

Open Letter: Proposed accommodation of people seeking asylum at Yarl's Wood

We the undersigned, as people of faith, community representatives and concerned citizens, wish to raise objections about the proposal to temporarily accommodate 200 people seeking asylum on a site in Bedfordshire. We seek assurance that the wellbeing and human dignity of the proposed residents will be at the forefront of the decision-making process.

The location of the proposed site is adjacent to Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre. We know that many of the intended residents will have experienced significant difficulties and trauma prior to their arrival. The proximity of this site to a centre used for detention could compound this suffering, and cause feelings of anxiety among residents seeking asylum. Furthermore, we are deeply concerned that vulnerable individuals will be housed at a location which is some distance from urban centres, significantly impacting their access to local services and community support. The proposed accommodation will consist of prefabricated style buildings, raising questions about the health and mental well-being of the residents, including risks associated with COVID19.

We seek responses to the following questions from the Home Office and their contractor Serco Group PLC:

- Have other more suitable options been exhausted, including hotel accommodation or other options closer to an urban centre such as Bedford or Luton?
- How will you ensure that the physical and mental wellbeing of the proposed residents will be safeguarded?
- Have the requisite social and environmental risk assessments been carried out?
- Will local organisations be given adequate access to offer support in a COVID secure manner?
- Will residents have adequate access to local institutions which can support their wellbeing, including places of worship?
- Has the process of developing this site been conducted in a transparent manner with the full support of the local authorities?

We seek transparent answers to these questions, and the assurance that nobody will be housed on this site until these matters have been given full consideration, so that we and the communities we represent can extend the compassion, welcome and support that all human beings, with inherent worth and dignity, deserve

Add your name to this letter [here](#).

Full name	Organisation	Role
Rehana Faisal	Lantern	Chair
The Rev'd Luke Larner	Red Letter Christians UK	Chaplain
Faisal Hussain	Luton Sunni Council of Mosques	General Secretary

Imam Muhammad Rayhan	Luton Council of Mosques	General Secretary
Sufian Sadiq	Discover Islam	Chairman
Tony Thompson	Hope Church Luton	Leader
Peter Adams	St Marys Centre for Peace and Reconciliation	Director
Lucie Shuker	City Life Church Luton	Church Leader
Attiq Malik	Liberty Law Solicitors	Lawyer & Human Rights Activist
Henry Cross	Rock And Redeemer Vineyard Church	Pastor
The Rev'd Tony Rindl	St. Mary's Watford, Three Rivers Refugee Partnership	Vicar
Dr Fatima Rajina	Stephen Lawrence Research Centre	Legacy in Action Research Fellow
Revd Cassandra Howes	Bedford Council of Faiths	Chair
T Kalyan	Bhagwan Valmik Temple Bedford	President
Rev'd Peter R. Kay	Benefice of Milton Ernest, Pavenham & Thurleigh	Priest-In-Charge
Jane Godley TSSF	The Third Order of the Society of Saint Francis, Bedford Group	Convenor
The Revd Canon Kevin Goss	St Pauls Church, Bedford, and Member of the General Synod of the Church of England	Vicar
Rev. Andrew Hollins	North Bedfordshire Methodist Circuit / Churches Together Bedfordshire	Superintendent Minister / Chair
Marc James	Three Rivers Church Bedford	Elder
Dr. Virendra Soni	Bedford Council of Faiths	Vice Chair
Rev. Marcus Ottaviani	St Mary's Goldington	Assistant Curate
Taj Ali		Freelance Journalist
Sanjeev Kumar	Shri Guru Ravidass Sangat Luton	General Secretary

Rajiv Sidhu		
Zafar Khan	Luton Council of Faiths	Chair
Gulie Butcher	Luton Council of Faiths	Co-chair
David Jonathon	Luton Council of Faiths	Director
Ramnik Gohil	Luton Council of Faiths	Trustee
Kishore Kaler	Luton Council of Faiths	Treasurer
Ryad Khodabocus	Luton Council of Faiths	Head of Community Relations & Development
Ray Gaston	Church of St Chad and St Mark	Vicar
The Rev'd Ray Gaston	Church of St Chad and St Mark, Parish of Central Wolverhampton	Vicar
Revd Robb Sutherland		Vicar
Naomi Bennett	Red Letter Christians UK	Co-Executive Director (CEO)
Charlotte Gibson	The Women's Theology Network	Co-founder (and Ordained, Church of England)
Mostaque koyes	Community Interest luton	Chair
Caroline Weaver	Ther Methodist Church	Minister and Prison Chaplain
Peter Gerrish	Bedford Council Of Faiths	Secretary
Revd Caroline Weaver	North Bedford Methodist Circuit	
Danielle Wilson	Red Letter Christians UK & Inclusive Gathering Birmingham	Co-CEO, Methodist Pioneer Lay Minister
Jennifer Shirley Taylor		
Wendi Momen	Northill Baha'is, Bedfordshire	
Debbie Clark		
Debbie Clark		
Ali wilson		
Michael Kane	Church of the Nazarene / Nazarene Theological College	Pastor / Chaplain
Susan Lennon		

Revd. Sophie Cowan		Priest
J Huntley		
Tim Ferguson		
Tim Ferguson		
Sujel Miah	Bangladesh Youth League	Trustee
Melissa Llewellyn	The Courtney Foundation	Trustee
Charlotte Gibson	The Women's Theology Network	Co-founder (and Ordained, Church of England)
The Rev'd Jarel Robinson-Brown	King's College London	Associate Chaplain
Rev. Ian Rutherford	Methodist Central Hall, Manchester	City Centre Minister
Mostaque koyes	Community Interest Iuton	Chair
Jack Belloli	Ripon College Cuddesdon / Diocese of Ely	Ordinand in the Church of England
Rev. Jon Price		Assistant Curate
Revd David Butterworth	Methodist Church - Birmingham	Minister. District Officer
Shana Iqbal	Lanten	Co-Vice Chair
Rt Revd Richard Atkinson, OBE		Bishop of Bedford
Andrew Axon	Vicar of Lamberhurst & Matfield	Priest
Shelly Dennison	Putnoe Heights Methodist Church	Trustee (Church Council member)
Rt Revd Dr Michael Igrave OBE		Bishop of Lichfield
Revd Dr Al Barrett	Church of England - Birmingham	Vicar
Angela Brydon	Beds, Essex & Herts Methodist District	District Discipleship Enabler
Tony Reese		
Lynne Gound	Priory Methodist Church Bedford	

Margaret Pritchard Houston	Diocese of St Albans	Children's Work Advisor
Jaimee Summers	Church of England	Clergy
Andrew Axon	Vicar of Lamberhurst & Matfield	Priest
Rev'd Morna Simpson	Benefice of Yardley Hastings	Rector
Dr. Joel Brown		Medical Doctor
Revd Fr David Green	Church of England	Clergy
Roger Chisnall	Just Community (St Albans)	coordinator
Fr. Paul Davies	Anglican Church of All Saints Queens Park Bedford	Vicar
Kirsty Borthwick	Westcott House / Diocese of St Albans	Ordinand
Jenny Lloyd	Priory Methodist Church/North Beds Churches Together	
Sherry Hooper	Bedford Quakers	Clerk