**How to talk about new asylum sites in the UK**

A Messaging Guide

This guide is for spokespeople who talk about migration issues in the media. As the Tory government pushes forward with new camp-style asylum accommodation around the UK, we need to challenge the failures and dangers of this approach with our messaging. With new immigration laws coming into force, we will swiftly see people seeking asylum being housed in unsuitable conditions. As local communities begin to oppose new sites in their areas for the first time, our support, vision and leadership is needed. It is vital that our narratives are focused and proactive, so that we can add to mounting public pressure and opposition to these sites. These are suggested messages to avoid negative frames that play into our opponents’ arguments and reinforce xenophobic narratives. They are messages that tell a compelling story of how we got here and what we advocate for.

### WORDS THAT WORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Embrace</th>
<th>Replace</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People seeking asylum</td>
<td>Asylum seekers</td>
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<tr>
<td>People who have come to seek safety and rebuild their lives in our communities</td>
<td>Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Talk about people with identities and agency.]</td>
<td>[Move away from simplistic labels that create an ‘us and them’ dynamic and erase people’s humanities.]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safe and accessible routes</td>
<td>Safe and legal routes</td>
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Safer ways

[Talk about safe ways to move that are available to everyone.]

If you ask anyone in my community, they...

People up and down the country across race, class and party...

Local authorities across the UK.../

will tell you that they reject these unsuitable and inhumane sites for people seeking asylum being forced into their communities.

People living in the village of Wethersfield in Essex are angry and concerned for the safety and well-being of people seeking asylum who will be forced to live in RAF bases that are remote, unsafe and unsanitary.

Communities up and down the UK condemn people being forced to stay in accommodation that is unsafe, in poor condition and so remote it isolates people from community and support networks.

This government is steamrolling over what local people want - which is an asylum system that treats people with care and respect, rather than imprisoning them.

[Unite people based on a shared value around care and empathy. Talk about people rejecting this government’s proposals.]

Barges like the Bibby Stockton that this government wants to force

[Using the word “legal” makes people think about “illegal migrants” and people as criminals.]

These new centres have been dumped on local communities

These accommodations for asylum seekers are a burden on our communities

We don’t want these sites in our backyard

[Avoid negative frames like “burden” and “dumped”, as they feed our opponents’ narrative that people seeking asylum are a strain on our resources.]
through in Dorset are essentially floating cages where people will only be allowed out for a small amount of time, isolated from community and support networks.

Abandoned RAF bases where military personnel currently live are unsuitable for people who are fleeing war.

These places are dangerous for people to live in, they range from being rat infested and unhygienic, to having poor structural conditions. All are run by private companies who have been hired by this government.

Just this year, we mourned the death of people who were killed by a deadly disease outbreak at Manston Centre caused by the poor living conditions this government forced them to live in.

[Spell out what these places are, describe them with words that convey how inhumane and unfit for living they are. Name specific types of places and even the locations they will be to bring your message to life. Use real-life examples to show people what these places are really like.]

This government consistently shows us that it can't be trusted with our immigration and asylum systems and processes. It has proposed plans that range from careless to outright cruel.

[Point the finger of blame at this government and specific MPs who are responsible for our hostile and inhumane immigration system. This shows people that we got here by choices and, therefore, different choices can be made.]

This government has shut down safe routes for people to claim asylum -

Asylum accommodation

[These terms can sound soft and hide the true horror of these places. When you say these words, make sure you explain what they really are.]

Our immigration system is broken

[Always talk about who is responsible. Statements like this can feed fatalism as they don't explain how we got here or who is responsible for changing things.]

This government needs to fix the backlog
it has introduced so many loops and hurdles that people's applications are not being processed as smoothly as they could be, or even at all.

We need to come together to demand that this government strips our asylum system back to basics, and that starts with reintroducing the safe routes that have been removed and repealing this government's cruel Refugee Ban laws.

[Show that the stress of the system has been manufactured by this government's mismanagement of the immigration system.]

People move and will always move, so having an immigration system that is compassionate and provides safe routes is as essential as the NHS, the welfare system and parental leave. It’s a public service that needs investment and adequate funding for it to work well for everyone.

[Talk about our immigration system as an integral service that needs to be funded.]

["The backlog" is a piece of jargon that doesn't explain the actual problems with the system. It also feeds the idea that the problem is that there are a high number of applications to process efficiently.]

It is most cost-effective to process claims

This policy proposal is a waste of money

[We want to win people's hearts and minds and make the case for a compassionate system, not a cheap system.]

RESOURCES

➔ **How to talk about Offshore Detention Centres**
   NEON

➔ **How to talk about Channel Crossings**
   NEON

➔ **How to talk about Manston Migration Centre Scandal**
   NEON