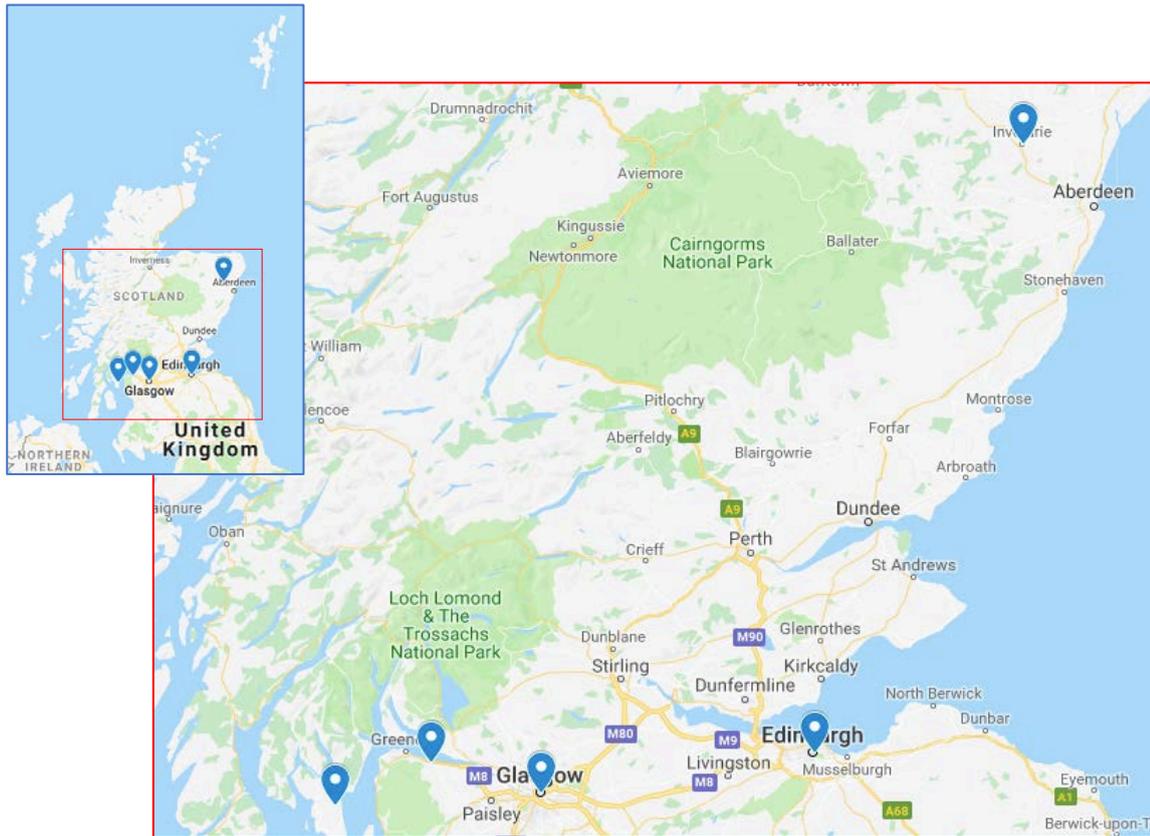[5] See Appendix B for a detailed breakdown of accommodation costs

Figure 7: Map showing locations of selected Scottish local authorities participating in the Syrian Resettlement Scheme with whom GLIMER worked for this report

One of the key features of the VPRS is the matching process whereby the Home Office delegates to COSLA the role of consulting with local authorities as to how many people they will receive and who those people will be. This process is one of COSLA's main roles in the resettlement scheme. The turnaround time from the announcement of the extended VPRS in September 2015 to the arrival of the first refugees was extremely tight. Council officials and those supporting the reception effort had less than 6 weeks to prepare for the first arrivals and source some suitable accommodation. Local authorities across Scotland have managed the resettlement of refugees in very different ways and there is no standard approach to accommodation. In each of the localities we worked with, different solutions had been trialled depending on the availability of housing stock. Local authorities have opted for solutions which they deem appropriate for those they are housing and the local area.

3.1 Glasgow

Figure 8: NGOs and Supporters gather in Glasgow's George Square for a Refugee Week 2018 event
(Photo Credit: E. Hill)

Glasgow City Council was one of the first local authorities approached by the Home Office to participate in VPRS due to its experience in dealing with asylum seekers and refugees. Indeed, the city had already been involved with previous resettlement schemes through the Gateway Protection Programme including those created to provide refuge for people who had assisted the British armed forces in Iraq. The multi-agency networks that have characterised the city's approach (Wren, 2007) were again mobilised to prepare for the first arrivals from Syria in late 2015, including representatives from education, the police and the health service. Given that many of those who arrived through VPRS were vulnerable by definition, including specific health conditions, Glasgow was seen as a location that could cater for such needs. In Glasgow itself, the housing association properties that have been set aside for resettled refugees are prepared and furnished by Glasgow City Council and also include a welcome pack provided by the Refuweegee charity.[6] These are usually flats and are preferred to private rentals or even offers from the public because they meet the Scottish Regulator standard. They are also short-term tenancies so as to make it easier to move people if they are not happy with their accommodation or even want to move out of

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[6] See https://refuweegee.co.uk/

Glasgow. After about four months, if the family is happy in their accommodation, attempts are made to 'flip the flat' and obtain a permanent secure tenancy.

The accommodation pathway chosen by Glasgow reflects the dearth of available social housing. While Glasgow City Council (GCC) prefers to get housing associations to 'flip the flat', this is not always possible and so refugees may end up having to move. The decision to house refugees under temporary tenancy agreements before 'flipping' has its drawbacks and is currently under review. The key problem for any two-stage process of housing refugees is having to potentially uproot a family to the other side of the city despite the fact that children may have already settled into a local school. While this is avoided if possible, those working with the refugees recognise that they must work around shortages in housing stock in a manner that is judged as fair to all. Any attempt to offer special treatment to refugees in terms of housing allocation could have deleterious consequences for community relations. Acting fairly is therefore seen as a priority although the same issue is also raised by refugees themselves who naturally compare their accommodation situation to other displaced migrants they have met in the city. While requests to move based on physical needs may be catered for, it is seen as a dangerous precedent to move refugees for any other reasons as then others would expect the same treatment. Some refugees in Glasgow who have entered through the resettlement program believe that it would be more beneficial for them to go through the same homelessness route as former asylum seekers in the hope of getting a better property. However, by refusing to sign for a permanent tenancy they risk ending up with nothing or at best a flat that is unfurnished.

