

LIVERPOOL'S
**GOOD
FOOD
PLAN**

All-Party Parliamentary Group inquiry into ending the need for foodbanks

Feeding Liverpool submission on behalf of
foodbank users in Liverpool



**Feeding
Liverpool**

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1. About this submission

Feeding Liverpool is the city of Liverpool's food alliance, connecting and equipping people and organisations to work towards good food for all.

This submission contains:

- A table of responses received from 52 people using Trussell Trust foodbanks to three of the questions asked in the inquiry – these were gathered by foodbank volunteers in Trussell Trust foodbank centres in June 2022 for the purpose of this inquiry
- Quotations from an anonymous feedback wall in St Andrews church, Clubmoor from foodbank users
- Nine stories from people using foodbanks (from a range of Trussell Trust and independent foodbanks) gathered in 2021 as part of Liverpool's Good Food Plan
- A story submitted anonymously via Feeding Liverpool's website by someone who felt embarrassed using a foodbank
- A detailed case study provided by Asylum Link Merseyside

This report has been compiled by Dr Naomi Maynard, Good Food Programme Director and Colin Pryor, Development Worker at Feeding Liverpool. Feeding Liverpool would be happy to provide oral evidence in September and October if required.

Feeding Liverpool have also coordinated two further submissions: a submission on behalf of 20 organisations in the city from the voluntary and public sector, and a submission from the Good Food Community Advocacy and Policy Group. These will be submitted separately.

Liverpool City Council are making their own submission to this inquiry.

2. Submission from 52 people using a Trussell Trust foodbank in June 2022

The table below contains information provided by 52 people who used a Trussell Trust foodbank in Liverpool during June 2022 in response to three of the inquiries' questions. Foodbank volunteers supported the collection of this information.

There were a range of reasons why people were at the foodbanks. These included 'low income': households being consistently unable to make ends meet, with the rising cost of food and fuel cited by some as particular triggering factors. Over the last year, 'low income' has been the most common reason for foodbank use across the Trussell Trust foodbank networks in Liverpool. Some foodbank users identified specific trigger points as to why they needed to visit the foodbank today, such as needing to pay for a funeral, being made unemployed, being recently released from prison, having to pay for a trip to a hospital, or unexpectedly having benefit payments delayed or sanctioned. Others reported ongoing factors, such as income from employment or benefits now routinely not covering household expenditure, or being in debt.

They identified a range of changes needed to prevent them from needing to use a foodbank - some were related to personal circumstances (e.g. a desire to improve their budgeting skills), others referred to the need for structural/systematic changes, for example to the benefits systems, or a need for improved wages and fairer employment conditions. Many call for the impact of the cost of living crisis on household budgets to be addressed.

Each person that visited the foodbank was asked if they would have preferred a pre-packed food parcel, cash grant or to have been able to choose the food themselves. 20 said they preferred pre-packed foodbank parcels, 17 favoured cash grant and 17 would have liked to choose the food for themselves. Some indicated they would be happy with multiple options and therefore have been counted in more than one category. Sadly we did not manage to gain many insights into why they choose these preferred choices; those who did offer a reason typically indicated that dietary requirements are an important consideration making either choosing food for your household or a cash grant for some preferable to a pre-packed food parcel.

	1. What has led you to the foodbank today?	2. What one change needs to happen, to make sure you don't need to use a foodbank again?	3. Which of these options would you have preferred today and why? Pre-packed food parcel , cash grant, or choose food yourself at the foodbank.
1	Universal Credit has been sanctioned, due to a missed appointment because of suffering from depression.	Client needs to be employed. There needs to be better communication between the Universal Credit team and their clients, preferably face-to face meetings.	Choose your own food as client has food and drink preferences
2	There has been a break in benefits during the transition from Employment and Support Allowance to Universal Credit, they haven't been paid on time so do not have enough money.	Client wants to improve their budgeting skills	Pre-packed food parcel
3	Personal Independent Payment has not been paid	Save some money to have as an emergency backup	Cash grant
4	The client is on a zero-hour contract, they weren't given any shifts, meaning a reduced wage	Better working terms and conditions	Choose your own food
5	The money received via benefits is not enough to cover bills and living costs	Benefit amount to increase	Prepacked food parcel
6	Has no food or money	Having a job, food to be cheaper, gas and electric to be cheaper	Choose your own food
7	Benefits are £533 for 8 people which does not cover our expenses, the client also has to pay for their father's funeral.	Stop the benefit cap	Cash
8	Short on money	Benefits need to cover monthly living costs	Pre-packed food parcel
9	Lack of money	Get some help with budgeting/ get money from other agencies	Chose my own food

