

RIGHT TO REMAIN CAMPAIGNING FOR MIGRATION JUSTICE IMPACT REPORT 2022/23





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www.righttoremain.org.uk

www.wallsmustfall.org

Charity number 1192934, Company number 04026564

**RIGHT
TO REMAIN**

WE ARE RIGHT TO REMAIN

Right to Remain is a national migration justice organisation. We want to build a world where everyone can exercise their right to remain where they need to be with dignity and humanity. We work with communities, groups and organisations across the UK, providing information, resources, training and assistance to help people to establish their right to remain. We boost our community's power to challenge injustice in the immigration and asylum system and create an alternative world.

The organisation was founded in 1995 as the National Coalition of Anti Deportation Campaigns, a coalition of grassroots groups fighting against the deportation of their friends, family members, neighbours and co-workers across the UK. We became a registered charity (1192934) in December 2020.

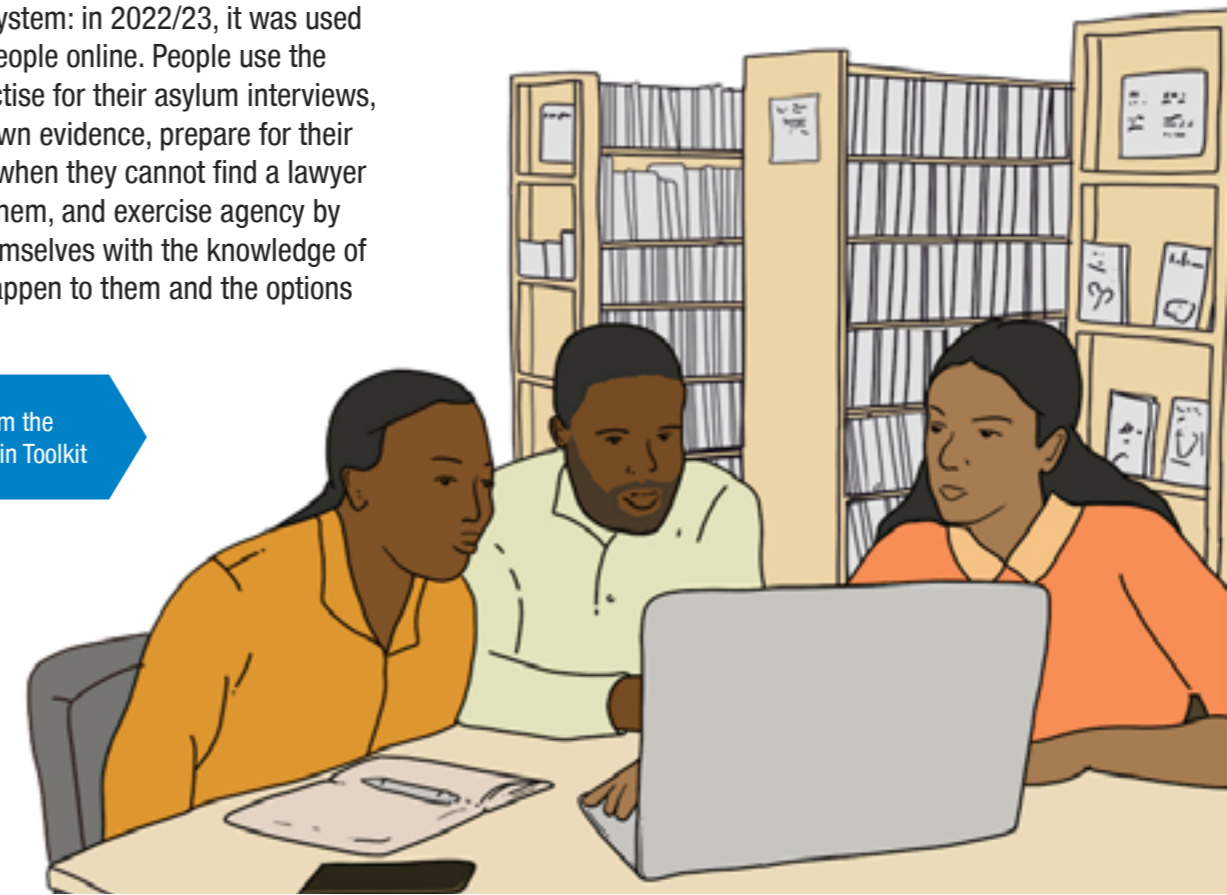
Our name changed in 2014 to reflect the expanded scope of the organisation's work, in response to our community's changing needs. As the landscape of asylum and migration law, policies and landscape grew harsher, our community spoke up. It was essential that they understood the (asylum and immigration) system better from the very beginning of the process for three reasons; in order to support each other to secure their immigration status and right to remain in the UK, to proactively protect the community from the risks of the violence and trauma of detention and deportation and, most importantly, to fight the system itself.

