



**Refugee &
Migrant
Justice**



2025

Impact Report

Together, We Made a Difference

While the work referred to below was completed while we were **RAMFEL (Refugee and Migrant Forum of Essex and London)**, we have now rebranded to **Refugee and Migrant Justice (RMJ)**. We refer to the organisation as RMJ throughout the report.



Glossary

Asylum-seeker – *A person who has submitted a claim for asylum in the UK, but not yet received a decision.*

Citizenship – *British citizenship, with all the rights and privileges afforded to British-born citizens.*

Family Reunion – *This is when one or more family members are in the UK and have been granted Refugee status, and then apply to have their remaining family members come to join them.*

ILR – Indefinite Leave to Remain – *Often used interchangeably with 'Settlement', this means the legal right to remain in the UK permanently. Conversely, 'Settlement' is more often used to refer to the status awarded to EU citizens, while ILR is used for all other applicants.*

LTR – Leave to Remain – *Permission to be in the UK for a period of time. 2.5 years is normally awarded for those on family/private life visas, but some routes – such as the Domestic Violence concession – vary.*

Refugee – *Any person fleeing war or persecution who has been granted asylum. According to UNHCR, the person does not need to be legally recognised to be deemed a refugee. However, for our purposes here, this means someone whom the Home Office has officially granted Refugee status, which allows for 5 years of leave to remain in the UK, along with the right to work, study, rent, and claim benefits.*

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Message from our CEO

In 2025 we saw the UK swing even further to the right on immigration and asylum. The government has taken more steps to deepen Theresa May's 'hostile environment', and the continued media frenzy and misinformation about 'small boats' and asylum accommodation has led to increased use of dehumanising and racist language in public and political life and helped elevate migration as the central focal point in British politics.

We are growing concerned with how this dehumanisation is helping to legitimise increasingly cruel and harmful policy as well as placing asylum seekers and refugees at risk, as seen with attacks on asylum hotels in 2025.

Regardless, Refugee and Migrant Justice is proud to continue to represent those in need, from families fleeing persecution who need to reunite with loved ones, to rough sleepers blocked from escaping the cycle of homelessness by their lack of immigration status.

Asylum accommodation has been the most divisive topic over the last year, with protests and riots outside several sites in the UK. There is a misconception that people awaiting a decision are living in luxury, while UK nationals struggle to make ends meet.

This is far from the reality. In most cases, Asylum accommodation is cramped, claustrophobic and bleak. Food is often inedible or insufficient and asylum support is so low, people awaiting a decision can barely afford basic local travel.

Furthermore, these hotels are run by a handful of private companies who pocket billions of pounds in public contracts, directly profiting from the suffering of asylum seekers.

2025 also saw the government announce a sudden end to the 'Family Reunion' route forcing us to submit 16 applications in only a few days that would each typically take several months to prepare. Whilst highly restrictive and rife with bureaucratic delays, family reunion was essentially the only safe route refugees could take to rebuild their lives in the UK.

These measures will likely cause confusion, fear and pain to families, that have been torn apart by conflict and persecution and could force more refugees (particularly children) to make life-threatening journeys to the UK, using unsafe irregular routes, because they believe the safe visa route is closed.

We have received higher numbers of visa refusals this year and therefore have a higher number of appeals. We are still often stretched to breaking point for capacity and forced to turn referrals away.

The immigration advice sector, along with Legal Aid and pro bono representation, have long been under pressure – but poor Home Office decisions, along with diminishing Legal Aid contracts and financial security, are leaving many people unrepresented at the initial application and appeal stages. Less than half of people applying for asylum receive representation. This leads to poor outcomes and delays. Legal aid is crumbling and urgent action is needed.

We believe everyone should have access to justice and representation. The immigration system is hard to navigate even for those of us who do it professionally; no one should be expected to try to do this alone.

We want to thank all funders and partners for their continued support, our staff for their dedication and hard work in a complex environment with ever-changing rules, but most importantly our clients for their perseverance.

**James Tullett,
CEO**



The Year in Numbers



610
people granted some form of
immigration status in the UK

189
people granted Indefinite
Leave to Remain (ILR)

346
people granted Leave to
Remain (LTR)

58
people granted British citizenship

21
family reunion applications
granted

10
refugee families safely
reunited in the UK



4190
people assisted

2198
clients and

1992
of their children and dependent
family members

of these

687
were rough sleeping
clients



3176
food parcels



711
applications submitted



102
asylum seekers or refugees
accessed improved
accommodation



97
appeal cases worked on

Some clients were supported on multiple matters, and for many clients we have submitted applications in 2025 but have yet to receive a decision from the Home Office.