10	Lack of money – this client is on the state pension	Bit more money in the pension	Prepacked food parcel
11	Struggling financially - amount not covering household outgoings	Need to budget money better- Not doing so good due to mental health issues	Prepacked food parcel
12	Need help with benefits	Stop messing around with benefits system	Not answered
13	Both mine and my partners benefits has been stopped	Lower energy and food costs	Cash grant
14	Benefit not paid	The cap on Universal Credit is madness	Choose your own food
15	Benefit not paid	More job opportunities	Choose your own food
16	Not answered	Benefit cuts	Cash grant as son is autistic and only eats certain foods
17	Not entitled to benefits and has used up saving	Not answered	Prepacked food parcel
18	Low income and fuel prices	Better fuel prices – at the moment choice is heat or eat	Choose food myself
19	Off work due to personal reason	Not answered	Choose food myself
20	Delays in benefits	Change the prime minister	Cash
21	Many problems	The job centre being more flexible	Prepacked
22	Increased energy bills	Get rid of the Tories	Pre-Packed food
23	Lost job	Get another job	Prepacked
24	Not answered	Better organisation from Universal credit	Cash grant
25	Delays in benefits	Change prime minister	Cash grant
26	Loss of job	Increase benefits	Cash grant
27	Lack of food	Find a job	Prepacked food
28	Benefit sanctions	Overhaul of the system	Cash Grant
29	High costs of living	Lower cost of living	Choose Food
30	Debt	Manage me debts better	Choose Food
31	Used money for bus fare to hospital	Help with energy bills	Prepacked

32	Lives with one child and is paying the 'bedroom tax' £250 a month doesn't have enough to save		
33	Shortage of food		Choose food
34	Lack of benefits and assistance provided to disabled people specifically and all people generally. It really feels that the tory government specifically want to make working class poorer whilst they get richer and richer	Better benefits and assistance from the government, better funding for the public sector. And Boris Johnson out - he's a criminal by law.	Prepacked food parcel, as its easier for me to carry due to my mobility. A cash grant - would have been helpful as I would have been able to get lactose free products which people don't tend to donate.
35	I ran out of food, and I don't get my Universal Credit payment for 5 days	More employment nationwide	Choose yourself - because I could get what I think will last me till I have funds again.
36	Ran out of food and I'm a diabetic	More money	Cash grant - I'm a diabetic and a fussy eater
37	Released from prison	Job	Any of the three, I am happy for the help
38	Ran out of food because of low income	More money	Cash grant - I'm a fussy eater
39	In between jobs	Remain in fulltime work change of government	Cash grant
40	No money for food		Cash grant - would make things easier
41	Cost of living increase		Choose food yourself
42	Waiting for Universal Credit payment	Government increases Universal Credit payment	Cash grant or choose food at foodbank
43	Because I am unemployed and without public funds permit, also I am looking for job	To get a job	Prepacked food because you put balanced essentials and nutritious food
44	Need help because of money worries	To have more help financially	Prepacked food
45	Not answered	More money	Prepacked parcel - would be more helpful
46	Having a heart attack and losing my job	Better plans from government	Choose food yourself at foodbank

47	Shortage	Money	Prepacked food
48	Universal Credit sanction for six weeks	The £100 top up has affected me clearly	Cash grant or prepacked food
49	Not answered	Getting the correct benefits	Cash grant
50	Work	Not answered	Cash grant – maybe with fuel poverty vouchers for gas and or electric
51	Work – supporting my client		Happy for prepacked or choose food yourself
52	Work – supporting client	Budgeting benefits as weekly pay	Prepacked – yes quick and easier choose own food – yes choose things to make fresher meals

3. Anonymous feedback left by people using the foodbank at St Andrews Church, Clubmoor

“This is a friendly, clean place. Staff very helpful and do not judge. They are understanding staff who understand that people struggle and go out of their way to help”

“You see I pay all my bills on time, which leaves me very short for food and energy. I need this help”

“What a wonderful thing these lovely ladies are doing for our community. I walked in sad], walked out feeling better. Thank you”

“I’ve run short of money and food – everything has gone up!”