Since then, the main resource of our public legal education work about the asylum and immigration system, our [Right to Remain Toolkit](#), has become the critical infrastructure for the entire asylum and migration field. It is the lifeline for many who are stuck in a Kafkaesque system: in 2022/23, it was used by 321,997 people online. People use the Toolkit to practise for their asylum interviews, gather their own evidence, prepare for their own appeals when they cannot find a lawyer to represent them, and exercise agency by equipping themselves with the knowledge of what could happen to them and the options

they have. Many groups, large and small, use it for their staff and volunteer training and for their work at large. Lawyers and students use it as a reference point and other professionals such as youth workers, ESOL teachers, and doctors use it to support people going through the system.

This popularity is due to the fact that our resources, workshops and outreach are accessible, practical and empowering. They are accessible because they are designed specifically for both non-specialists and people going through the system, based on feedback from our community collected over the years. They are practical because they include information about possible steps people can take to improve their chance of securing immigration status and their right to remain in the UK, also based on the tips contributed by our community. And they are empowering because they help people understand what might happen to them at each stage of the process, and how to help prepare for any given scenario, enabling them to take better control of their lives with or without the help of legal advisors and solicitors (an example would be our ['how to prepare for detention' Toolkit pages](#)).

Illustration from the
Right to Remain Toolkit



The Toolkit and our workshops act as a portal through which people can enter the shared struggle for migration justice and start taking collective action to change the system – because you need to understand the system to fight it, just as our community said when we developed the Toolkit over ten years ago.

We also demystify legal support. We explain clearly how allies and supporters who are not accredited to give legal advice and who, for this reason, are afraid to help others can still safely provide vital support in our community. At the same time, this scales up the amount of this support available (as opposed to legal advice). This both alleviates the pressure faced by the struggling legal advice sector, and connects people in the system with their supporters, equipping them with knowledge and confidence to fight for the right to remain together, and seek ways to survive the system

within their local community. This knowledge of the system will always remain central to our movement.

[In fact, our legal education work goes beyond a simple gesture of information provision.](#) Our work is relational. We carefully and consciously do this in a way that calls for solidarity to bring more people and groups into the movement, focussing on building power in our community.

The Toolkit and our workshops act as a portal through which people can enter the shared struggle for migration justice and start taking collective action to change the system – because you need to understand the system to fight it, just as our community said when we developed the Toolkit over ten years ago. The Toolkit is therefore the basis of our strategic convening and campaigning, including our experience-led community organising work, [These Walls Must Fall](#).



1 BUILDING SOLIDARITY AND CONNECTIONS AMIDST SHOCKS

INTRODUCING OUR IMPACT REPORT 2022/23

2022/23 was a year of huge shocks for our migrant and refugee communities.

It was also a busy year for Right to Remain, as we continued to build radical solidarity and new connections through our public legal education work, and via our [Toolkit](#): the step-by-step guide to the UK asylum and immigration system, and also through our lived-experience campaigner development programme [These Walls Must Fall](#). Additionally, we eased ourselves into a new organisational structure and welcomed new staff to the team.

Despite powerful opposition and condemnation from our communities and allies, the Nationality and Borders Act was introduced, as the grotesque plan to send people seeking asylum to Rwanda dominated the news – the plan which has been a scene of an epic legal battle between the lawyers who support our community and the government who wishes to boast to the world this dubious arrangement. As if this was not enough, on the heels of the Nationality and Borders Act, Parliament began the process of passing the draconian Illegal Migration Act (it became an act in July 2023).

This new law cancels the asylum system as we know it, potentially leaving many in permanent limbo, in destitution, in detention and exposing them to the risks of exploitation, victimisation and human rights abuses. These changes to the system mean our community faces an ever more hostile world.

Notwithstanding this gloomy news, for Right to Remain, 2022/23 was a year of learning and [building our strength](#).

We responded with agility to our community's desire to understand and prepare for the changing aspects of the asylum and immigration system. And while we equipped our community with the knowledge to navigate the system towards securing their right to remain, we have considered, thought and learnt more about how we can build collective power to challenge the system. We also had a tremendously intense period of strengthening the organisation's structure, readying us to fight more effectively for migration justice with our community and equipping us to become better at building radical solidarity.

With this impact report, we want to share with you some of the things we have been up to, and what we are thinking about in 2023/24 as we look to the future.