Many of the outcomes from this year are from applications submitted in previous years. This year we have supported clients with more issues and for a longer period.

We are unfortunately operating within even more restrictive conditions, meaning cases take longer and require more complex work; as seen with the high volume of appeals.

We are nevertheless proud of the quality of our work, across all legal cases that are concluded, we have an almost 100% success-rate.

Client Impact Stories



RAMFEL's unwavering support, especially when they recognized the challenges I faced with trauma, mental health, and learning disabilities, made a profound difference in my life.

RMJ Client

“ I just wanted to say I am so grateful for the work you've done for me and my children and I thank you so much for your understanding. Because of you I am now able to work and provide for my children and you've given me a chance for a bright future. Thank you once again for your hard work and dedication to me and my children's wellbeing.

RMJ Client

“ Keep doing what you are doing as you are kind and compassionate and listen to other peoples concerns and try to bring some light into their darkness.

RMJ Client

“ The Council has provided me a shared accommodation after my ejection from my former placement... I have got a Work-Coach, who is now helping me to get a job asap and also improve educational skills. I can't stop thanking you every day. I do appreciate you always.

RMJ Client

“ I just wanted to say I am so grateful for the work you've done for me and my children and I thank you so much for your understanding. Because of you I am now able to work and provide for my children and you've given me a chance for a bright future. Thank you once again for your hard work and dedication to me and my children's wellbeing.

RMJ Client

“ I am the Executive Director at my charity. I am one of RAMFEL's success stories, this is what you assisting me to get my visa had led to, will always be grateful to you guys. My lived experience of immigration has also come in handy in the job.

RMJ Client

Advocacy & Campaigning

Migration continued to dominate political discourse in the UK. This can be seen with the increased normalisation of far-right talking points in mainstream politics, and disruption outside of asylum hotels around the country, with the threat of violence and rioting still palpable nationwide. In response to these developments, the hostile environment has become further entrenched. Organisations working with migrants and refugees have been targeted by the right-wing press, and the dehumanisation of people arriving on 'small boats' continues. Thankfully RMJ was not targeted directly, but we took precautions to protect staff and client's safety and privacy.

We have been working to provide a counter-narrative, and advocate for the rights of migrants and refugees but this has been more challenging than ever as the government proposes more punitive and self-defeating immigration and asylum systems. In addition to proposing to greatly increased settlement routes for almost all migrants who are not earning large salaries, the government suspended refugee family reunion, preventing recognised refugees safely reuniting with their loved ones.

These policies are not only cruel but drastically hinder migrants' ability to establish themselves in the UK, reach their potential and just get on with their lives. The irony is not lost that senior politicians are the first to bemoan a lack of integration but then go out of their way to make it much harder for people to integrate.

Despite this, RMJ continued to hold the government to account and loudly and proudly advocate for fairer, more humane and effective immigration laws, rules and procedures.

Impact Highlights



**Campaigning
Impact**



Campaign to End Asylum Hotels



Legal Impact



**Landmark Legal Victory on Digital
Immigration Status**



**Political
advocacy**



**Parliamentary Support for ILR Fee
Waivers**



**Sector
Leadership**



**Coordinating Sector Response to
Afghan Data Breach**



Campaign to End Asylum Hotels

Throughout 2025, we campaigned for an end to the use of asylum hotels in the UK.

We delivered a petition to 10 Downing Street signed by 550 supporters, calling for all asylum hotels to be closed.

We published our investigative report: "Profiting from People: Inside the UK's Asylum Hotels."

Impact:

This work helped bring greater public and political attention to the realities of the asylum hotel system.



Parliamentary Support for ILR Fee Waivers

Labour MP Kim Johnson tabled an Early Day Motion for RMJ calling for the introduction of a fee waiver for indefinite leave to remain applications for those on family/private life visas.

Impact:

We have completed significant outreach calling on MPs to sign the EDM, and to date 44 MPs from various parties have done so.



Landmark Victory on Digital Immigration Status

In 2024, we won a landmark High Court challenge against the UK government.