“I had to come because my bills are so high and had to put extra on my electricity meter”

“There’s a delay in benefits”

4. Nine stories from people using foodbanks written in 2021 as part of Liverpool's Good Food Plan

John Paul, care leaver, Merseyside Youth Association foodbank

I left care when I was 17, I'm 24 now. I've been living on my own or in hostels ever since in and out of work.

This last year's been hard, I started working in January for an agency and after two weeks they had to let me go because of my asthma, the only role they had available was all in COVID wards in the hospital, and because of my asthma they couldn't put me there, so they had to cancel the contract.

When I started working I was buying higher quality ingredients and everything, so I can actually cook my meals from scratch rather than getting them frozen. I can make my own pizzas and everything but then obviously that ended and it's kind of gone back to the usual frozen ready meals.

I think what's needed is to either make foods more cost effective or for an increase in Universal Credit, which I know that they have been doing since the start- April last year, but a permanent increase if you get me.

Cheryl, Micah Liverpool foodbank

I'm Cheryl, I'm 51 and I have two daughters and four granddaughters.

I was a nurse a few years ago, but I worked as a cleaner before the pandemic. Before Covid I got some temporary work, but then it just fell on its face. I was just doing some cleaning to fill gaps but that fizzled out and we were back to square zero. One daughter and granddaughter depend on me totally, and it put me in poverty just when they had no income.

We are tossing up, do we put money in the meter or eat? I was reluctant to use foodbanks because it's all tinned food – I have multiple food allergies and I am allergic to all pharmaceuticals, I get sick, so I use my food as medicine. Food is medicine to me. When I just rely on tins I get sick really, really quickly.

The fruit and veg is the best part! Even if I am the veggie in our house, my daughter and granddaughter they both still love veg, its good nutrients. We need our immunities boosting during this season anyways, even without Covid. It's been hard, especially with the baby, she's just two and she's growing, her needs are growing. This has helped us juggle a little bit more. I share whatever I cook with my block, I got three men who live single in my block, so I leave what I've cooked outside their doors.

Zahara, Liverpool Arabic centre

My husband and I have been living near Prince's Park for the last year. We're originally from the Yemen, but lived in Germany for a little while before coming to Liverpool. We arrived last

summer, back then things were looking up, we had money, we had a car and my husband had a job.

When the second lockdown started that job was gone. We had nothing and we aren't eligible for benefits. We're now in debt and owe our landlord thousands of pounds in rent.

It has been tough, there have been times when we were only having soup. I'm a good cook, but we just don't have the money. During the last few weeks we experience some depression, we didn't even have the appetite for food. We are getting support from the community centre and a church, we are so grateful. If I do find a job I'll have income and then probably my circumstances will change.

Barry, Micah Liverpool foodbank

My two daughters, one's 10 and the other one's 14, I'll have them fed more than me, you know what I mean, you've got to. It's like my cat, I've got to make sure she's fed before me.

I only started learning to cook in the last couple of years. It's not that I like cooking, it's a necessity really, more than anything. But I have actually found it quite therapeutic to be honest.

I had 4 jobs a week at one point but I've been in and out of employment for about 10 years now. I'm trying to get back into work and been on courses through the foodbank. I've struggled with my mental health over the years, I was recently diagnosed with Bipolar and Adult ADHD. I've tried to kill myself a few times.

I come to a food bank, and I volunteer there too. Volunteering gives me strength, makes me feel good, I enjoy helping other people. I'll do something but I won't wait round to be thanked. As long I know it's been done to my ability, I'm happy with that.

Niall, Micah Liverpool foodbank

This year I turn 59. I don't have a home or an income so I need to rely on food each week from two foodbanks. Before the pandemic I went around the soup kitchens, I used to volunteer at them too and work the door, but now a lot of them are closed.

I'm disabled but my disability, we just don't get assistance for our type. That's a very long story (sighs), I haven't claimed since 2007.

I don't have anywhere to cook, so I eat pre-prepared or dried foods. That's what I get here at the foodbank. The variety of food I get is good but without the second food bank, the quantity wouldn't be enough for the week.