2 OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AT A GLANCE

IN 2022/23:

321,997 PEOPLE USED THE RIGHT TO REMAIN TOOLKIT ONLINE

WE PUBLISHED 18 LEGAL UPDATES ON OUR WEBSITE AND PRODUCED 24 LEGAL UPDATES NEWSLETTERS

WE INCREASED OUR STAFF TEAM BY ABOUT 60%, FROM 5 TO 8



There was a 22% increase in the number of people who used the Right to Remain Toolkit online, compared to the previous year. In 2021/22, just over a quarter of a million people (263,368 people) used the Toolkit. The number of users in 2022/23 was almost a third of a million people (321,997 people).

In 2022/23, our public legal education work directly connected us with about 800 people who are going through the asylum and immigration system or working in solidarity with them, and increased their knowledge and capacity to (help) navigate the system better. We ran 24 workshops across the UK, including our flagship [Knowledge is Power](#) online workshops, as well as tailor made, commissioned workshops. And we began our [Toolkit Festival](#) season, celebrating 10 years of our renowned Toolkit, with old and new friends across the UK.



We have updated our Toolkit in light of the Nationality and Borders Act, and continue to do so. We published 18 legal updates on our website and produced 24 legal updates newsletters. About 4,000 people receive our regular newsletters.

These Walls Must Fall Campaigners in the Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield and Halifax areas continued to mobilise local people and groups to take part in actions against the Hostile Environment in the spirit of solidarity.



We also began building a stronger organisational structure, allowing us to accelerate our work to boost the migration justice movement. We were able to increase our staff team size by about 60%, [from 5 to 8 in one year](#), expanding our under-resourced but vital legal education and engagement capacity. We welcomed [Leah Cowling](#) (Legal Education Officer), [Sundus Abdi](#) (Communications and Campaigns Assistant – Intern) and [Esther Doherty](#) (Engagement and Operations Officer) to the team.

3 PEOPLE AT RIGHT TO REMAIN

This is the full line-up of our current staff team, and you can read more about each staff member [on our website](#).

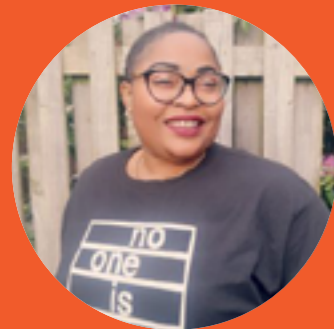
Right to Remain is governed by a [voluntary Management Committee](#).



EIRI OHTANI
Director (London)



MICHAEL COLLINS
Coordinator (London)



VEE SMITH UKA
Organiser, Yorkshire (Halifax)
(Resigned in July 2023)



MAGGY MOYO
Organiser, North West (Manchester)



YUMNA KAMEL
Legal Education Officer (London)



LEAH COWLING
Legal Education Officer (Glasgow)
(Joined in December 2022)



ESTHER DOHERTY
Engagement and Operation Officer (London)
(Joined in February 2023)



SUNDUS ABDI
Communications and Campaigns Assistant (Intern) (Birmingham)
(Joined in December 2022)

Our staff team in 2022



New staff members, 2023





4 KNOWLEDGE IS POWER: OUR PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION WORK

At the beginning of 2022/23, Right to Remain’s connections with our hub of groups we work with were less active due to the lingering effects of the Covid-19 lockdown coupled with the departure of a key staff member in April 2022. It was clear that we had a lot of urgent catching up to do.

Increasingly anxious voices in our community, worried about the impact of the Nationality and Borders Act, demanded clear and accurate information about the changing asylum and immigration system. We needed to actively reach out to these groups and organisations and to work with them directly on the ground.