The court ruled that the government had acted unlawfully and irrationally by failing to provide digital proof-of-status to migrants during the period between visa renewals known as "3C leave."

Impact:

Almost all people we work with are now issued digital proof of their status while on 3C leave.



Coordinating Sector Response to Afghan Data Breach

Following news of a major Ministry of Defence data breach affecting Afghan nationals who supported UK efforts in Afghanistan, RMJ coordinated a sector-wide response.

We organised a joint letter calling on the government to expand family reunion provisions for Afghan nationals resettled under two now-closed humanitarian schemes.

Impact:

The letter was covered by The Independent. 50+ organisations signed on in support.

Political Advocacy

We have been building up our network of MPs that we regularly communicate with and who are willing to table PQ's, Early Day Motions and write directly to the Home Secretary to highlight problems and propose solutions. In total, 66 MPs supported our work in 2025, either by advocating on behalf of their constituents we represent or through questioning and challenging existing immigration rules, laws, practices and proposals.

NO WAY HOME?

It is time to remove management of immigration from the Home Office

RMJ also contributed to a report by Green Party MP, Carla Denyer, proposing that management of the UK's immigration system be removed from the Home Office's remit.

This report offers genuine, workable solutions that will make life easier for both the government body administering the UK's immigration system and the people whose lives are directly affected by this administration. We were delighted to support this by offering our expertise.

Key Media Moments

Our report *"Profiting from people: Inside the UK's Asylum Hotels"*, published in November 2025, received a lot of media coverage. The report highlights systemic failings with asylum accommodation, the stark difference between squalid conditions and media portrayals and how, through billions of pounds in government contracts, these hotels function as a for-profit system.

This report's release was featured in The Guardian and our Advocacy Officer and a member of our casework team wrote comment pieces in The Big Issue and Inside Housing respectively.





RMJ has continued to identify and highlight injustices through a combination of expert casework, investigative work and utilising parliamentary tools.

Investigative Impact

Refugees Unable to Apply for UK Visas

Through Freedom of Information requests and casework evidence, RMJ uncovered that refugees trapped in conflict zones were unable to apply for UK visas because visa centres had closed and the government refused to waive biometric enrolment requirements.

The investigation was first reported by The Guardian, bringing national attention to the barriers preventing refugees from accessing UK protection routes.

Home Office accused of 'blocking' people stuck in war zones from joining family in UK

FoI figures show Home Office apparently refusing to use biometrics waiver for people who have no way to submit them



☐ Palestinian children walk past the rubble of buildings in Gaza, where visa application centres have been forced to close by the conflict. Photograph: Mohammed Salem/Reuters

Home Office contractor collected data on UK citizens while checking migrants' finances

Official sent email to charity that suggested Home Office had data on 'hundreds of thousands of unsuspecting Britons'



☐ Equifax, whose headquarters are in Atlanta, Georgia, was behind a huge cybersecurity breach in 2017. Photograph: Mike Stewart/AP

Home Office Use of Equifax Data Checks

RMJ revealed serious concerns about the government's use of Equifax credit checks when assessing immigration fee waiver applications. These checks were collecting and storing personal data from unsuspecting third parties, including British citizens with no connection to the applicants.

Following national media coverage of the investigation, the government stopped contracting Equifax to carry out these checks, marking an important step toward protecting individuals' data rights.

Shaping the National Debate

Bell Hotel Coverage and Asylum Accommodation Debate

As the legal proceedings surrounding the Bell Hotel in Epping dominated national headlines, RMJ provided expert commentary across the media. We consistently called for the closure of asylum hotels, while strongly opposing the targeting of asylum accommodation by far-right groups.

RMJ was featured on: BBC Radio 5 Live, LBC, ITV News.

We were also quoted in major publications including The Big Issue and the Washington Post, helping ensure that the public conversation focused on policy failures rather than scapegoating migrants.



Expert Commentary



World Homelessness Day

To mark World Homelessness Day, RMJ casework manager Louisa Thomas published a comment article highlighting the intersection between restrictive immigration policies and rough sleeping.

Drawing on frontline casework experience, the article shed light on how immigration restrictions can push people into homelessness and housing insecurity.

Litigation

In a significant win, in 2024 the High Court ruled that the Secretary of State was behaving irrationally by refusing to provide people on Section 3C leave digital proof of their immigration status. This would allow people waiting for a decision on their visa renewal applications to continue working and renting without issue. Regrettably, the government decided to appeal this decision.

