



ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON
**No Recourse to Public
Funds**

APPG NRPF AGM & Event: "I have the right to feel safe": Going to School in a Hostile Environment.

**26th March 2020, 1.30-2.30pm
Committee Room 17, House of Lords**

Attendees

Name

Kate Osamor MP (Chair)
Naz Shah (Vice Chair)
Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Officer)
Stacey Lamb (Secretariat)
Imogen Richmond-Bishop (Secretariat)
Eve Dickson (Secretariat)
Gracie Bradley (event co-host)
Dami Makinde (Speaker)
Isatu, Amina, Suzanne and Titi (Speakers)
Tamya Bustamante & group members
Erin

Organisation/Party

MP Edmonton/Labour (Co-op)
MP Bradford West (Labour)
MP Brighton Kemptown & Peacehaven/Labour (Co-op)
Just Fair
Just Fair
Project 17
Liberty
We Belong
Brighter Futures
Sin Fronteras, LAWRS
Each Other

Apologies

Laurence Robertson (Vice Chair) MP Tewkesbury/Conservative
Chris Stephens (Vice Chair) MP Glasgow south West/Scottish National Party

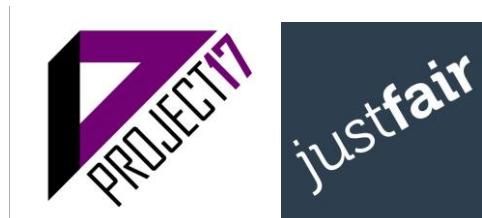
AGM

The AGM of the APPG on No Recourse to Public Funds was held and officers were elected.

Event details

In partnership with Liberty, the APPG on No Recourse to Public Funds and the APPG on Migration hosted **"I have the right to feel safe": Going to School in a Hostile Environment.**

The event explored children and young people's experiences of the hostile environment through the lens of the school day, creating an important opportunity to hear from young people who are navigating the immigration system, and the campaigning they are doing to change it for the better and secure their rights





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Welcome from Chair

Thanks to Project 17 and Just Fair for providing the Secretariat to this APPG.

Thanks to Liberty for co-hosting this event.

Thanks to Speakers from Brighter Futures, to Dami Makinde and Sin Fronteras.

It is through the voices of those most affected that this group and forum can inform MPs of what it is really like to have no recourse to public funds. This APPG provides a safe platform for views that are silenced, to be valued, where we can consider current legislation and what needs to change.

1. Gracie Bradley (Liberty)

Thanks to co-hosts Project 17 and Just Fair. NGOs often work in silos, which is why Liberty felt it important to co-host this event with partners.

Liberty is asking for the Department of Education to withdraw from their MoU with the Home Office, which provides for children's school records, and specifically addresses, to be shared with the Home Office for immigration enforcement purposes, without children and families' consent.

Liberty is committed to preventing school records being accessed/shared with the Home Office, which can lead to immigration enforcement, and is campaigning to stop schools recording details of where individual students are from.

The Department of Education has student information with the Home Office on 1500 occasions, without parents' knowledge or consent.

Individuals with NRPF are excluded from the public safety net, with the Government providing help for children only when they are 'in care'.

Citizenship fees can be £1,000 (excluding immigration fees relating to the 10-year track). A court ruling has recently found this to be unlawful.

Ask: Join liberty in listening to young people and supporting them, by supporting our ["Care Don't Share" Pledge](#).

2. Dami Makinde (We Belong)

We Belong fights for young migrants who have been living in the UK but are trapped in the UK system when they reach their teens.





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The reality of the 10-year settlement system, means being 'here' but not being a citizen. You feel as if you are on probation, that you are being constantly analysed and could be arrested and deported at any time. It feels never ending, and the strain on your mental health and wellbeing is constant.

In the 10-year settlement system, Immigration fees and surcharges to maintain status are applied every 30 months, as well as the fees of immigration lawyers. This means constant saving for renewals.

For young people, the school system/environment protects you to a certain extent. When you turn 18 you no longer have that protection and self harm is common.

We Belong has created a leadership programme to support young people, helping them to overcome challenges and build resilience. However, Government needs to implement change.

EU Citizens have a five-year track. We are only asking for the same.

3. Brighter Futures

Brighter Futures is a group supporting (and facilitating peer support) for young migrants. We meet weekly to support one another and campaign.

Being undocumented is dangerous. You have no right to mental health support, housing support and no right to the public safety net.

We all refer to 'public funds', by excluding us, the Government is saying that we are not members of the public. Young people and young children are being excluded for free school meals. When you are trying to survive, education is secondary.