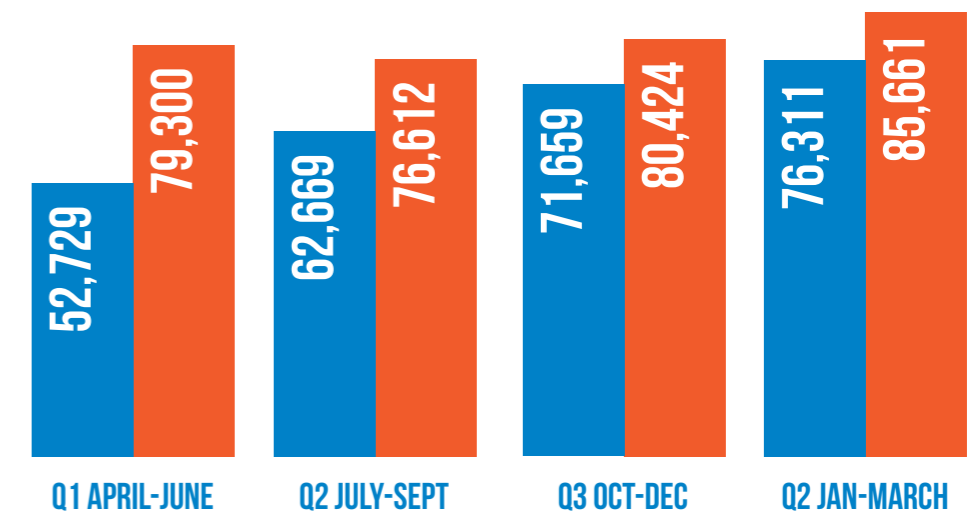
MORE PEOPLE THAN EVER ARE USING THE TOOLKIT

We saw a steady uptake on the number of unique online users of the Toolkit (meaning unique individuals who have spent some time on our various Toolkit pages, as opposed to unique individuals who simply viewed the Toolkit homepage).

The table below compares the number of unique online users for the 2021/22 period with the 2022/23 reporting period, indicating that there has been a significant increase in Toolkit usage, from **263,368 in 2021/22** to **321,997 unique active users in 2022/23**.

TOOLKIT USERS

2021-22
2022-23



This increase was achieved by a number of factors. We increased the volume of our social media communications from December 2022 onwards to promote our legal education work. We also made more conscious efforts to lower the barrier to entry by [explaining in detail how best to use and share the Toolkit](#). We updated and redesigned our [Toolkit leaflets](#) to be more user friendly, and as the comments underneath our February 2023 blog entitled [‘Want some of our new Toolkit flyers? Get in touch!’](#) suggests, they are well received.

Since launching our improved Toolkit flyers, we distributed them to over 100 groups and organisations across the UK in the first three months, many of whom were able to distribute them further in their local areas, including in the hotels which host people seeking asylum.

This distribution process is managed by our Engagement and Operations Officer who will be able to further track their impact in the future.

STRENGTHENING THE IMMIGRATION SIDE OF THE TOOLKIT

Our second Legal Education Officer, Leah Cowling, joined us in December 2022 with a brief to further strengthen and develop the non-asylum immigration sections of the Toolkit. She began preparations for this expansion with deeper research into [the 10 year route to settlement](#), the severity of the No Recourse to Public Funds policy, and the lack of public legal education around fee waivers for applications. Leah also works closely with Yumna Kamel, our first Legal Education Officer to deliver some of our online workshops. Please get in touch with Leah if you want to know more about her work.