3.2 Argyll and Bute

Argyll and Bute is a rural local authority, the second largest by area in Scotland with the third sparsest population. The town of Rothesay on the Isle of Bute was chosen as the location to resettle those arriving through VPRS as there was housing available as well as spare capacity in the local schools. The ability to successfully absorb the displaced migrants, even if the numbers were quite modest, was a key factor in deciding where to locate them. Housing availability was also important in terms of the reception by local residents because 'if you're not [seen to be] taking housing away from a community it's [seen as] less of a threat' (LA3).
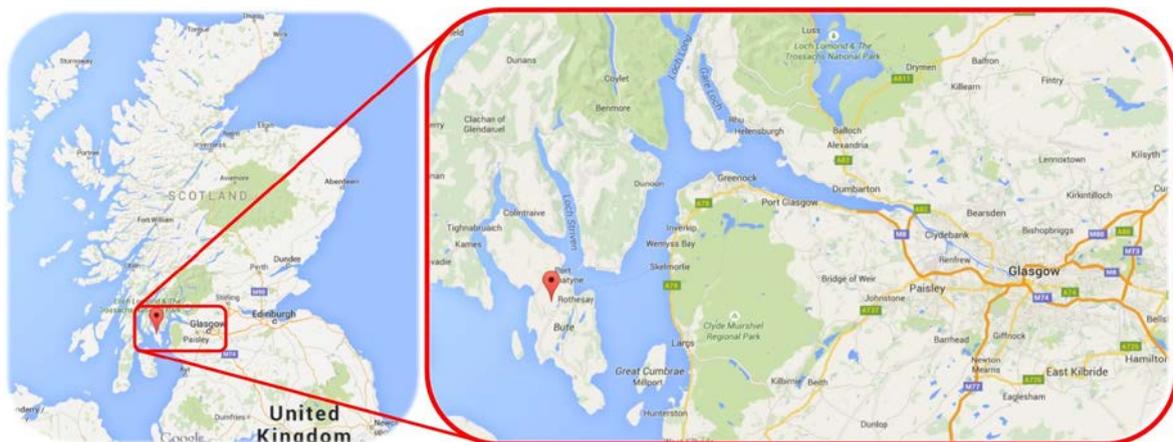

Figure 9: Location of the island of Bute, on which Resettled Syrian families are accommodated

By placing all the Syrians in one town it also made it logistically more manageable for those tasked with helping them to integrate, in particular the refugee resettlement group that meets up regularly. Initially 24 families were

welcomed to Bute and through an ongoing process of family reunification a number of other individuals have been allowed to join them. It is currently one of the top five local authorities in the UK in terms of intake of Syrian refugees relative to population (Easton, 2018). In Argyll and Bute, all housing stock has been transferred to RSLs and all refugee families arriving under VPRS have been housed in properties owned by Argyll Community Housing Association and Fyne Homes. Properties provided by these housing associations were previously empty but the Council uses the money provided through VPRS to furnish and decorate them to a minimum standard and include essentials such as a television and an internet connection.

Each family has signed a Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement with the RSLs as this arrangement is considered to be more secure than offering families a private tenancy. Properties include "starter packs" with bedding, towels, crockery, cutlery, pots and pans provided by the Pass It On project. Each child is welcomed to their new bedroom by a toy box full of donated toys from local residents. The housing managed by RSLs is a mixture of ex-council houses built in the post-war period as well as older tenement flats made of stone. This means that some families may end up in an independent property with a garden, whereas others will have neighbours above and below. Requests to move must be managed within the standard housing transfer process which involves a points-based system. Decisions on housing are linked to availability and this means that families arriving through VPRS do not always get what they expect. Like many local authorities, there is a lack of social housing on Bute with three bedrooms or more and the needs of Syrians must be balanced against those of the local community who may also be in need of more spacious accommodation. Related to this, refugee support workers and housing associations have striven to find a balance between finding accommodation that is suitable for the size of the family and providing housing that is of a similar quality and size to all in a spirit of fairness and in order to avoid jealously. The importance of managing expectations is a constant theme that is brought up by those working with resettled refugees.

Figure 10: The Rest and Be Thankful, Argyll and Bute, April 2018
(Photo Credit: E. Hill)

Argyll and Bute has a declining population and Rothesay in particular is known as a popular retirement destination. Since the arrival of the Syrians in the town, this trend has been reversed due to the fact that the majority of the arrivals are families, many of whom have had more children since their arrival in Scotland. Similarly, in addition to increasing the population, they are perceived as a potential driver of economic recovery and have been encouraged to set up new businesses. This sits within an overall regeneration strategy to make Argyll and Bute 'a place where people want to live, work and do business' (LA3). There is nevertheless an acceptance that if young people go on to university they are unlikely to return to the area. Despite the best efforts of local authorities in rural areas to welcome displaced migrants as a means to boost a dwindling population, they may have trouble retaining families who often feel that such areas, far from large urban centres, cannot cater for their needs. In Argyll and Bute, at least five families have left from a total of 24 that have been welcomed in order to join relatives living in England and also seek better job prospects (although some families have also indicated a willingness to be transferred to Bute). The council has not ruled out the possibility of welcoming more refugees in the future. However, there is no interest in participating in the asylum dispersal scheme or welcoming unaccompanied asylum seeking children as this would prove too costly.

3.3 Aberdeenshire

Aberdeenshire Council is a rural local authority that covers a vast area in the north east of Scotland with no prior experience of refugee reception. The council offered to accept up to 50 families as part of the VPRN with the first refugees arriving in February 2016. Aberdeenshire has quickly adapted to this new situation by putting a number of partnerships in place. After conversations with the Scottish Refugee Council and various people working in refugee reception in Glasgow, the council set up the Aberdeenshire New Scots Partnership and also developed an Aberdeenshire Integration Plan as well as an Asylum and Refugee Strategy group. This is a public sector group with people from the key services in the council which itself currently employs five people to manage the 'clients' from Syria. While most local authorities in Scotland have used RSLs to find appropriate properties for resettled refugees, Aberdeenshire council opted for the use of private sector housing. The council made this decision early on because there were already 10,000 people on the waiting list for social housing. Instead, a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme has been used which means that the council leases a house for a two-year period from a private landlord and then transitions the lease over to the tenants if and when that becomes appropriate. By placing refugees into private rented accommodation, Aberdeenshire replicated the decision made by Aberdeen City Council to use a PSL scheme.[7] This is, in fact, the model that has been adopted by a majority of local authorities in the UK that have taken part in VPRS (UNHCR, 2017). This seems to have worked in Aberdeenshire despite the risk of private sector housing not being a permanent solution where people can potentially become homeless at short notice.