The Court of Appeal passed judgment in the section 3C litigation in November 2025 and unfortunately overturned the High Court's ruling. Whilst disappointing, the government is now essentially doing what we've long called for anyway, with people on 3C leave increasingly being issued digital proof of their status. This makes their decision to expend public money contesting the litigation all the more frustrating.

To aid individuals and practitioners, we published updated guidance on requesting digital proof of status when on 3C leave. Our guidance for employers on how to confirm a person on 3C leave's right to work has also been well received across the sector, and has assisted colleagues in successfully preventing clients from seeing work wrongly suspended/denied.

Throughout 2025, we have continued to provide expert testimony in legal challenges to oppressive immigration rules and policies:



- ➔ **We provided a witness statement supporting litigation challenging the government's decision to reinstate the 28-day move on period from asylum accommodation. They had, sensibly, increased this to 56 days and their decision to revert to this shorter period will undoubtedly see more people fall into destitution and rough sleeping.**
- ➔ **We also provided a witness statement supporting a challenge to the Home Office's ongoing failure to consider disabilities as part of their NRPF policy and decision-making.**
- ➔ **We provided 2 witness statements to support legal challenges focusing on the problems people on the 10-year route to settlement face when they accidentally apply late to extend their visas and are therefore immediately classed as so-called "immigration offenders".**
- ➔ **Finally, we provided a statement to support a challenge to the suspension of Family Reunion.**

Changes to the Asylum and Immigration systems

The UK government has announced radical plans to increase settlement routes for refugees and migrants. The proposed changes are complex and hugely significant. Put simply though, they mean that some people may live their entire adult lives with immigration status in the UK but never become a citizen.

Currently, once an asylum claim is granted and an individual obtains refugee status, they are entitled to apply for ILR after 5 years. These changes will mean that refugees will only be eligible for ILR after 20 years after renewing their leave every 30 months. Some people will therefore spend decades denied that right.

It risks creating second class citizens with limited rights and no safety net. This is dangerous ground that threatens core values of equality and fairness. If recent announcements come into fruition, 10-years will become the baseline number of years migrants must wait before obtaining ILR. Individuals who receive public funds whilst on a pathway to ILR, under the new rules, will only be eligible for ILR after 15 or 20-years. This means that many individuals may forego essential state support, including disability or statutory maternity pay, to avoid being punished with extended settlement routes.

These changes follow hot on the heels of the government's shameful decision in September 2025 to suspend refugee family reunion. For years, we've highlighted how restrictive family reunion rules are and called for the definition of "family member" to be extended beyond a western-centric concept of the nuclear family.

Such an expansion would recognise how conflict shapes family units and dynamics whilst creating an effective safe route for refugees in conflict zones such as Sudan, Gaza and Afghanistan to reunite with their loved ones in the UK. This would drastically reduce the need for people relying on alternative and dangerous routes to safety and family reunification.

This is some of the most harmful immigration policy in UK history and is likely to cause suffering and loss-of-rights at levels previously seen with Windrush, but with far more people impacted. This is a betrayal of the social contract migrants on these already arduous settlement routes signed up to.

The removal of these rights will create a two-tier system where many members of our communities, including key workers, friends and family members, will face decades with less rights than their neighbours. Most of those impacted will be racialised migrants and their British children.

These proposals will therefore exacerbate social and wealth inequality along racialised lines and will fundamentally harm the fabric of our society.



Refugees & Asylum-Seekers

While public discourse about the right to seek asylum reached fever pitch, we continued to support our refugee and asylum-seeking clients with everything from food parcels to Family Reunion applications. We saw huge demand for our services, and a lot of anxiety from clients about changes to the asylum system.

Our Legal Aid project, set up in 2023, has continued despite the Legal Aid billing system going down for more than 8 months. This system failure was the result of a data breach which led to the leak of thousands of clients' personal information. It meant Legal Aid practitioners, including ourselves, were unable to claim reimbursement from the Legal Aid Agency for work that should be government funded. We have not been paid for work completed over the last 7 months. Regardless, we continued to work on asylum cases and complex Family Reunion cases, both at the initial stage and before the First-Tier and Upper Tribunals of the Immigration and Asylum Chamber.