Yumna and Leah with our new Toolkit leaflets

EVOLUTION OF AND DEMAND FOR OUR WORKSHOPS

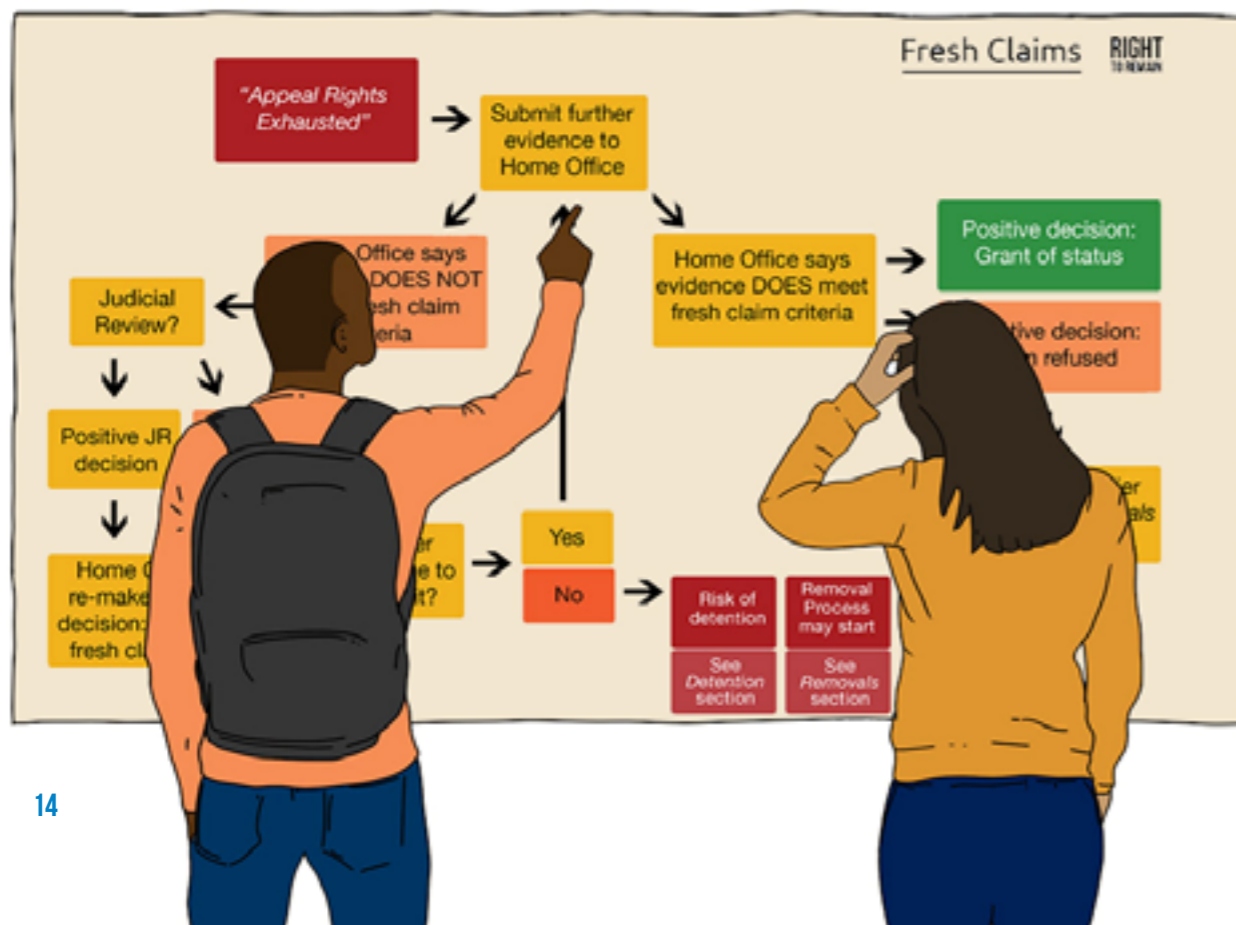
FROM APRIL 2022 UNTIL APRIL 2023, WE DELIVERED 24 WORKSHOPS 9 OF WHICH WERE IN-PERSON FOR 800 ATTENDEES

subscribed to the first workshop, with 100 in attendance on the day. The feedback was positive, with many people stating that they would be passing the information onto their networks and communities, and about 6 organisations requesting follow-up workshops. We tried the same format 6 times, before making substantive changes to its structure to make it more interactive, relaunching it in January 2023.

Participants were both people in the asylum and immigration system themselves and those who support them to navigate the system.

In order to reach more people, we developed and launched our online [Knowledge is Power](#) workshops in June 2022. Over 150 people

Our workshops receive very positive feedback. We believe that direct engagement is the best way to build relationships, and collective knowledge and strength. It improves not only our own understanding of what is happening on the ground, but also how we should be responding to the present difficulties that our communities are faced with.





Belfast Toolkit Festival
February 2023

WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS AND FEEDBACK IN 2022/23 INCLUDE:



At the [Hope Project's Destitution Conference](#) in June 2022 in Birmingham, one audience member told us that he had helped a friend by going through the Toolkit and showing him how to use it. Because of this, the friend was able to use the Toolkit to proceed with an asylum appeal, despite being unable to secure legal representation.

On 25 July 2022, we facilitated an introduction to the Toolkit and short workshop for team members from [Refugee Info Bus](#). The purpose of the session was to refresh their memory of the asylum system, and to introduce how the changes made by the Nationality and Borders Act would impact people in practice, so that they could relay this information back to their service users in Calais. Feedback from the participants was as follows:

Thank you so much for taking the time to run through the toolkit with the team last week! It has already made a noticeable difference in our referrals to the toolkit, and it has been wonderful to empower people to access the information directly.

REFUGEE INFO BUS

On 22 September 2022, we conducted an in-person training session for new members of the [Refugees at Home](#) team in London. The interactive session included showing the team how to use the Right to Remain Toolkit and other resources like videos, the Young Asylum Guide, and the Asylum Navigation Board. We also went through an overview of the asylum system, looked at fresh claims, and finished with the difference between providing legal support versus legal advice.

Thank you so much for today's really interesting and engaging workshop. The team thoroughly enjoyed it and have come back to the office feeling more confident and equipped to support our guests. It made me think about how I might deal with different situations and how I can best use the toolkit as a guide. I would encourage everyone at Refugees at Home to refer to the toolkit, to help with day-to-day queries and to keep up to date on changes in laws.