Locations in Aberdeenshire were selected based on their proximity to Aberdeen, which is home to an existing Arabic speaking and Muslim community. These locations are also commuter towns favoured by those working in the oil and gas industry in the Aberdeen area. Due to the decline of this industry in recent years, there is now a surplus of private rental accommodation. In contrast to the trend of housing displaced migrants in available social housing which is often located in areas of multiple deprivation, Aberdeenshire has chosen communities with a degree of private property ownership and wealth.

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[7] Aberdeen City Council is a separate local authority which has also been involved in resettling Syrian refugees.

Figure 11: Location of Aberdeenshire, in which Resettled Syrian families are accommodated

Foregrounding a 'community development' approach, local authority sought areas with 'the right communities with the right social capital if we are looking for integration' to avoid the 'disconnect between the physical resettlement, putting people into houses, and what the outcome of the resettlement programme is' (LA 4 interview). This can be seen as part of a wider strategy in Aberdeenshire to harness the potential of the local community to aid the integration process:

> We have tried to grow community support and allowed it to look like what it should look like in that community rather than dictate what it should look like. So in Westhill, there's support from within the church but also from Banchory which is quite close by…they'll spend lots time with the New Scots in these areas. In Kintore they've got smaller settlements so it's been more neighbours coming round and saying, 'do you want us to take the girls to Rainbows or Brownies?' and that kind of thing.

(LA 4)

4. Accommodation Governance: impact and implications

The complexity of accommodation provision for displaced people who arrive in Scotland should not be under-estimated. Whilst many accommodation issues discussed above arose from localised operational and contextual issues, they are arguably also a matter of governance. Accommodation provision in both Dispersal and Resettlement pathways sees (a) a 'permeation across governance areas' (O'Toole et al., 2016, p. 174) and (b) a permeation across government levels, resulting in decisions that relate to accommodation provision also having an impact upon other areas of (1) governance and (2) displaced people's lives. In this section, we discuss how the governance of accommodation provision for both the Dispersal and Resettlement schemes impacts the provision of housing, housing standard131, activity at local level and relationships between government(s) and civil society.

4.1 'Decentering' Dispersal and Resettlement accommodation governance

In recent years, the governance systems through which displaced people are hosted in the UK have undergone significant change. These changes have applied to both the Dispersal Scheme – the governance of which was overhauled in 2012 – and the VPRS, which marks a significant upscaling of previous resettlement initiatives.

Prioritising 'burden shifting' as a primary aim, the governance of the Dispersal pathway positions 'asylum as a specific and managerial issue, and at the same time reiterates an economic account of asylum as a question of resource allocation, cost and productivity' (Darling, 2016, p. 230). Between 1999 and 2012, Dispersal accommodation was overseen by the UK Government but provided and managed by participating local authorities across the UK. This dynamic shifted when the 2012 COMPASS contracts were brought into effect. The COMPASS contract continued the emphasis on asylum accommodation provision in terms of management and economic efficiency, the implementation of which was 'dispersed' to third party contractors (Bevir, 2011, p. 459). The contract also removed asylum accommodation provision from local authorities and instead awarded it to private contractors (including Serco in Glasgow). The changes in the contract meant that as of 2012, local authorities were no longer directly involved in the provision of asylum accommodation (though they remain involved in the provision of accommodation for recognised Dispersal-pathway refugees). The changes have also minimised the involvement of the Scottish Government in matters related to Dispersal because it is considered as part of immigration policy which is a reserved matter.

The change in contract has also heralded a change in the tone and operationalisation of accommodation provision. Emphasising cost-saving and efficiency, and in a turn towards privatised economies, the COMPASS contract – and the governance model on which it is based – amplifies a marketised and competitive element to accommodation provision. The changing geography of Dispersal accommodation in Glasgow, as well as the issues related to housing standards can be directly related to this change: because the COMPASS governance model is based on cost-saving and efficiency, and because this is incentivised through the privatisation of the contract, the model encourages Serco to adopt cost-reducing measures, such as placing people in accommodation in increasingly peripheral areas, or subcontracting to housing providers of a lower standard.

In terms of service provision, the governance model also discourages Serco from acting outwith the terms of its contract, making points of transition from Dispersal accommodation particularly pressurised for asylum seekers and refugees, and for the incoming public sector service providers. Under the terms of the COMPASS contract, Serco are funded by the Home Office to provide accommodation only to the point at which a decision is made on a person's asylum application. Despite this, the company had shown a willingness to work with the public and third sectors to keep asylum seekers in accommodation beyond this point to reduce the number of people evicted into destitution. However, the terms of the COMPASS contract placed pressure on the company not to do this. An NGO worker observed:

> Well they've [Serco] got this contract and I think again it's down to money. That if they keep somebody in Home Office accommodation that means they can't put a new person in there. So they've got new people coming in all the time and they've got pressure to find homes for new people. If they can't and people end up living in hotels, they get criticised for that, they could get fined for it. So the conditions of their contract are very very strict and they're under a lot of pressure to continue their role as accommodation providers.
>
> (NGO 7)

In the eyes of many of the stakeholders with whom we spoke, the lack of flexibility afforded by the COMPASS contract was not conducive to the multi-agency collaboration required to make the current system work (discussed further in Part 4.3 below). It also created a dynamic in which operational, financial and political responsibility for accommodation was increasingly 'decentered' (Darling, 2016) from the remit of central government. For instance, though the public and third sectors were the bodies on which the eviction of asylum seekers from Serco accommodation would have most impact, they had little structural say over a decision that would ultimately be made by Serco.[8] Serco's accountability instead was orientated to the Home Office, for which it had authority to act on its behalf. Meanwhile, however, though Serco was empowered by the Home Office, its actions remained informed by the terms of the COMPASS contract, and prevailing attitudes within the Home Office. This process of 'decentering' responsibility for asylum seeker and refugee accommodation allowed the Home Office to maintain oversight on matters relating to displaced people even as it implied that issues relating to their accommodation – including any potential financial or political fallout – were ostensibly in the hands of local organisations and institutions.

The governance model introduced since 2012 has also arguably reduced the role and scope of the public sector. In Scotland, this has had the additional consequence of removing devolved government from matters relating to housing. Though the accommodation of asylum seekers is the responsibility of the Home Office – and therefore a public sector responsibility – the COMPASS contract has operationalised this responsibility through private means, blurring the distinction between public and private sector accountability. The distinction has enabled Shelter Scotland to mount a legal challenge to Serco's 2018 plan to evict 330 asylum seekers from Dispersal accommodation, arguing that by acting upon instructions from the Home Office, Serco is acting as a public authority and 'have obligations under the Human Rights Act' (Weldon, 2018) not to evict displaced people into destitution.