Sikarthmi, Micah Liverpool foodbank

After leaving Sri Lanka, Liverpool has been home to me and my five children aged 2, 5, 9, 10 and 15, for the last eight years. Since my husband left earlier this year, I have struggled financially, and my spouse visa expired last month. Our future feels uncertain.

My children love the fresh fruit, vegetables, and eggs we receive at the foodbank. In the evenings they will eat the carrots and peppers ‘fresh’, dipping them in yoghurt, whilst I prepare a Sri Lankan egg pudding for dessert.

The foodbank feels like a family. It is more than the food I receive, it is a place where I feel loved and accepted, giving me the strength to face the road ahead.

Vlora, Micah Liverpool foodbank

It has been three years since Vlora left Albania. At 25, she came to England on a spouse visa, accompanying her husband as he found work. Three months ago he left her and their two children, aged 18 months and three years, for a different life in London.

He occasionally sends money, however Vlora finds herself unable to make ends meet as she is still not allowed to work. She only has a little English, but explains this is her third visit to Micah Liverpool foodbank. She is grateful for the food, and in particular for the nappies for the baby.

Sarah, Micah Liverpool foodbank

Speaking about the impact of the [Winter Boost](#) project which boosted foodbank parcels with fruit, veg and eggs:

Standing in the queue 30 minutes before the foodbank opens, Sarah is happy to talk. She is 48, now living alone as her son has long since moved out. In her thick scouse accent, Sarah explains she is struggling with her mental health. A recent spell in hospital has meant her benefits have been fluctuating. Finding herself in rent arrears, she is thankful for the support of the foodbank. Sarah shows me her ‘continuous ticket’, meaning she can visit for the next few weeks until her debts are paid off.

“I have to eat with the medicine I take for my mental health, so the foodbank helps.”

When asked about the fruit, vegetables and eggs provided through the Winter Boost initiative, Sarah explains “it has made a huge difference. If you’ve got vegetables you can do a curry, do a blind scouse. I got a turnip the other week, I didn’t know what to do with it but gave it a go. The eggs were lovely, I done waffles with eggs when my son came to visit”.

Alayna, Micah Liverpool

1 month and 10 days ago Alayna arrived in Liverpool from Iran. After a difficult journey crossing borders hidden in a lorry with her partner and 2 year old daughter, her family are seeking asylum in the UK.

Dressed in a tracksuit and t-shirt, this is Alayna’s third visit to Micah Liverpool foodbank. She feels safe, and welcomed, receiving bags of food including rice, eggs, bananas, oranges, potatoes, a giant onion and a handful of freshly grown radishes. Although this last month has been hard, with a large smile on her face, Alayna explains “In my country I am not free, here I am free!”.

She is very grateful for the support her family has received. She tells how her daughter loves the fruit, and is learning to say “Mummy banana” when she comes in the door. Alayna is looking forward to using the eggs to make shakshuka, a Persian dish where the eggs are cooked on a bed of tomatoes and herbs.

5. A story submitted anonymously via Feeding Liverpool's website by someone who felt embarrassed using a foodbank

"I'm a self-employed 57-year-old, who has been out of work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to my lack of eligibility, I have had no help from any government bodies during this time. This has taken a heavy toll on me personally and I've begun staying in bed for much of the day, as then I don't have to even think about breakfast and lunch, often just having a single evening meal. My neighbours volunteer at the local foodbank and for this reason I don't go as I wouldn't want the added stress of embarrassment.

I'm increasingly worried about my future as my state pension is ten years away due to the retirement age being put back and I seem unable to get a job even though I'm often over-qualified. I have a feeling this is due to my age, which is disheartening as I've worked since I was 15. I've persevered through this, but the retirement age push back has really hurt me. I also wish there was a more subtle way I could access help, other than at a food bank."

6. An in depth case study, with detailed case notes, submitted by Asylum Link Merseyside, which illustrates the need for long term food support for asylum seekers

The client has been known to Asylum Link Merseyside (ALM) for some years. He attends English Classes and more recently the Allotment project. Communication has been extremely difficult with this Afghan service user with very little English. Presents as unsure and often confused. His mental health has visibly deteriorated over the time we worked with him. He's well known in ALM and many people look out for him.

12/09/2018 – Attends to report lost documents - ASPEN payment Card – new application made.

12/02/2019 – Asylum refusal – discuss fresh claim – solicitor said no help for 6 months – no reason given and this is incorrect information.