REFUGEES AT HOME

Thank you so much for attending our 'Orientation for Newcomers' Power session yesterday as our guest speaker!! We saved all the links, thank you for being such a great guest and providing some really helpful information. It would be great to keep in touch if you're happy to do so... Big thank you and warm wishes.

Right to Remain received requests from two organisations – [BEACON Bradford](#) (Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern), and the [International Rescue Committee \(UK\)](#) – to contribute to Q&A sessions.

BEACON BRADFORD

The demand for our workshops far exceeds our capacity to deliver them. For example, we had to turn down requests for workshops from six groups, large and small in January 2023.

We are currently asking groups who would like to receive our training or workshops to contact us again while we continue to run our Knowledge is Power online sessions on a monthly basis. For more information, please contact Esther Doherty, Engagement and Operations Officer.

These Walls Must Fall Toolkit workshop in January 2023



OUR POPULAR LEGAL UPDATES AND BLOGS

We publish regular Legal Updates, explaining changes to immigration law and policy in a simple, easy-to-understand way. These updates serve as a reference point for the migration justice sector, staff in other sectors, and people who are in the system. Some particularly apt figures include:

NATIONALITY AND BORDERS ACT

On 12 July 2022, a [Legal Update blog](#) summarising the impacts of the **Nationality and Borders Act** upon UK immigration was published. From the date of publication until 1 April 2023, the blog has been read nearly **10,000 times**.

INADMISSIBILITY RULES AND THE RWANDA PLAN

On 3 August 2022, a [Legal Update blog](#) explaining the **Inadmissibility Rules and the Rwanda plan** was published to outline the policy and track the various legal challenges. From the date of publication until 1 April 2023, the blog has been read **2,648 times**.

HOME OFFICE DELAY IN PROCESSING ASYLUM CLAIMS

On 3 November 2022, a [Legal Update blog](#) explaining the causes of the huge **Home Office delay in processing asylum claims** was published to acknowledge the increasingly common experience. From the date of publication until 1 April 2023, the blog has been read **6,094 times**.

APPLYING FOR ASYLUM WORK PERMISSION

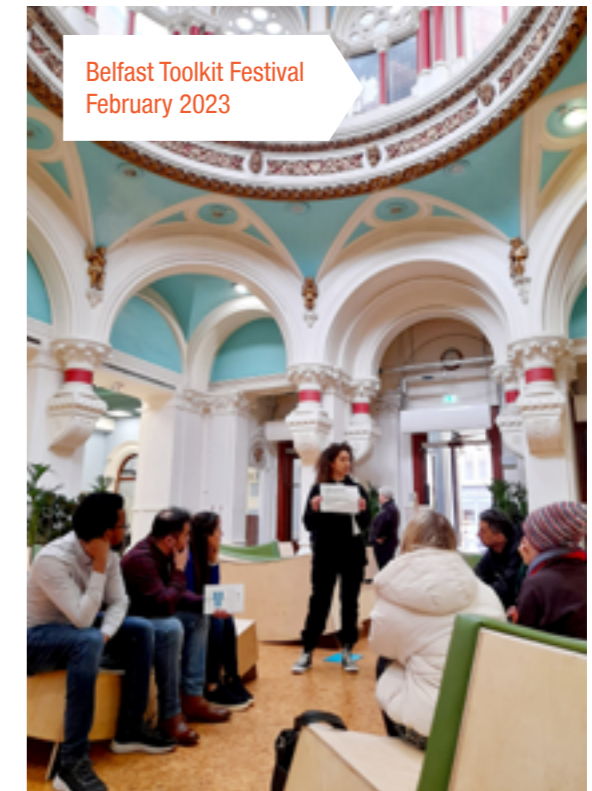
On 16 March 2022, a [Legal Update blog](#) signposting our community to a guide to **applying for (asylum) work permission** drafted by the [Migration Justice Project \(MJP\)](#) was published. From the date of publication until 1 April 2023, the blog has been read **12,081 times**. Plenty of queries were also received. This led us to develop a further relationship with MJP which resulted in our inaugural [Toolkit 10th anniversary festival in Belfast](#) in February 2023. The demand on this blog post also eventually led us to draft an entire Toolkit page on [Applying for Permission to Work](#) in 2023.

CHANGES TO IMMIGRATION LAW AND POLICY EXPLAINED IN A SIMPLE, EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND WAY

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF THE TOOLKIT – TOOLKIT FESTIVALS

In 2023, we are celebrating [10 years of the Toolkit](#); its history, its achievement and our community that helped Right to Remain create and develop the Toolkit in the first place. As part of this celebration, we have been organising Toolkit Festivals across the UK to reconnect with our partners and introduce more groups into the migration justice movement.