The Resettlement Scheme operates on a less marketised governance model to that of Dispersal. However, it is arguably also an example of a decentered immigration governance model, designed by UK Government to be enacted by third parties locally. Resettlement governance differs from Dispersal insofar as where the latter relies on a direct relationship with a private contractor and an indirect relationship with local authorities, Resettlement has forged a direct link between the Home Office and local government. It has also developed a new strand of outsourced immigration governance through its utilisation of out-of-country UN Refugee camps to identify refugees eligible for the Scheme. In terms of devolved governance, Resettlement also presents a different prospect for the Scottish Government because some of the needs of refugees (including housing) fall under devolved competences. Whilst the Scottish Government is therefore not formally involved in the Resettlement Scheme infrastructure, it has more scope to facilitate or intervene in Resettlement activities.

By allowing scope for local authorities to have (indirect) input into selection processes and by giving them opportunities to engage in local planning, the governance model of the Resettlement Scheme is arguably more collaborative than that of Dispersal. Certainly, the localised element of control was popular with the local authorities with whom we spoke, as we discuss further below. However, it is also worth noting that this relative popularity notwithstanding, Resettlement governance still functioned by 'dispersing' responsibility for the programme onto local authorities whilst distancing the Home Office from political fallout. This was in evidence particularly in areas in which the arrival of Syrian families had gained negative media attention, which focused on the localised context

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[8] As demonstrated in Serco's announcement in July 2018 to evict 330 asylum seekers from Dispersal accommodation (see boxed text on p7).
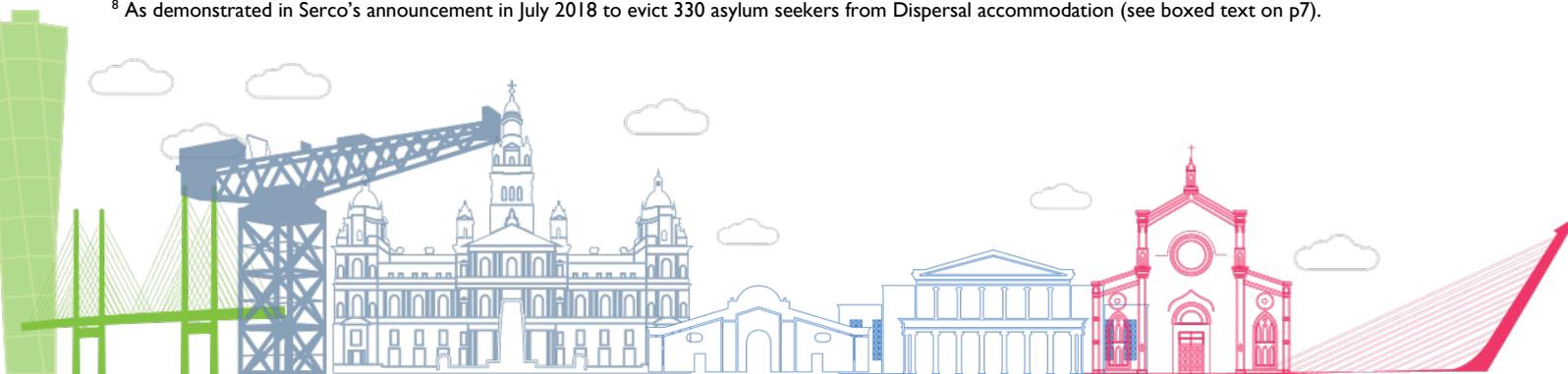
of their settlement rather than Home Office policy. It is also worth noting that the more 'autonomous' environment of the Resettlement programme emerges from a context of a decade of austerity and cuts to council services. Many of the local authorities with whom we spoke noted that participation in the Scheme gave them access to much-needed funding that would otherwise be unavailable from the UK Government. Whilst the Scheme therefore championed the involvement of local authorities, it did so within a political and financial environment that had reduced alternative options.

The Dispersal and Resettlement schemes share similarities in governance approaches in the sense that they both function through 'decentering' models, which seek to distance the Home Office from political fallout and increase operational responsibility for local actors. They diverge over the extent to which the decentering process affords local authorities, devolved government and local actors autonomy over the provision of accommodation within local areas. As the provision of accommodation covers a number of operational and policy areas – including the built environment, service provision and the political context – the sections below briefly consider the extent to which scales of autonomy in accommodation governance shape housing experiences for displaced people in Scotland.

4.2 Autonomy, community planning and the built environment

The impact of governance upon the built environment is a feature that is arguably particular to models related to accommodation provision. The governance of both Dispersal and Resettlement had impact on the material provision of housing, its relationship to the local environment and community planning and development. Stakeholders noted that the varying levels of autonomy allowed by the Schemes was related to the extent to which local authorities were able to plan for the accommodation of displaced people in their local area.

In the context of Dispersal in Glasgow, Glasgow City Council was faced with a situation in which previous governance models had allowed them a degree of control in planning for the accommodation of asylum seekers in the city which had now been removed. Prior to 2012, Dispersal governance had enabled Glasgow City Council to decide upon the locations in which asylum seekers were to be housed, the housing stock in which they were to be accommodated, and improvements that needed to be made to do so. In the early years of Dispersal, the Council primarily chose to accommodate Dispersed asylum seekers in housing that was otherwise hard to fill – usually in areas of existing multiple deprivations and in high rise accommodation stock. This approach was met with mixed results (Kelly, 2002). However, as a Council officer noted, the accommodation of asylum seekers within these areas had 'regenerative' effects, both on account of (a) the funding the Council received for Dispersal accommodation and (b) an increase in population:

> The repopulated areas were in dire straits to be honest. And I think probably from us doing it [dispersal] back in 2000, I kind of joke about this but it will be true... The money that the council received for doing dispersal, they were big contracts, you know… it was a lot of money generated into the system, if you like. And that helps with regeneration.
>
> (LA 2)

In the short term, Dispersal increased populations in local areas and provided work for Council contractors involved in the provision of accommodation (decorators, furniture makers, council officers). Longer term, it provided Glasgow City Council with an income that it otherwise would not have gained from the sites that eventually enabled

the contemporary large-scale regeneration projects occurring in many Dispersal sites:

> Probably all the demolition and all the ones that are getting done [like Red Road], a chunk of that money's probably went tae reinvest on that because they were getting rental income that they probably wouldnae have got for a large period.
>
> (LA 2)

To an extent, pre-2012 governance of Dispersal enabled Glasgow City Council to (1) plan arrival and settlement by area and housing stock (2) coordinate support for arriving and existing communities (3) invest in the accommodation in which asylum seekers were housed and (4) improve the built environment of existing areas. In contrast, the governance of the COMPASS contract means that Glasgow City Council has minimal operational input into the accommodation of asylum seekers in the city, and reduced scope – and funding – for community planning. Instead, the location and type of housing stock in which asylum seekers are accommodated is determined by the marketised priorities of the 2012 governance model:

> It [regeneration] drives up the cost of accommodation, and Serco look for low cost accommodation in which to accommodate people. And…if it came to the stage where it became overly expensive to get to somewhere, to have accommodation somewhere, then they would look to source it elsewhere. That's why we have a large amount of accommodation [for asylum seekers] in the East of Glasgow. It's because it's cheap.
>
> (NGO 2)

By driving up accommodation costs in Dispersal/Regeneration sites, the regenerative activity enabled by the pre-2012 Dispersal model has made the same sites unattractive to post-2012 housing contractors, Serco. As we have discussed above, Serco's search for low cost Dispersal accommodation has increasingly led to asylum seekers being housed in peripheral locations in Glasgow; though Glasgow City Council has some say in where asylum seekers are accommodated,[9] it does not have influence over the landlords – and the locations of their housing stock – with which Serco subcontracts. This loss of control over the location and housing in which asylum seekers are accommodated is therefore not just a transferral of responsibility from one organisation (Glasgow City Council) to another (Serco); rather, it represents a loss of policy control, to which the Council has contributed and in which it has invested – and which has implications for the built environment and community development in Glasgow beyond the implementation of Dispersal.

The Resettlement Scheme allows a more autonomous role for local authorities in community and housing planning. The governance of the Scheme enables this on several counts, as it allows local authorities to:

- Select refugees on the basis of existing housing and resources within the local area (i.e. local authorities would not offer accommodation to a person whose needs they could not adequately support).
- Identify locations and communities which had sufficient space, access and resources.
- Identify areas and housing stock in need of 'regeneration'.

The Scottish Registered Social Landlords Syria Response Group saw the Scheme as an opportunity to (a) halt the declining condition of existing housing stock and (b) receive income on stock:

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[9] COSLA brokers a relationship between Glasgow City Council and Serco, in which the Council can discuss matters relating to location and type of housing stock for asylum seeking populations.

[there] exists very high quality housing in rural areas of Scotland which are lying empty, 50 at a time, because the local population is in decline. Housing is critical and we recognise other support would have to also be put in place. Opportunities exist therefore to give refugees hope and regenerate local communities.

(PAIH, 2015)

The relative autonomy that Resettlement governance allows local authorities therefore also provides space for local actors to mobilise local knowledge that (1) answers the needs of refugees (2) answers the needs of existing communities and (3) is place and location specific. As a result:

- With some adaptations, Glasgow City Council inserted Resettlement programme refugees into the homelessness housing route. This meant that the Council was able to mobilise existing infrastructure and expertise to swiftly respond to the Resettlement programme population.
- Argyll and Bute Council was able to strategically mobilise a similar homelessness route to place Resettlement refugees in RSL housing stock specifically in a location with a surplus.
- Aberdeenshire Council was able to mobilise incoming Resettlement populations to fill vacant private rental accommodation that had been struggling since the crash in the Scottish oil and gas industry.

Though refugee resettlement was something with which local authorities in many remote and rural locations may have been unfamiliar, the provision of housing for people in need – and mobilisation of resources and services that this entails – was something in which they had considerable expertise. By allowing room for autonomy of localised accommodation governance, Resettlement capitalised upon this knowledge and expertise. It also allowed for refugee resettlement to be embedded within community planning competences, achieving a balance between the material provision of accommodation for dispersed people and existing local housing and socioeconomic priorities. To this end, local authorities in remote and rural locations in Scotland had begun to move away from the prevailing 'Glasgow model' of accommodation provision and develop area-specific approaches to housing refugees. At the time of research, local authority networks in the north and west of Scotland were being developed to respond to the unique challenges of accommodating refugees in remote environments.

4.3 Governance pressure points, complexity and dysfunction

Stakeholders also raised the issue of autonomy in local governance in matters relating to accommodation service provision. The decentering focus of Dispersal governance has created a system of accommodation provision which is dispersed across multiple stakeholders. This has meant that at points of transition in the accommodation system – for example, following a decision on an asylum application – service provision relies upon coordination between many different service providers, often resulting in congestion or confusion. A lack of autonomy, stakeholders noted, meant that local authorities and third sector organisations were unable to make changes to a system that was potentially impeding their work.

The two main problem points within the Dispersal accommodation pathway are also (1) points of transition between various immigration statuses and (2) points at which multiple stakeholders, with different political and governance interests, come into contact. Stakeholders noted how the already-fraught conditions of the 'Move On Period' were exacerbated by the necessity of the involvement of multiple stakeholders, multiple governance

interests and competing politics. For instance, a successful transition from Dispersal accommodation to social housing within the parameters of the 28 day 'Move On' period required the award of refugee status (giving a person recourse to public funds) from the Home Office and the award of funding from the DWP. As the latter is dependent on the former, cooperation between the two departments is required, but often not forthcoming. A Glasgow City Council officer observed:

> You're thinking, 'right it's the Home Office and the DWP. Two huge departments, can you not sort it out?' Because […] the Home Office'll be thinking, 'right, well if we extend it [the Move On Period…] that would cost us x amount for the time you went in there to us giving you twenty eight days notice. If we give you sixty days we're going to have to pay Serco another two months rent so we'll just say no. But you're going into the DWP system anyway so what difference does it make, you know?
>
> (LA 2)

It also requires successful communication between the Home Office and Serco confirming a person's new status. Under agreements made between Glasgow City Council, anti-destitution networks and Serco, it may also require Serco to stay an eviction until DWP funding is received. If a transition between Dispersal and social housing is achieved, the system subsequently requires the completion by the individual of a 'Resettlement Plan' and coordination between Glasgow City Council's homelessness team and Glasgow's 66 Registered Social Landlords. If space is temporarily unavailable in RSL accommodation, it may also require coordination of temporary accommodation between Glasgow City Council and hostel or B&B providers. If this option falls through, an individual may need to contact third sector organisations for emergency accommodation. If a case becomes complex (i.e. a person's recourse to public funds is contested), additional stakeholders from the legal and third sectors may also become involved.

In this example alone, the 'Move On' Period involves (1) inter-governmental coordination (2) multi-level coordination between national and local government (3) coordination between the private, public – and sometimes, third – sectors (4) coordination between local government and housing association representatives (5) coordination between the refugee individual and all these organisations. If coordination between stakeholders breaks down, there is a strong likelihood that a refugee will end up facing a (temporary) homelessness situation. It is also likely that though the process involves a number of stakeholders, responsibility for homelessness situations will be situated at local level, either with the public or third sector.