Many of our Legal Aid clients were referred for us to assist with their asylum appeals, which means that they were all unable to access Legal Aid representation for their initial applications before the Home Office, and are only getting the chance to properly present their asylum claims at the appeal stage. This lack of representation at the initial claim stage almost certainly leads to the Home Office refusing meritorious claims, not only creating a risk of miscarriages of justice but unnecessarily adding to the appeal backlog.



Challenges

The inhumane living conditions for asylum-seekers have continued, with the added pressure of riots and protests outside asylum hotels in particular. Clients are often living in cramped or shared rooms, without access to a kitchen to cook for themselves.

The backlog of asylum claims and delayed decision-making often leaves people in these conditions for years, unable to work and reliant on £49 per week for all of their needs.

→ **£49**
per week

If asylum is granted, refugees' circumstances often get worse before they get better. The government ended the pilot scheme of extended move-on period from 28 to 56 days in September 2025. At the time of writing it has been reinstated for people who are pregnant, aged over 65 or have children – everyone else still has 28 days to leave their accommodation, apply for financial support or secure work and find somewhere to live.

The people who have only 28 days are those we struggle to get accommodation for the most, with many becoming street homeless. One of the most challenging groups to find accommodation for is refugees under 35, because local housing allowance rates do not meet the cost of accommodation. Rates of street homelessness are very high among this group. Overall, there is a gap in support available for newly recognised refugees in that one-month window. It is the worst possible way for people to start their lives in the UK having finally been told they can stay.

In response to the government suspending Family Reunion with less than a week's notice, we submitted as many applications as we could before the deadline, as failure to do so would have prevented refugees from reuniting with partners and children stranded overseas.

Thanks to the tireless work of our casework teams, we submitted 16 applications in less than a week; whereas under typical circumstances each application would take several months to prepare. We are continuing to explore ways we can challenge the suspension through litigation.

The remaining visa route open for family members is designed for people already established in the UK, has very high financial requirement thresholds and is far more complex to navigate than the family reunion application process. We suspect that refugees applying under this route will receive more refusals and be forced to pursue more appeals, again adding to the appeal backlog.

This backlog is prolonging stress and anxiety for our clients, as well as causing more work for advisors. We are often waiting for over a year for the Family Reunion appeals we are working on to be heard by a judge, so are forced to update our evidence multiple times to ensure it is relevant.



The government's most recent set of changes to the asylum system, put forward in December 2025, will place huge pressure on the advice sector.

If the changes are put into practice, it will mean that once granted refugee status, the majority of refugees will have to re-apply every 30 months to renew their visas.



every
30
months

These changes will place unprecedented pressure on an already overstretched advice sector, and likely lead to many people being unrepresented. These lengthy settlement routes will of course harm peoples' ability to establish themselves in the UK, but will also lead to many people slipping in and out of immigration status due to a lack of available representation despite their home countries unquestionably remaining unsafe for them to return to.

Successes

We are proud that the team managed to submit 16 Family Reunion applications before the suspension came into effect on 4 September 2025, working late into the night to ensure our clients did not miss the window to apply.



10
families
safely reunited

21 Family Reunion applications granted

Despite the many challenges, our Legal Aid project is gaining momentum, and our team is confidently navigating the complex processes.

We also have a very strong partnership with both Islington and Camden councils, with our collaboration on immigration and family reunion leading to fantastic results.

We are particularly grateful for support workers attending Tribunal hearings as witnesses for very complex family reunion cases.



People supported



276

Asylum support cases handled



20

Education & employment support cases



203

Housing & homelessness support provided



224

Cash grants / essential items / SIM cards provided

Outcomes



102

People secured or improved accommodation*



67

Destitution grants or essential support items secured



47

People secured basic state support

**Once refugee status/Humanitarian Protection granted or whilst waiting for asylum claims to be processed*

Case Study

In September 2025, one day before the sudden suspension of the refugee family reunion route, we submitted an application for two children of a very vulnerable refugee in the UK.

The sponsor is a survivor of child abuse from her father and domestic abuse from her ex-husband. She was trafficked to the UK and exploited for the purpose of prostitution. She suffers from severe depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and she is highly mistrusting of authorities and legal representatives, given her past experiences.

With significant struggle, we were able to successfully submit a family reunion application for her two children before the suspension came into effect. Given the exceptional circumstances, we requested an expedition of the case which was indeed ultimately granted.

The children are due to arrive in the UK in the coming months. Had we waited just a few additional days, this family would have remained separated with potential serious harm to the sponsor's mental health and the children's basic development.