Our first port of call was [Belfast](#), where we were hosted by the [Migration Justice Project](#) (part of the Law Centre Northern Ireland) in February 2023.



Belfast Toolkit Festival
February 2023



Belfast Toolkit Festival
February 2023

5 LIVED-EXPERIENCE LED COMMUNITY ORGANISING

THESE

WALLS

MUST

FALL

THESE WALLS MUST FALL: ITS HISTORY AND NOW

These Walls Must Fall is a network of refugee and migrant Campaigners working with allies and supporters for radical change run by Right to Remain.

It started years ago when our legal education workshops, although helpful in sharing information about people's rights, still left our community feeling unfulfilled. They acknowledged the importance of their individual endeavours to achieve their right to remain in the UK, but also recognised that the system was *unfair*, and wanted to challenge this injustice. In 2017, we embarked on a year-long consultation with community-based refugee and migrant support groups across the country, and developed These Walls Must Fall as a framework for local organising.

Our Campaigners, all with lived experience of immigration enforcement, build their power locally with their allies to fight for a better world through campaigning and organising. Since 2021, they have taken part in a Campaigner

Development Programme, a suite of sessions to help them build their skills and confidence to create a leaderful community that is active in challenging the Hostile Environment. Within the Programme, our Campaigners take part in workshops, group activities and one-to-one coaching. The Programme equips them with skills to engage local allies and targets, such as organising events, speaking at demonstrations, and facilitating meetings to make connections with local groups.

The Campaigner Development Programme is led by These Walls Must Fall's two Organisers, Maggy and Vee, and is overseen by Michael Collins, our Coordinator. Currently, we work with about 40 Campaigners, clustered around Manchester, Liverpool, Halifax and Sheffield.

Reflecting on developments during the year that saw the increasing harm of the Hostile Environment, our Campaigners were active in opposing the government's Rwanda plan, learning about the impact of the anti-protest law, organising workshops on detention, taking part in demonstrations, hosting local solidarity meetings and much more. Equally importantly, they supported and looked after each other through our quarterly gatherings and at times when individual Campaigners faced crisis moments.





CREATING COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY

Below are some of These Walls Must Fall's highlights in 2022/23.

TAKING CENTRE STAGE AT THE MANCHESTER PRIDE CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

In August 2022, our These Walls Must Fall Campaigners were invited to take part in [the Manchester Pride Candlelight Vigil](#), to share their experiences as LGBTQ+ people seeking asylum, and how the Manchester community can join forces to fight the Hostile Environment. The Campaigners worked with actors to have their experiences read on stage to a live audience of thousands and recorded for many more.

In many places across the globe, queer people live a secret existence for fear of persecution. After fleeing their homes, they risk violence and discrimination. Upon arriving in the UK, their situations are made increasingly difficult by the hostile environment policies put into place by the British government. Nevertheless, Campaigners felt motivated to bring their traumatic stories to light through the Manchester Pride Festival, although it was not without a challenge.

Teresa, a campaigner who shared her story, said: "My experience, which I still have to live through, was read by someone else because I was not able to stand in front of people and talk about how I was humiliated [because of who I am]. I was taken back to when and where it happened." After seeing the crowd's reaction, Teresa was deeply moved: "The solidarity from members of the public in Manchester was amazing, I felt loved, I felt I had a family and I belonged somewhere I am not judged, shamed and stigmatised."

This year, in August 2023, the group returns to Pride with a large section in the parade and a follow-up public meeting for local people who want to get involved in radical solidarity.

These Walls Must Fall at Manchester Pride 2022



FIGHT AGAINST DERWENTSIDE DETENTION CENTRE

In May 2022, These Walls Must Fall Campaigners from Manchester, Liverpool and Yorkshire organised to travel to Durham to join the [national demonstration against immigration detention](#), focusing on the recently opened detention centre for women, Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre.

Women from These Walls Must Fall groups delivered powerful speeches, gave interviews to local media, and made connections with similar groups from across the country. A particular highlight of the day was when veteran These Walls Must Fall member, Mavis Harrison, was reunited with an old campaigning friend:

It was an emotional day for me, meeting Agnes Tohah who was one of the speakers. I was detained with Agnes ten years ago in Yarl's Wood. To this day I have not healed and I am still seeking counselling. When I saw her, I remembered the trauma we both went through and ten years later we are here in Durham fighting for other women who are inside this detention centre and many other detention centres.