The complexity of this system makes a pressurised situation additionally fraught. It is one that is arguably exacerbated by the current Dispersal governance model, which has (a) encouraged the 'dispersal' of service provision amongst multiple stakeholders and (b) removed the opportunity for Dispersal accommodation to be simply 'flipped' into refugee accommodation. Meanwhile, whilst Glasgow City Council and the third sector bore the responsibility for the consequences of a dysfunctional system – there was very limited scope for them to enact either systemic or structural change. Though representatives from Glasgow City Council, the Scottish Refugee Council and other third sector organisations had recommended that the 'Move On' Period should be extended to a minimum of 60 days, the Home Office has not adopted these measures. Stakeholders did not expect the Home Office to adopt every policy change they suggested, but they felt that consultation processes had little beyond face value. A local authority representative noted,

I don't know why they asked us for our input as if they were listening cause they werenae.

<div align="right">(LA 2)</div>

Other attempts to improve parts of the 'Move On' Period – such as a collaboration between Serco, the public sector and anti-destitution organisations to stay evictions until alternative housing could be found – were also curtailed by Home Office pressure (as evidenced by the 2018 Serco evictions scandal).

Disenfranchisement is experienced at all levels of the Dispersal pathway housing system, but most acutely by individuals attempting to access accommodation. This is reflected in the high refusal rate amongst refugees of offers of permanent accommodation by Glasgow City Council. At a meeting between Glasgow City Council, the RSLs and the Scottish Refugee Council to address this problem, a Glasgow City Council officer reflected that whilst housing location and type may be a factor in the high refusal rates, they might also be understood as a symptom of a housing system that offers little opportunity for a refugee to enact any agency. The high refusal rate for refugee accommodation might in part therefore be understood as an issue of governance, in which processes of decentering have disenfranchised the individuals on whom they act.

Stakeholders reported fewer pressure points within the Resettlement system; however some nevertheless persisted, especially at the point of arrival. As refugees, people on the Resettlement Scheme were eligible for housing, basic income and disability support. These welfare provisions (1) granted access to social housing and (2) provided basic support for people to settle in Scotland. Provision of this support required precise and coordinated action from local authorities, the Home Office and the DWP. In the early months of the Scheme, coordination between these bodies often failed, resulting in pressure on local authorities to keep refugee families in temporary accommodation. However, as the Scheme matured, local authorities had developed systems through which welfare support could be more efficiently accessed. They had also started to develop parallel systems of support with civil society organisations, which provided services not otherwise offered by the state – i.e. befriending services or welcome packs.

4.4 Civil society and multi-agency network governance?

The third sector has had considerable input into accommodation provision for displaced migrants in Scotland. Though the organisations working on asylum seeker and refugee support in Glasgow have differing capacities and priorities, they have become well-known for their collaborative work and formation of multi-agency networks, both within the third sector and more broadly with local and devolved government. This is certainly evident on issues relating to accommodation.

Within these existing networks, there is evidence that collaborative work between the third and public sectors has the potential to contest existing accommodation governance models. Third sector interventions have particularly helped both local government improve accommodation services for refugees, and have provided guidance and evidence for devolved government working on NRPF. They have had success in this role because they are able to travel between levels of accommodation governance, and broker relationships and identify gaps in existing systems.

Multi-agency accommodation networks in Glasgow: Examples

(1) The issue of declining housing standards in Serco Dispersal accommodation has been addressed accumulatively by third sector organisations in Glasgow. This work has included:
- Evidence-gathering work by organisations including the British Red Cross and the ASH Project of poor housing standards and intimidation by Serco staff.
- Publicity strategies by the Scottish Refugee Council and Positive Action in Housing.

The pressure that third sector organisations were able to accumulatively place on Dispersal accommodation contractors contributed to the termination of the contract with Serco subcontractor, Orchard and Shipman, in 2016.

(2) The issues arising from the 'Move On' Period have also been addressed collaboratively in Glasgow.
- The Scottish Refugee Council has worked in partnership with Glasgow City Council and Housing Association representatives to improve the homelessness route process.
- The Scottish Refugee Council has also worked with Glasgow City Council, RSLs and Serco to develop scenarios in which a Dispersal flat could be 'flipped' to refugee accommodation. To-date, the partnership between GCC and the SRC has achieved a handful of 'flips'.

(3) The threat of homelessness to asylum seekers and refugees with NRPF has attracted substantial networked collaboration amongst organisations in Glasgow.
- Networks include the Destitute Asylum Seeker Service (DASS) and Glasgow Asylum Destitution Action Network (GLADAN), which provide case-work, legal advice, emergency funding and emergency accommodation to destitute asylum seekers.
- Anti-destitution networks have also made representations to the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament to include displaced migrants with NRPF in policymaking relating to homelessness and destitution in Scotland.

In some scenarios, multi-agency collaboration has had a tangible impact on Dispersal governance systems. For instance, the collaborative work between Serco, the third sector, RSLs and Glasgow City Council that successfully 'flipped' Dispersal flats to refugee accommodation is a local-level iteration of accommodation provision that is markedly different to that prescribed by the post-2012 governance model. Third sector collaboration – such as the work undertaken by members of the GLADAN network – also responded to gaps in the existing accommodation system, including essential services such as legal support, as well as much-need material provisions such as emergency housing. These third sector provisions had direct impacts on the lives of asylum seekers and refugees who were vulnerable to destitution; however, they also provided indirect support to local government and the welfare state by anticipating and providing for situations (i.e. homelessness) that might otherwise put pressure on the public sector. A number of stakeholders noted that the gaps in current governance provisions necessitated this work. Some also noted that whilst the gaps filled by the third sector may in part be due to governance oversight, they are also likely to be a deliberate strategy of a model which has sought to (1) make efficiencies and (2) remove the state from accommodation provision. One third sector worker observed:

> Like I said, the non-profit sectors here can provide statutory services at a cheaper rate. […Really] I don't want to have a job! […] No I mean it, I guess the advantage could be perceived that people are more independent and then able to kind of advocate or speak out about bad practice. But then getting any kind of change within the kind of government structure that we're working in is really difficult. Like I would prefer that the state is providing all these services and [better] models of accountability.

<div align="right">(NGO 5)</div>

Whilst multi-agency collaboration had some successes, they existed within a system in which there was little scope for them to hold the Home Office and the DWP to account, or make interventions at national level. Devolved and local environments offered a little more room for collaborative, multi-agency activities. However, some NGOs expressed reservations about existing local dynamics, including:

- The extent to which multi-agency networking was in fact a multi-agency hierarchy. Though some NGOs and community groups felt that there was a useful level of collaboration between organisations, others felt that the reputation of Glasgow's multi-agency networks had been overstated and was 'mere rhetoric' which harked back to the early days of dispersal (NGO 5 interview).
- Others noted a distinct hierarchy of power and representation, which enabled some organisations to access multi-level partnerships and kept others without access to government (NGO 8 interview).