Rough Sleeping

Our work supporting Rough Sleepers is our biggest project. We continue to take referrals from 8 North Central and Northeast London boroughs, not just for clients who are street homeless but those at risk of homelessness, or in Temporary Accommodation funded by the Council.

We receive around 60 referrals a month, with no signs of the need slowing down whilst central government continues not to recognise the link between insecure immigration status and destitution.



Challenges

Despite significant MHCLG funding and the combined efforts of Councils, advice and outreach sectors, numbers of rough sleepers in London are still increasing.

We are seeing the Home Office refuse more leave to remain applications than ever. Punitive changes to the Immigration Rules and guidance will leave people who have experienced housing insecurity less likely to be able to regularise and retain their immigration status. As is the case under other projects, more refusals means more appeals, which often take years to resolve and absorb a lot of time and capacity whilst only worsening court backlogs.

As the migration debate continues to dominate the front pages, migrants and refugees are being used as political footballs rather than meaningfully considered as active members of society. The government's National Plan to End Homelessness, published in December 2025, is undermined with minimal reference to homeless migrants. Meanwhile, the government's sweeping plans to change the immigration and asylum systems continue to ignore the reality that Local Authorities have statutory duties to everyone living in their boroughs, regardless of whether or not they are entitled to mainstream support or housing.

Cuts in central government services intended to save money or be punitive towards migrants often end up in (heavily indebted) local councils picking up the pieces. There ultimately needs to be more genuine consultation and joined up thinking from central government. MHCLG is funding work to prevent rough sleeping and Home Office policy is putting people on to the streets. This government must ensure its departments are working towards a shared goal to end rough sleeping

Successes

We continue to see vulnerable EU citizens eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme who have not yet applied, 5 years on from the deadline. Thankfully we have yet to receive a refusal on the basis of the application being submitted late.

We work closely with incredible frontline organisations like Mulberry Junction, The Welcome Centre and All People All Places who support rough sleepers and work to get people off the streets and into accommodation.



We collectively made strides in recent years towards making provisions for rough sleepers with insecure status, not least the creation of Home Office Escalation Services which sits within the Homelessness department and the Reconsideration route for refusals that has reduced the need for unnecessary and time-consuming appeals when an initial refusal decision is obviously wrong.

Even when the reconsideration route does not work, we have a very successful track record of overturning refusals at appeal stage.

Outcomes



358

clients assessed



110

rough sleepers granted ILR



54

rough sleepers granted LTR

Case Study

A vulnerable Lithuanian client was referred to us in February 2025. He had been admitted to hospital for TB. We struggled to contact him initially but worked with the NHS Outreach team who had referred him to connect and eventually got through to him.



We knew it would be a struggle to prove the client's time spent living in the UK as he had no bank account, had been working informally, and had spent around 4 years of his time in the UK homeless. He did not know about the EU Settlement Scheme but wanted to regularise his status in order to find stable employment and accommodation.

We spent 2 months gathering evidence before submitting the application and escalating it to the EUSS Vulnerabilities team. There was then a struggle to get the Lithuanian embassy to confirm the client's identity, which involved weeks of back-and-forth. Eventually the Home Office granted Settled Status.

The client is now eligible for mainstream support and starting to rebuild his life. Without our intervention, he would almost certainly still be sleeping rough.

Immigration and Fee-Paying Project

As is the case in our RAS project, demand has been very high for our immigration casework service. The re-opening of our project funded by the National Lottery, which is not restricted by borough, has highlighted the huge need for specialist legal advice and representation, particularly for families who are unable to afford private solicitors fees.

Not only are we receiving high numbers of referrals, but clients are often in acutely vulnerable situations and dealing with significant trauma. As is so often the case, unfortunately we are not able to accept every referral due to capacity.

This is frustrating for referrers, for us at RMJ, and most importantly for the people who are in desperate need of support to retain and regularise their immigration status.

Our work supporting people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) continues, with referrals from the British Red Cross and Social Services from various councils.

We are seeing an increasing number of referrals from Adult Social Care, with older people who have been living independently and under the radar for many years and have now been picked up by support services due to ill-health or advancing years. These clients are often particularly vulnerable and have mental health conditions. We represent them to regularise their status and access the support they need as quickly as possible.

