



Terms of Reference for Welsh Refugee Coalition

Background

The Welsh Refugee Coalition was established in 2015. We are a coalition of organisations working in Wales with asylum seekers and refugees at all stages of their journey, and with the communities in which they live. We work together in the interests of asylum seekers and refugees and the communities that welcome them, to ensure that our resources are used to best effect and to speak with a coherent and strong voice on policies and practices affecting people seeking sanctuary in Wales.

Through collaborative work, the Coalition contributes to a more equal, globally responsible Wales with cohesive communities to make a Wales welcoming place of safety where rights are enjoyed and asylum seekers and refugees can thrive.

Objectives

- Sustain engagement with the Welsh Government, UK Government and public decision makers to ensure policies have a positive impact on the lives of asylum seekers and refugees and their integration in Welsh communities, exerting influence collaboratively, e.g. through joint position papers. Work to make Wales a Nation of Sanctuary through supporting the Nation of Sanctuary Sub-Group (NoSSG -see Appendix 1 below).
- Build capacity among coalition members to best support people seeking sanctuary and staff and volunteers engaged in this work (e.g. through workshops or information and updates on policy, practice and services).
- Undertake and/or facilitate projects, initiatives or events that:
 - Celebrate and promote the welcome and contribution of people seeking sanctuary
 - Promote understanding of asylum and refugee rights and issues
 - Enable asylum seeker and refugee voices to be heard

Membership

- Membership includes representatives from across Wales and includes both volunteers and staff members from a range of relevant groups and organisations.
- Membership is open to all those who are committed to welcoming people seeking sanctuary and supporting the achievement of cohesive communities. In the event of the full Coalition becoming too large to feasibly achieve its objectives, members will consider establishing a core Steering Group.
- Membership of sub-groups is open to all Coalition members, and any other member that the sub-group deems appropriate or necessary. Sub-groups will nominate a Chair who is a member of the full Coalition. The Chair is responsible for reporting back to the full Coalition meetings.

- To join, prospective members should contact the Secretary. Any party committed to welcoming people seeking sanctuary in Wales and supporting the achievement of cohesive communities will be allowed to join the Coalition, provided there are no reasonable objections from the rest of the Coalition.

Meetings

- The full Coalition meets quarterly, with dialling in facilities available to avoid unnecessary travel.
- Sub-groups meet as often as necessary, depending on their objectives, and report to full Coalition meetings on their activities via a nominated representative.
- The Coalition appoints a chair and secretary. The chair or their nominated deputy chairs Coalition meetings and represents the Coalition's position in public (see Communications below).
- Welsh Refugee Coalition meetings are part of the landscape of networks and fora in Wales which exist to address the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and host communities. The Welsh Refugee Coalition sends nominated, informed representatives to these meetings to represent collective views and expects feedback from them.

Ways of working

- We develop our position papers by consensus, often started by a collective discussion followed up by focused work of a sub-group, with opportunity for written input and comment from all on subsequent drafts. Member organisations are then consulted before their name is included in the final document.
- Preparations for projects and events such as the Sanctuary in the Senedd event are undertaken by a task group of volunteers appointed by the Coalition. A collective discussion and feedback after the events gives a steer for future events.
- We will ensure active engagement of people seeking sanctuary within the Coalition and all of its activities, projects and initiatives.

Communications

- The Coalition will encourage and facilitate more coordinated and coherent communication on refugee and asylum issues by:
 - Adding capacity to campaigns and media interventions on refugee and asylum issues that have particular strategic value
 - Convening the sector to discuss issues of mutual interest and to plan and act collectively where appropriate
 - Through establishing and managing platforms for sharing information, intelligence and ideas
- The Coalition's positions and voice depend on the collective views of its members on specific issues, which it communicates collaboratively to maximise impact. It also plans collectively how to influence key decision makers.
- Whilst member organisations may of course always represent their own point of view publicly the Coalition Chair is responsible for representing the Coalition in public and for lobbying and representational activity. Except in exceptional circumstances, the Chair should do this with input from Coalition members.
- Coalition members may express the collective view of the Coalition where it has been determined by collective work on position papers, including when they are nominated

to relevant committees, but they must do so as a representative of the whole Coalition, not just their own organisation.

- Sub-groups may be established to determine collective messages on particular issues. The nominated Chairs of sub-groups are responsible for communicating those messages on behalf of the whole sub-group. Members may express the collective view of the sub-group where it has been agreed by the whole sub-group, but they must do so as a representative of the sub-group, not just their own organisation.

Appendix 1: Nation of Sanctuary Sub-Group (NoSSG) Terms of Reference

Background

The Nation of Sanctuary Sub-Group (NoSSG) is a sub-group of the Welsh Refugee Coalition. The group emerged from the “Wales: Nation of Sanctuary” conference in Cardiff in April 2017. This event brought individuals, groups and organisations together to determine how the vision of a Wales where people seeking sanctuary are met with welcome, understanding and celebration of their contribution, wherever they go, can become a reality. The NoSSG is made up of volunteers and staff from a range of groups and organisations, and represents the different geographical areas of Wales and different sectors. The “Wales: Nation of Sanctuary” conference raised a number of issues and ideas that NoSSG wishes to progress. Taking the [summary report](#) of the conference as a starting point, there are four important themes that the NoSSG is planning to tackle in the future: Community, Personal Development, Voice and Access.

Aim

- To drive forward the Nation of Sanctuary vision, ensuring people at all levels, and particularly those seeking sanctuary, can be involved in making Wales a Nation of Sanctuary.

Objectives

- To maintain and nurture connections between groups across Wales, and provide opportunities for sharing best practice and ideas.
- To liaise with Welsh Government, local government and other public, third and private sector institutions to encourage tangible action that furthers the Nation of Sanctuary vision.
- To create a coherent and forward-looking strategy to tackle the themes of Community, Personal Development, Voice and Access.
- To act as an advisory body for the Wales: Nation of Sanctuary funded project, to be led by DPIA.

Membership

- At all times the membership of the NoSSG will include representatives from across Wales and will include both volunteers and staff members from a range of relevant groups and organisations.
- At any time, the NoSSG may choose to invite new members to join the sub-group to support a particular element of its work.
- Members agree to take on some actions from meetings to further the objectives of the NoSSG and progress these on behalf of the whole sub-group.

Governance

- NoSSG is a sub-group of the Welsh Refugee Coalition. Reports about NoSSG activity will be made at Coalition meetings by either the Chair or the Secretariat.
- The group meets around 6-8 times a year, depending on need.
- To facilitate access from across Wales, the group will normally meet by phone, except where the matter at hand requires face-to-face meetings.