04/03/2019 – Attended ALM to have appeal judgement explained – new list of solicitors given.

21/03/2019 – Notice to quit accommodation. Set up post box, submit internal ALM destitution request, joined the food list. Staying with 'friend'.

01/04/2019 – Added to Food Store List – weekly pickup.

11/10/2019 – Client has been staying at the Whitechapel. Unhappy as other residents are alcohol/drug users. Also not happy with evening curfew 6:00pm. Check with Sisters in Seal Street for alternative accommodation.

04/03/2019 – Called to check on progress with support/accommodation.

28/05/2020 – ALM call to check on updates – still on food list.

13/08/2020 – Client attended to ask if a letter had arrived for him from Afghanistan? Follow up indicated a letter had arrived a month previous but with no name or indication of who for – both client telephone numbers not working.

03/11/2020 – Client attended with Persian Documents for translation – documents require a once over before we go ahead with translation – passed to Further Submissions Team. Telephone numbers updated.

12/11/2020 – Client documents roughly translated by an ALM Farsi speaking volunteer – requires a referral to Freedom from Torture.

20/11/2020 – Client has health problems, mental health – is Victim of Torture, shrapnel in arm – needs an operation. Client – very distressed – his friend has lost all his documents – including the envelope with evidence from Afghanistan. ALM start Subject Access Request but will take time. Post here for him – Hospital – diagnosis (psoriasis) – another appt in clinic in 4 weeks time – gave him cream at clinic – (was difficult as no interpreter at the appointment before) Booked for future appt. Health issue – shrapnel in arm – causes numbness in his arm – need to call

his GP - follow up - next week (as past 5pm now). Freedom From Torture - went through the referral with client - he agreed - understands the service. Will do the referral next week

02/02/2021 - Client rang about a large amount of money owed according to a letter from NHS. He has appointment today at Broad Green at 14.45. Rang NHS Liverpool Royal 07879 427319 and spoke to Alex Musunov who understands client is a refused asylum seeker and cannot pay.

04/02/2021 - Encrypted Broadgreen saying that despite charges, client can attend for his appointments since he is destitute. Client has another appointment in 2 weeks. He hasn't heard from his solicitor 'Hassan' - Sami thinks solicitor is with Jackson Canter.

05/04/2021 - Called the client today to get an update on his situation. He said he gave his fresh evidence to a guy called Hassan an interpreter for a Solicitor about 8-9 months ago. He was told he will hear from them in about 2 weeks but that has not been the case. He does not have a receipt to prove a fresh claim has been made. He is currently staying with friends who have said if he needs to get a solicitor they will help him pay. He is still on the destitution list and collects food parcels every week.

He said he is bored at home because before lockdown he used to come to English classes but now they have stopped. I suggested he comes along to the allotment or come to the arranged bike rides, but he said he lives very far and he walks to ALM every week to pick up his food.

08/06/2021 - Old solicitor declines case - New Solicitor for Further Submissions/Fresh Claim - cost paid by friends.

22/06/2021 - Called to see if client has receipt or confirmation letter from solicitor. Despite use of interpreter, very unclear.

14/07/2021 - Struggling to get hold of solicitor - sent letter formally requesting client care letter and for the client to meet with his solicitor.

21/07/2021 - Solicitor response - meeting arranged for 22/07/2021

03/08/2021 - Client came to the centre with a copy of the document he was given by Solicitor. This was a list of evidence he should collect as evidence for his fresh claim. Client very agitated at times, raising his voice and throwing his head back. Summary of the call;

- He has made two payments to LDB already (£290 + £400)

- He states he has no further documents and cannot obtain these. He states he advised the solicitor of this on his first appointment and they assured him they could do the claim anyway.

05/08/2021 - Email to Solicitor - Our client has been back to our offices this week with the list of evidence you have suggested he collects in support of his fresh claim. He has stated that he is unable to provide any documents as he has none with him in the UK and is unable to contact anyone in Afghanistan. He has asked me to ask you what the prospects are for his case without such evidence?

16/08/2021 - Client came in to ask for more update on his solicitor. He asked me to try and get him an appointment with LDB for Thursday. Kabul fell to the Taliban this weekend and so the situation there has changed significantly and he's looking to get a fresh claim in as soon as

possible.

