PLEDGE A SPARE ROOM
Positive Action in Housing is an independent, anti-racist homelessness and human rights charity (SC027577) dedicated to supporting women, children and men from refugee and migrant backgrounds to rebuild their lives. We believe in a society where everyone has the right to live safe and dignified lives, free from poverty, homelessness or inequality.

We assist those seeking sanctuary from war and persecution to overcome crisis situations, for example, the removal of basic human rights such as refuge, shelter, the right to work or hold a bank account. We support migrants to know their rights, secure paid work and stabilise their lives. We establish and maintain ethnic minority communities to overcome bad housing. We offer welfare advice and money skills. We provide volunteering and training. We offer advice, crisis grants, and free shelter to those at risk of destitution.

By empowering people with information, we help individuals to make the right decisions about their future. Through proactive casework, we challenge unfair decisions.

We will help in all these ways until we have a society that treats everyone fairly, respects people’s human rights and leaves no one destitute.

“An unprecedented 68.5 million people around the world have been forced from home. Among them are nearly 25.4 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18.” UNHCR
WHAT IS ROOM FOR REFUGEES?

Room For Refugees is a network of volunteers from all over Scotland and the UK. Volunteers offer safe, temporary room in their homes for women, children and men from refugee backgrounds fleeing persecution and torture in their country of origin. We support those who have no recourse to public funds, have exhausted their own resources and are about to be made destitute.

WHY? Only around 43,300 people fleeing their home, out of 68.8 millions, reached Scotland or the rest of the UK. People are being left without their basic human needs e.g. food, shelter, finances, and emergency shelters. Asylum seekers are refused permission to work and have no recourse to public funds. The policy of enforced destitution as a way of forcing people to leave the UK is not working. More and more genuine refugees are being fast tracked into destitution.

We are challenging the “hostile environment” with a human response that is reaping life transforming results for everyone who takes part.

The network provides vulnerable people the breathing space to assess their options and secure the support needed to gain a positive decision on their asylum claim or be granted ‘Leave to Remain’.

Room for Refugees was pioneered by Positive Action in Housing in 2002, making it the longest running refugee hosting scheme run by a registered charity, in the UK or Western Europe. The Network went viral in September 2015 following the Refugee Crisis.

The Network

• Offers shelter and limited crisis grants for those affected by the global refugee crisis who are actively trying to resolve their destitution and legal situation to rebuild their lives.

• Enables those moved by compassion and a sense of justice to offer space in their own homes or properties to someone in need.

• Brings hosts together in local networks to make their communities refugee friendly and aware.

We work in partnership with over 300 non-profit organisations and agencies like the British Red Cross, Freedom from Torture, and Shelter from the Storm. This model can bypass red tape and bureaucracy to ensure vulnerable people without recourse to funds can find hope, resolution and a roof over their head.

"Like AirBnB for refugees” The Guardian

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Hamid, 38, from Iran. Living with Alison and Gen in Glasgow.
WHO ARE WE ASSISTING

- **People who have been granted refugee status** following a successful asylum application but who then have to vacate their housing within 28 days - in spite of having had no time to find somewhere else and get a job.

- **Asylum seekers**, meaning people who have applied for asylum and whose application is ongoing. This includes people who have arrived in the UK informally and reported to the Home Office.

- **People who have been refused asylum and are appealing the decision**. This includes people from countries all over the world.

- **Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)** in need of placement throughout the UK.

- **Those who are stuck in immigration detention** because they don’t have a guaranteed billing address.

AND WHERE?

Our biggest demands for hosting are in **Glasgow, Edinburgh, London and the surrounding areas**. We are always looking to increase the number of hosts in these areas which have the largest refugee/asylum populations in the UK. We regularly arrange hostings in cities, towns and villages across the rest of Scotland, England and Wales.

We also offer “respite hosting” so that households living in outlying rural areas can experience the benefits of hosting. And even if hosting is not possible, we are bringing together local Refugee Host Networks.

The US hosting programme is still in development. We have around 2,000 hosts registered in the US and have just begun our hosting programme in Chicago with the city’s biggest refugee resettlement agency, RefugeeOne.
WHY OFFER A SPARE ROOM?

It’s about removing the borders from our hearts and our minds. Having a refugee family or individual stay with you while they try to get their life back on track is one of the most practical, life-enriching things you can do for yourself and for people who find themselves in a crisis situation.

