**Sanctuary in Parliament 2017: Follow Up Email/Letters**

*There are two proposed follow-up texts below. One is for use if your MP attended this year’s Sanctuary in Parliament event; the other is for use if they did not attend. If you use either text, please also make sure to attach the Sanctuary in Parliament policy briefing (*[*which can be found here*](https://cityofsanctuary.org/2017/10/13/sanctuary-in-parliament-2017/)*) as it is referenced in the text.*

**1. DRAFT FOLLOW-UP TEXT: MP ATTENDED**

Title: **Sanctuary in Parliament 2017 – Parliamentary Question Request**

Dear **XXXXX XXXXX** MP

I am writing to thank you on behalf of **[NAME OF LOCAL GROUP]** for attending this year’s Sanctuary in Parliament event and for taking the time to discuss the issue of destitution amongst refugees and asylum seekers.

**[INSERT PARAGRAPH HERE BASED ON YOUR DISCUSSION WITH THE MP]**

For people seeking protection in the UK the risk of falling into poverty or homelessness is very real. After fleeing war, torture and persecution in their countries of origin, many face on-going hardships in the UK.

We are campaigning for three practical policy changes that would make a meaningful improvement in the lives of refugees and those seeking asylum in the UK. They are:

1.      Permission to work for all people seeking asylum who have been waiting for more than six months for a decision on their case.

2.      Asylum support should be raised from its current level to at least 70% of mainstream income support.

3.      The ‘move on’ period for new refugees should be extended from 28 to 50 days - reflecting a more reasonable timeframe for refugees to access accommodation and financial support.

I have attached a full policy briefing on destitution and how the Government could begin to tackle it.

**As a follow-up to our discussion, I would like to request that you table one of the related questions below for answer by the Home Office.** Ideally this would be tabled as an oral question for the next Home Office Oral Questions session on Monday 8 January 2018. The tabling deadline for that session is 12.30pm on Thursday 21 December.

* If she will make it her Department’s policy to grant asylum applicants who have been waiting for longer than six months for a decision on their application permission to work without the Shortage Occupation list restrictions?
* How many asylum applicants have been granted permission to work in the last twelve months?
* What assessment her Department has made of whether the period given to newly recognised refugees to transition from asylum support to other forms of support is adequate?
* If she will increase the period refugees continue to receive asylum support after receiving a positive decision on their asylum application to 50 days?
* What plans she has to increase the levels of financial support given to people seeking asylum?
* What assessment has been done of the impact of living on £36.95 per week on the physical and mental well-being of people seeking asylum who have been waiting on a decision for prolonged periods of time /or for more than 6 months?
* What steps she is taking to ensure that people seeking asylum and refugees do not experience destitution?

If you would like further information or to discuss any of the above then please contact **[????]**

Best wishes,

**1. DRAFT FOLLOW-UP TEXT: MP DID NOT ATTEND**

Title: **Sanctuary in Parliament 2017 – Parliamentary Question Request**

Dear **XXXXX XXXXX** MP

This year’s [Sanctuary in Parliament event](https://cityofsanctuary.org/2017/10/13/sanctuary-in-parliament-2017/) saw more than 100 refugees, asylum seekers, local activists, MPs and Peers gather to discuss the issue of destitution amongst refugees and asylum seekers.

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Best wishes,