Email back from Solicitor stating the following:

Thanks for your email - As you may be aware that for fresh claim an applicant needs to provide new or fresh evidence which has not been considered in the past by the Home Office or Immigration Judge. If he has no new evidence then it means he may not have a fresh claim to submit. And the Home Office may not consider his fresh claim if submitted without new evidence because he would not have provided new evidence. (in other words the Solicitor has charged him £690, to tell him he has to collect evidence that he cannot collect)

Email from ALM - Yes, I'm aware about the need for new evidence in a fresh claim and I've explained as much to Mr Client. He showed me the list of evidence you'd asked him to collect and I went through this with him using an interpreter. He became quite frustrated and stated that he does not have any of the documents listed and he is unable to obtain any from Afghanistan.

Mr Client remained adamant that there is some sort of case being prepared for him by yourselves as he has already made two payments to you (totalling £690). He states that he has been open about the absence of evidence since his first contact with your offices and so he is now querying what the plan is for his case moving forwards.

Does the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan support his case in anyway?

Generally when people have such questions I am able to refer to their client care letters and explain what their solicitor has set out. He has no copy of his client care letter so I was unable to do this. Could you please provide some clarification on the work he is paying you for either directly to Mr Client or else if you would like to send it through to me I'm happy to get an interpreter to explain this to him.

13/10/2021 - I saw client in the line for lunch at ALM and asked how his case was doing. We got an interpreter and he explained that he has no idea what his solicitor is doing as he hasn't been able to get in touch with them. He does not believe a claim has been submitted to the HO yet. He said that the solicitor had told him that "ALM had complained that the Client was coming to us asking about his case and told him not to bother ALM with this any further." The client stated that that is why he had stopped coming in to speak to us. I assured him we were more than happy to help. I asked what he wanted the next step to be and he said he wanted his money back from the solicitor. I agreed to see if Peter Simm would put something in for him if no fresh claim had already been made.

18/10/2021 - Spoke to the further subs team about client's case and he said he had checked with Peter Simm who had agreed to help client put in a fresh claim if nothing had already been submitted by solicitor. I sent the following email to the solicitor

Email to Solicitor - If no application has gone in yet then he would like to request a refund on the fees he has already paid and to close his case with you. Could you please advise how he would go about that?

Also, Mr Client mentioned that you had told him I was not happy with him coming into Asylum

Link to talk about his case. I just wanted to clarify with you that it's not a problem for clients to ask for our help liaising with legal reps, it is well within our remit and so not a bother at all.

21/10/2021 - Client called friend to interpret and explained that Philippa has told him that ALM would help him with his FS. He was worried that this would delay his application and he is concerned about his family in Afghanistan. Client said the solicitor has told him to come in on Monday (25th) and he will 'give him his case' which he can take to the Home Office the following day. Client said that he thought he had appointment booked with HO for the Tuesday to submit his case. Asked me what to do. Explained that I cannot tell him what he should do. It's his decision. Client said he will attend the solicitor on Monday and then submit the file to HO on Tuesday.

01/11/2021 - Client came to see me and explained that he had been to the HO to submit the fresh claim prepared by solicitor. He doesn't have a copy of the subs but did have the receipt from the FSU.

On the receipt was a post it note saying, "can someone please help him to apply for section 4". Client says he showed it to a caseworker here and she started asking him questions about his address history etc. and he is worried that we haven't studied his case properly.

I explained that we wouldn't be looking at his asylum claim and that these are the questions for accessing s4 support. He said he would like to apply for S4 but only if he gets to stay close to ALM.

I explained that that is unlikely but that we can request it. I talked to Wole who confirmed that Hajira had tried to make the s4 application with Client but that he had left before they could complete it. I have made an appointment for Client to come in at 12.30 on Weds 3rd November for me to make the application with him.

03/11/2021 - I completed the ASF1 with client (Section4 Support). He has taken a letter home for his friend to sign confirming that he can no longer stay in the accommodation. He will bring this back tomorrow after his ESOL class.

During the session the client appeared withdrawn and needed prompting multiple times to answer questions. He was holding his head throughout most of the session. He stated that he doesn't sleep and he startles awake every 20 minutes or so. This leads to headaches through the day. He says he has told this to the GP and asked for some medication to help him sleep but that he wasn't prescribed any. I asked how his mood was and he said, "I don't know any happy". I got his permission to write to the GP raising my concerns about his mental health. He agreed.