Our hosts offer breathing space to families and individuals to work out their options, and get their paperwork in order, so that they can begin the process of finding work, education, and rebuilding their families, their lives and their future.

Room for Refugees is a discrete and confidential hosting network providing safe matching of refugees/asylum seekers with households in the UK. We work with around 500 Caseworkers from diverse organisations around the country. Each caseworker must know their clients and carry out proper screening and risk assessments before making a referral.
I was a teacher in Darayya, Syria. I lost my wife and everything I had. I had been rough sleeping while my application was being considered. To avoid being in the street I spent most of my time in the library researching how to help my case. Alister and Eloise have been very patient and kind to take me into their home. One day I hope I can rebuild my life and repay the kindness they have shown to me.

Omar, Teacher from Syria

“I actually feel much more comfortable in my own home now, because it’s being used.”

Len, host since 2016

In 2016-17, the Room for Refugees programme worked closely with social workers in

3 LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS
Glasgow, Edinburgh and Ayrshire, to identify potential foster carers of hosts from its register for unaccompanied asylum seeker children.

As a result of being hosted, families were enabled to keep their children and avoid Social Work removing the children because of their risk of destitution.

In 2 CASES, the charity provided funds for family dependents to leave war zones in Syria and join family in the UK.

75,300 nights of free shelter provided to refugees and asylum seekers since 2015.

I have hosted people for varying lengths of time from a few days to five months. I have a supportive, loving family and it’s nice to share that with those who are far from their families.”

Edith, 62, retired Social Worker

’S 3.3 M’ is the estimated savings in the cost of shelter as a result of charities like the British Red Cross and local government using the Room for Refugees Programme for destitute clients since 2015.

*Estimated at £50 per night

510 external caseworkers from 250 refugee, homelessness and aid agencies across Scotland, England and Wales are now part of the Room for Refugees network.

550 successful placements since 2015

“Living with Omar is like living with any other housemate: we usually eat together and have a chat each evening and he’s met some of our friends. It’s been fun.”

Alister, Academic, Glasgow

I actually feel much more comfortable in my own home now, because it’s being used.”

Len, host since 2016

7000 people registered to host with Room for Refugees

50% increase

Edith, 62, retired Social Worker

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EDITH 550

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HOW DOES IT WORK?

#1 You register online and decide how long you can offer a spare room or property, according to your circumstances.

#2 Registered caseworkers from aid organisations and local authorities refer people in need online. All potential guests are screened to ensure a safe match.

#3 We match guests with available hosts in the areas requested depending on household composition, needs and preferences, to ensure a mutually rewarding experience.

#4 We drop you an email, to check your availability and level of interest.

#5 If you can take someone, a caseworker will contact you to discuss, provide you information and arrange a pre-hosting meeting.

#6 A first meeting happens between you, your potential guest and their caseworker, to introduce yourselves, discuss points and ask any questions.

#7 Once you are happy to go ahead, we arrange and confirm the start and exit dates.

#8 The caseworker accompanies the guest to your home on the agreed start date. You and your guest go through the house rules.

#9 The hosting agreement is signed by all parties. Your guest is also given a code of conduct to make sure your home is respected. The caseworker will keep regular contact to check all is well.

#10 Throughout the hosting, our team remains at your disposal to support and accompany you.
JOIN US!

Do you have a free room and want to become a host?

Join a unique network and help the integration of refugees through our innovative hosting program. To sign up, complete the registration form online at roomforrefugees.com.

To refer refugees or those claiming asylum who have no recourse to funds, please visit our website.

SUPPORT US!

If you are unable to host refugees but would like to make a contribution, please go to roomforrefugees.com/#help to give a donation. Your donation, however modest, gives people hope to rebuild their lives.

Contact us if you would like to volunteer, donate or ask a question.

Share our content using the hashtags #RoomforRefugees and #WeHaveRoom.
ROOM FOR REFUGEES is a discrete and confidential hosting network connecting refugees seeking for temporary accommodation with individuals who have a room to welcome them in Scotland and the UK. The programme offers safe immersion in private homes, allowing individuals and families to fully participate in their integration project. Above all, Room For Refugees is an intercultural meeting and a mutual enrichment through cohabitation.

ROOM FOR REFUGEES

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