We ask the Government to allow those currently with NRPF, to access training, apprenticeships and to recognise our place as a member of the British public. When you are young you have high hopes, but you have no rights, you must stay home. You want to be better and dream, but you can't because you have no way of accessing the training and further education that you need to do so.

When you cannot follow your dreams or improve yourself and your skills, you become isolated. You become scared of relationships, scared to make friends, scared of being judged. It becomes difficult to be with friends at all.

Despite being over 18, we cannot make decisions. You see your friends from school studying, whilst you fear becoming homeless. We are refused help from the council, and it was suggested to go to the park to sleep in the hope that a member of the council's team would register them at the Park, in which case they would be able to provide some assistance.

We ask to be treated as people and not statistics.





4. Sin Fronteras

Sin Fronteras is part of LAWRS, an organisation that supports over 4000 women and girls. The group is for 14-21 year olds and we work through empowerment, celebrating culture, feminism and encouraging peer support.

When trying to access online help with resources and guidance written in their native language, many women are falling victim to unregulated websites that charge exorbitant amounts, taking advantage of their desperation for information and support.

Due to the stigma and violent attacks, women from South America have often said they were Portuguese, due to fear. Many of the young people in our group are afraid to speak in their native languages on public transport after a woman was attacked for doing so.

Questions

Erin (Each Other): Does Kate have any comments on the plans to implement a point-based immigration system?

Kate: There has been an increase in deportation. We must ensure that immigration detention centres have activists nearby, and that they are able to connect. We need to make sure individuals being held in detention centres and/or being deported, are recognised as human beings by decision makers, not statistics. To do so, we need to show who they are and hear the voices of those that will miss them. Rights are being denied. Individual within this system are being brave, Parliamentarians need to be brave too.

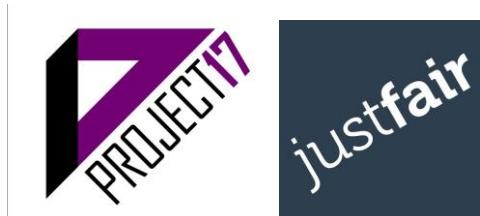
Ami Forbes (Barnardo's): How can Barnardo's and large organisations work with more grassroots groups and share expertise, without 'railroading'. (follow up with Secretariat)

Isatu (Brighter Futures): People don't know what help is out there. We hear that we can apply for help, but we don't know where to or how to access groups like Brighter Futures. We must raise awareness and how do we do that?

Group discussion and answered by peers with lived experience of NRPF: We need to make sure services such as GPs and pastors are educated on this issue and are aware of Brighter Futures and Praxis etc.

However, for victims of trafficking, they do not have access to a GP or church support.

Catherine (ECPAT): Child guardian scheme was announced five years and has only been rolled out in one third of local authorities. This Government says it is against Modern Day Slavery but won't let children enter the UK from Calais.





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Sin Fronteras: We all have the right to live happily and safely without fear of domestic abuse. Having NRPF removes that right as you don't have the same access to services and don't have the same protections. You are more fearful of approaching services, as you have been turned away by services within the system in the past. **What can we do to encourage and support women to come forward?**

Kate: The new Domestic Abuse Bill and amendments are an important opportunity. We must ensure safe reporting for all women, irrespective of NRPF. This voice needs to be heard within the larger women's voice. (Ami added that Barnardo's recent report has supported safe reporting irrespective of immigration status).

Felicia (UN Refugee Agency): **Women don't disclose issues, how should we approach women to provide help and support?**

Group discussion: Patience and perseverance. One day you will ask the right question, or the same question at the right time and you will connect. Show you care and be patient.

Dami: **What do you [parliamentarians] say to young people that don't feel safe. If individuals affected by Windrush aren't safe, then what protection could they possibly expect? How can we feel safe and that we belong?**

Kate: This highlights that there is no humanity in policies being laid. I will be taking your concerns forward and making sure they are heard.

Deborah, NELMA: **Free school meals is an issue for children with NRPF. I live in Enfield, where my son goes to school. Enfield do not provide free school meals to all children, like some other local authorities do, for example Islington. Are all children going to have free school meals in Enfield?**

Kate: I'd like to see free school meals for all children. MPs cannot set local authority policies. It's an issue of local authority budgets. Are you asking me to write to Enfield to ask them?

Kofo, Project 17: Me and my son we went through a lot. We were facing homelessness. Things are better now. Project 17 are my family and they have always been there. Kate is wonderful. I now work here, in the Houses of Parliament.

Session ended with a reading from Brighter Futures, "Who is this poem for?".