We have also launched a project supporting people affected by the Windrush scandal to formally document their status and the rights they are entitled to. This project is funded by Action for Race Equality.

In 2025 we began a small project supporting migrants living with HIV. The project was designed to ensure that in obtaining or improving their immigration status, clients would be empowered to improve their financial situation and better engage with HIV care or treatment or avoid being returned to countries where their care and health may be jeopardised.



Whilst this project faced funding limitations and limits on how many cases we could support (most referrals were complex asylum cases), this has provided the basis for greater partnership with HIV specialist organisations and the wider health focused third sector.

Challenges

As with our other projects, the Home Office is again refusing an increasing number of applications. We challenge refusals at appeal, and have been very successful at this, but the process is time and resource intensive. The appeals backlog wastes time on all sides.

The most recent proposed changes to settlement are discussed above but will significantly impact many of our clients' short and long-term prospects in the UK. We are particularly concerned about our clients who have children.

Parents will face the choice between accessing basic state support to support themselves and their families and being punished with an extended qualifying period before becoming eligible for permanent immigration status. This will unquestionably harm affected children's life chances.

Successes

With this project we have enabled more migrants to receive accurate, timely legal advice. We assisted several clients who had missed their deadlines to submit their visa renewal applications – often through no fault of their own – leaving them as overstayers and facing destitution. With our assistance under this project we were able to reinstate their immigration status and entitlements.

Furthermore, we have encountered clients who have received incorrect advice from unregulated providers which has led to them submitting incorrect or invalid applications. Our project has hopefully reduced reliance on such unregulated advisors.

We are grateful for our strong relationships with Garden Court Chambers, Richmond Chambers and Social Workers Without Borders, who have supported us to get positive results for our clients' appeals.

The Social Services and support teams we work with have also been integral, working to provide as much evidence as possible for our shared clients' immigration applications.





Case Study

Our client, Amina, came to the UK in 2024 from Bangladesh to join her British husband and soon became pregnant. However shortly after arriving, Amina's husband began to show signs of violence and aggression. It soon also became clear that Amina's husband had drug and alcohol issues, which would often exacerbate the situation.



Things became even worse after Amina gave birth. Her husband became more violent, including threatening to kill her. Recognising the danger she was in, Amina was able to flee and get support from her local social services team, who referred her to us via the British Red Cross Essex.

We secured Amina temporary immigration status and access to basic state support via the Migrant Victim of Domestic Abuse Concession, which ensures she can support herself and her child. We will soon be applying for Amina to be granted indefinite leave to remain.

Amina came to us totally isolated, with no local friends/family, income or ability to speak English. By obtaining ILR, Amina will have the legal status needed to rebuild her life. This will ensure Amina and her family are able to live safer happier lives.

Fee paying project

We run a low-fee paying project to support people that already have status but need to renew their leave to remain or want to apply for citizenship for them or their children. These clients come to RAMFEL when they are unable to afford representation from a private firm. They are often working in the NHS and Care sectors, receive some form of public support to make ends meet, and need a fee waiver to be apply to renew their status; or are forced to borrow funds in order to apply for settlement as there is still no fee waiver option for ILR.

We supported a total of 358 clients under this project in 2025 (671 including dependents). This includes ongoing cases and new clients. 72% of clients under this project are women (258 of 358). The most common nationality is Nigerian, though we worked with clients from 51 different countries of origin.

We also began a project this year supporting other organisations to start their own fee charging service. We know there is high demand for good quality, low-cost legal advice and charities are well placed to deliver a significant chunk of this. The project aims to start new services that will be sustainable for years to come.

Successes



37

people granted
British citizenship



252

people granted leave to
remain



74

people granted
settlement or ILR



1019

instances of eVisa problem
resolution

Food Bank

On Thursdays we run a food bank and drop-in advice service in Ilford. The food bank is open to asylum-seekers, people without immigration status, and those who have the NRPF condition attached to their leave. We regularly see around 60 clients per week; some are regular attendees, and some coming for the first time or to access advice.

Our RAS advice service is always in very high demand, partly because the team offers holistic support.



Impact Highlights



3176

food parcels

to



377

families



410

families assisted with either food parcels or our food vouchers



With Gratitude To

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Refugee & Migrant Justice



Website: www.rmjustice.org.uk
Instagram: @rmjustice_uk
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Registered Charity Number: 1155207
Immigration Advice Authority registration: F201601016