08/12/2021 - The client spoke to me and said that he'd tried to talk to his solicitor but he'd been told that the individual allocated to him no longer worked there. He said he wanted me to tell the Home Office to send any decisions or correspondence here as he no longer has a solicitor. I explained that his case will be re-allocated to another solicitor in that office and that I would call to find out who that would be.

I called the solicitor and they are going to call me back to advise who the new caseworker is.

14/12/2021 - Gareth asked me to make client an appt for Covid Booster. GP practice advised

me to ring 119. Appointment 18 December. Rang client and told him also sent him a text with details.

10/01/2022 – Section 4 application sent.

04/02/2022 – Section 4 support granted, client removed from food list.

31/03/2022 – Client attends with a tenancy agreement (even though he is technically entitled to section4 housing).

04/04/2022 – Email Clients MP Ian Byrne – request to expedite Home Office decision.

Email to MP Ian Byrne citing clients declining mental health.

Since the Taliban occupation of Kabul I have witnessed a steep decline in our clients mental health. He has a wife and two young sons in Afghanistan and he is terrified for their safety. He came to my office last week and the decline in his presentation was startling. He withdrew to the point of appearing absent. When I tried to question him about this all he managed to say was he's thinking about his wife and children. I am concerned about this impact this wait on his asylum claim is having on him.

As I say, I am aware that under normal circumstances this case is well within expected timescales but given the clients declining mental health any assistance you could give in prompting the Home Office to consider his case would be much appreciated.

Second similar email to the Home Office Safeguarding Team.

(Please note his solicitor had already received notification in March and would have been well aware of our involvement).

05/04/2022 – Response from Safeguarding Team to say that a decision was served to the solicitors in early March. I called the solicitor to ask them what is happening with them serving the decision and they have said they will get back to me within the hour.

I am emailing following several calls through to your office regarding the above referenced client. The Home Office have advised us that they served a decision on his asylum claim in early March. Mr Client has not had notification of this.

Please could you ensure that he is issued a copy of his decision as soon as possible? I'm sure that you are aware that, whether the decision is positive or negative, this delay has significant implications for Mr Client moving forwards. I look forward to hearing from you.

07/04/2022 – Call from the Solicitor – Have we received client's Biometric Residence Permit (BRP card)? We asked, have they received the client's decision yet? – The Solicitor is checking. (Receipt of a BRP card usually means leave to remain has been given).

25/04/2022 – Solicitor emailed to say unable to contact client, but had received his BRP card. ALM continued to try and contact the client. Also contacted his GP to request assistance with possible Mental Health issues – client waiting for years and now a significant point had been reached.

11/05/2022 – Client joins Allotment projects – weekly gardening

11/05/2022 – Client to the office to say that his BRP card has his name spelled incorrectly. I have reported the error online.

I told the client that I had spoken to Mo (Family Reunion GMIAU) re: bringing his family here and she had advised that there is currently no way to apply from inside Afghanistan. She wanted me to check with him if they could get out of the country to make the application before doing anything further. Client said that they could get to Iran and stay there for the 4/5 months wait necessary for processing as they have family there. I have emailed Mo with the update and asked what the next steps are.

The Client spoke about getting headaches and feeling low. I invited him to join the allotment project and he agreed and went to the allotment this afternoon. I checked in with Hugh (allotment volunteer) who said that he stayed for the whole session and joined in with planting etc.

***Need to check if he has applied for benefits and if not I need to refer to MRSN.

16/05/2022 – The client came in with his friend. He has been given notice to quit his Serco accommodation by the first week of May. The friend said he's concerned that asking the HO to change the name on the BRP will delay him being able to move on. The client agreed that we keep his name spelled as it is now and then once benefits, housing and family reunion are sorted we can look at changing it.

I referred the client to MRSN for help with move on (attached to DB).

Mo has given the client an appt re: family reunion for tomorrow at 12pm. I am going to try and attend but if my earlier appointments run over then Gareth is going to support him with this.

17/05/2022 – Feedback from Mo Rahilly re: meeting with Shafi re: Family Reunion. She is emailing her supervisor at GMIAU for advice as Shafi has very limited documentation. No marriage or birth certificates and his family have no passports.



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