5. Conclusion: (De)politicising immigration through accommodation governance?

This report has highlighted a variety of experiences for displaced migrants when accessing accommodation in Scotland.

In terms of Dispersal accommodation, our work with stakeholders highlights three areas of particular concern: (1) persistent issues with housing standards and standards of service provision in asylum accommodation, exacerbated the trend of peripheralisation, (2) systemic and operational issues in the 'Move On' period which, post decision, inhibit smooth transitions between accommodation types and service providers and (3) the high risks of homelessness and destitution for both asylum seekers and refugees with no recourse to public funds. Concern relating to the provision of accommodation through the Resettlement pathway has been less pronounced. In some local authorities, refugees have raised concerns over location and housing type; however, local authorities are working with refugees to address this. Some local authorities have also experienced some delays and dysfunction when attempting to set up welfare support for refugees' accommodation, though local-level systems have been developed to alleviate these.

The difference between the stakeholders' and displaced peoples' experiences of these two accommodation systems is noticeable. This report acknowledges that operational and bureaucratic issues and local socioeconomic environments contribute to the provision of accommodation for displaced people in Scotland. Alongside these factors however, it also finds that governance has a considerable impact on (1) displaced people's accommodation experiences and (2) the capacity of local and devolved stakeholders to shape, adapt or intervene in issues related to housing.

Drawing on work with stakeholders across Scotland, this report has argued that there is evidence to suggest that both accommodation pathways 'decenter' accommodation governance from the central UK government by dispersing operational and political responsibilities for accommodation to the public and third sector – the result of what might be characterised as a 'localist' agenda (Lowndes and Gardner, 2016). However, this report has also found that though both Dispersal and Resettlement accommodation models might be broadly informed by a localist agenda, they diverge in how they subsequently utilise 'the local'.

The report has found that the systemic difficulties in the Dispersal-pathway – (1) the loss of urban planning capacity for local government (2) complexity and dysfunction at points of transition and (3) the paradoxical manner with which the pathway both relies on and disenfranchises the third sector – are all related to the issue of autonomy, or rather, the lack thereof that Dispersal governance affords local stakeholders. In interviews, stakeholders repeatedly reported that though the current governance of Dispersal-pathway accommodation placed considerable pressure on local-level actors to facilitate or provide additional support to Dispersal systems, it allowed them minimal room for local level adaptations of its systems, and little opportunity to intervene in policy at national level. In the public sector, despite their broader impact on local authority competences (urban planning, community development and homelessness), Dispersal accommodation decisions were seen as something that now largely 'happened' to rather than actively involved Glasgow City Council. Pressure was also felt by the third sector organisations on which the bulk of responsibility for emergency accommodation had fallen, but for which lines of communication to national government, as well as sufficient funding, were lacking.

Resettlement governance was generally felt to provide more room for manoeuvre for local stakeholders, and especially local government. This was especially the case for accommodation provision, where the relative autonomy allowed by the scheme enabled local authorities to mobilise (a) local level expertise on housing stock and housing location to best match accommodation with incoming refugees and (b) local knowledge of the areas which might most benefit from Resettlement funding. Resettlement governance highlighted the benefits of allowing local authorities to achieve a balance between the material provision of accommodation for dispersed people and embedding it within community planning and development competences. At the same time, Resettlement governance was not entirely without issue: as we report above, stakeholders felt that an arms-length approach by the Home Office to the scheme meant local issues were rarely fully understood. Meanwhile, questions over what happens after the Scheme finishes in 2020 raised concerns over the sustainability of the regenerating potential of the Scheme, not least related to housing stock and the built environment.

If the two are considered together, Resettlement governance provides far better experiences of accommodation provision both for refugees and local stakeholders. Many of the localised governance issues associated with post-decision Dispersal-pathway accommodation (temporary homelessness, temporary accommodation, multiple moves) were bypassed by the Resettlement programme, leading one Council officer to observe that Resettlement had created the 'gold standard' of refugee housing, which had resulted in a 'two tier' system between those on the Dispersal pathway and those on the Resettlement programme. This difference is most pronounced in Glasgow, where Dispersed refugees and Resettled refugees could conceivably be accommodated side by side:

So you could be a Syrian and you come through the camp and you come through that [Resettlement] Scheme. Or […] you could be a Syrian who's managed tae get tae Glasgow on the back a' a lorry or however. And

you're waiting on your temporary furnished flat cause you've got leave tae remain. And you might not even get a temporary furnished flat tae start wi'. And if you're lucky enough tae get one, aye you'll get a temporary furnished flat but there'll not be any food in it […] there'll no be anything. […] And you'll not get anybody tae help you because my team, they're only dealing wi' the homeless side of trying tae get you a hoose.

(LA 2)

Viewed through the lenses of human rights, community development and urban planning, the creation of a 'two tier' system for hosting asylum seekers and refugees makes little operational sense as it creates a starkly uneven system. However, this is arguably not a surprise. Rather than being viewed as the result of poor governance, it can instead be understood as an indirect but intended outcome of an overall governance approach with a preference for decentering its operations. The creation of a two-tier system works to the advantage of a decentering governance model because it aims to fracture local-level activity along Dispersal/Resettlement faultlines. By setting the two accommodation systems against each other, this governance model encourages competition, adds pressure and 'disperses' operational matters amongst even more stakeholders. This has the potential to challenge the creation of local-level networks, collaboration or solidarity movements, and works to dispel the consolidation of local-level movements that would otherwise challenge central government norms.

It is perhaps testament to the activity of local-level stakeholders that this has not been especially successful in Scotland. As the report indicates, collaborative activity between the public and third sector – and to a lesser extent, with Dispersal accommodation contractors, Serco – has created an environment in which local stakeholders communicate with each other rather than seeking to work against each other. In Resettlement contexts outwith Glasgow, there is evidence of similar collaborative activity led by local stakeholders, whether this is collaboration between local and national government to improve bureaucratic processes or collaboration between local authorities to form networks that respond to their remote or rural environments. This collaborative activity has certainly developed a focus on the local – ostensibly a desired outcome of a governance model which seeks to 'decenter' and depoliticise the role of central government in the provision of accommodation to asylum seekers and refugees. However, as our research suggests, the localised focus of stakeholders on accommodation provision has not meant that they have lost sight of the broader governance environment in which accommodation provision takes place. Indeed, the connections forged between local-level stakeholders have instead facilitated political opposition to central government decisions – as the coordinated, and multi-agency response to the Serco scandal of 2018 has demonstrated. This is not to say that as it stands, multi-agency collaboration presents a wholesale alternative to existing governance systems. Indeed, at local level – and in Glasgow especially – issues of hierarchy and representation between third and public sector stakeholders respectively need to be more explicitly addressed so that local-level activity might establish horizontal rather than vertical infrastructures. However, with further development there is potential for local-level, multi-agency activity to establish alternatives to top-down, 'decentering' systems of governance, and improve accommodation provision for asylum seekers and refugees across Scotland.

Appendix A: Abbreviations & Interview Codes

Abbreviations:

ASH – Asylum Seeker Housing Project
COMPASS - Commercial and Operating Managers Procuring Asylum Support
COSLA – Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
DASS - Destitute Asylum Seeker Service
DWP – Department for Work and Pensions
GCC – Glasgow City Council
GLADAN - Glasgow Asylum Destitution Action Network
NGO – Non-Government Organisation
NRPF – No Recourse to Public Funds
PSL – Private Sector Leasing
RSL – Registered Social Landlord
RST – Refugee Survival Trust
VPRS – Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme

Interview codes:

GV – Government Representative
LA – Local Authority Representative
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

Appendix B: Accommodation Costings

Support and subsistence
In the UK, asylum seekers are not entitled to access welfare support. If they are able to prove that at the point of application they are otherwise destitute, asylum seekers are eligible for Section 95 support. This entitles them to Dispersal accommodation and a subsistence of £37.75 week.[10] This is significantly less than equivalent welfare provision, through income support, at a minimum amount of £57.90 a week.[11]

If an asylum application is refused, an asylum seeker is no longer entitled to Dispersal accommodation and is not eligible for social housing. Under Section 4, if they are appealing their case, they are entitled to £35.39 a week through a payment card.[12]

Refugees (including those on the Resettlement Programme) are entitled to apply for welfare provisions. Basic income support begins at 57.90 a week.

Immigration Status	Accommodation?	Subsistence? (£)
Asylum seeker (Section 95)	Yes	37.75
Asylum seeker (Section 4)	No	35.39
Refugee (Income Support)	Yes	57.90

Home Office costs
Under the COMPASS contract, the Home Office covers accommodation providers (i.e. Serco) for £300 per month per service user, or £150 million annually.[13] Serco estimates that the average costs to the company per service user is £450 per month, and that accommodation provision operates at a loss.[14] A representative from Glasgow City Council noted that when the Council held the Dispersal accommodation contract, a housing unit cost approximately £800 a month (LA 2).

The VPRS provides funding over a five year period for each individual. Local authorities receive the following unit costs from the Home Office in year 1:

	Unit cost
Children under the age of 3	8520
Children aged 3-4	10770
Children aged 5-18	13020
Adults in receipt of mainstream benefits	8520
Other adults	8520

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[10] https://www.asaproject.org/uploads/Factsheet-1-section-95.pdf
[11] https://www.gov.uk/income-support
[12] https://www.asaproject.org/uploads/Factsheet-2-section-4-support.pdf
[13] House of Commons (2017)
[14] House of Commons (2017)

Age is taken at date of arrival in the UK and year 1 costs commence at that date. Additional monies are paid direct to the local Health Boards to cover both primary and secondary care. Year 2 to 5 funding is allocated on a tariff basis over four years, tapering from £5,000 per person in year 2 to £1,000 per person in year 5. The overall total budget for year 1 for 69 refugees is circa £680k. The total funding received from the Home Office as of 31 October 2017 is £1.04 million.

Appendix C: Selected third sector organisations involved in accommodation provision in Glasgow

Organisation	Description	Role	Influence
Scottish Refugee Council	Scotland-wide representation of issues pertaining to asylum seekers and refugees	Service provision, research, creating and influencing policy	- *New Scots* partner - COSLA partner - Member of DASS - Member of GLADAN network
British Red Cross Refugee Services	UK-wide NGO supporting issues pertaining to displaced migrants	Advice and case work, research, policy work	- *New Scots* partner - Member of GLADAN
Govan Community Project	Integration Network	Pastoral support, advice and case work, emergency funding, advocacy work, policy work	- One of five area-specific networks in Glasgow - Contributor to *New Scots* - Member of GLADAN
Refugee Survival Trust	Anti-Destitution organisation	Case work, emergency accommodation provision, emergency funding provision, lobbying work	- Member of DASS - Member of GLADAN network
Positive Action in Housing	Housing & social justice charity	Case work, temporary accommodation provision, research and lobbying work	- Member of GLADAN network - Contributor to *New Scots*
Night Shelter	Charity providing bed space for destitute refugee men	Pastoral work	- Member of GLADAN network - Member of DASS
Asylum Seeker Housing (ASH) Project	Asylum & refugee housing charity run by former asylum seekers	Housing issues advocacy, pastoral support, women's group support	
Unity Centre	Anti-racist collective supporting asylum seekers and refugees	Case work, pastoral support, advocacy work	

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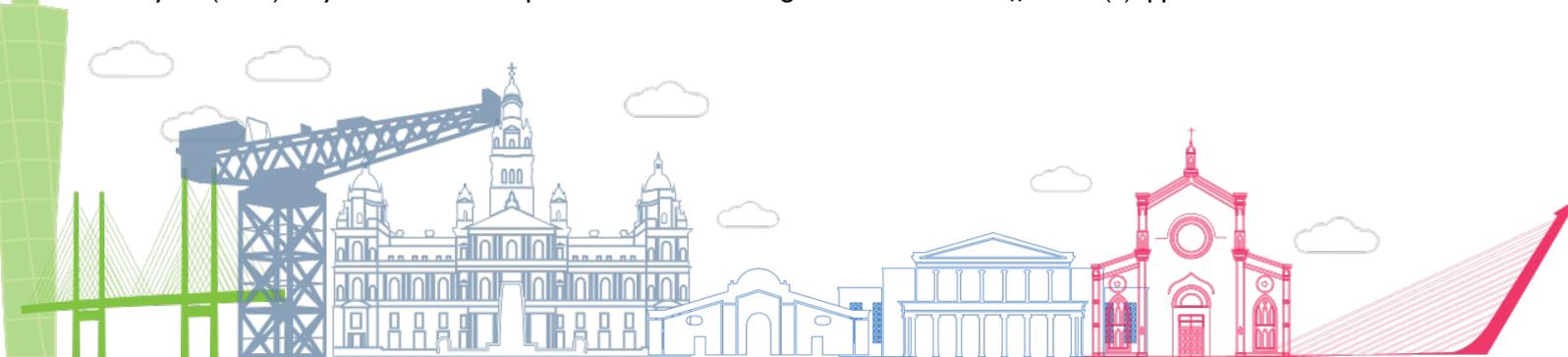
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