Protests are now held monthly outside the detention centre and, [in March 2023](#), These Walls Must Fall Campaigners returned to County Durham along with partner groups from Yorkshire. As Campaigners arrived at the centre, families visiting their loved ones brought stories from them – many of the people in detention had fled their home countries because of persecution and poverty, and had been held in detention for months, or even years, with no clear path out. Protestors at the rally held signs demanding justice and called for an end to the inhumane treatment of detainees.

Despite the grim circumstances, there was a sense of hope and solidarity at the rally, and protestors were determined to make their voices heard. It was a powerful reminder of the importance of speaking out against injustice, making connections, and building solidarity.



Agnes and Mavis at the demo in Durham, May 2022

LEGAL EDUCATION WITH THESE WALLS MUST FALL

In 2022/23, we started running a [bespoke Toolkit workshop](#) for our These Walls Must Fall Campaigners. One of the factors that inspired us to initiate this type of workshop was Glory, one of our These Walls Must Fall Campaigners. Recently, on learning that she was successful in securing her right to remain here in the UK, Glory sent us a voice recording in which she talked excitedly about how the Toolkit helped her in her journey. Several months later, we caught up with her to ask her more about her experience. The following excerpts are from our blog entitled '[A journey with the Toolkit: Glory's story](#)' published in January 2023.

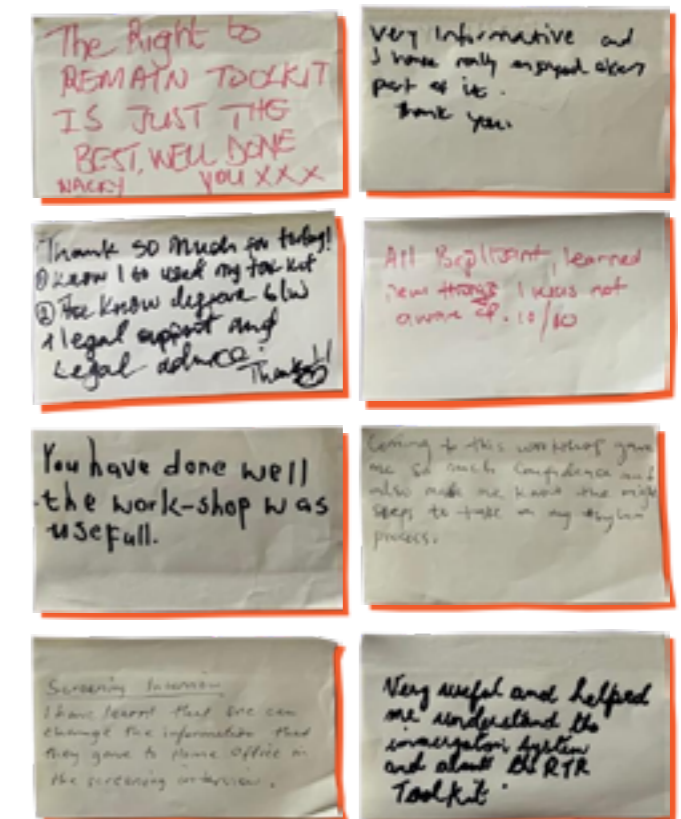
In the period leading up to her substantive interview, Glory used the Toolkit to understand more about how best to prepare for the interview. Glory tells us: **“I read the Toolkit and understood the questions that would be asked and how it relates to my case. Other people who already went through the substantive interview shared their experiences. Because of this, I answered the questions to the best of my knowledge.”**

... [Glory] recalls using the Toolkit to answer some of the likely questions she would be asked in the interview. **“We reviewed everything before I went for the interview, so I was prepared. I was afraid about it, but I felt reassured.”**

These Walls Must Fall focuses on community organising and campaigning, and it is also critical that our Campaigners understand the immigration system in order to fight it and survive it. Our training and skill-share workshops help our Campaigners learn about their rights and put them into action, for example by teaching them about the law, how to gather evidence, and how to find and build community support. Our Campaigners are also ambassadors for Right to Remain. It is important for them to understand how to use and share our resources with their extended community – because knowledge is power.

We carried out one Toolkit workshop for our [Manchester and Liverpool Campaigners](#) in January 2023, and one for our [West and South Yorkshire Campaigners](#) in March 2023.

FEEDBACK FROM THE MANCHESTER WORKSHOP:



THESE WALLS MUST FALL

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

FOREGROUNDING PEOPLE WITH EXPERIENCE

These Walls Must Fall aims to put the voices and views of people directly affected by immigration enforcement at the centre of campaigning. We support people to speak out as experts rather than victims, and to take leading roles in campaigning.

SOLIDARITY

We believe that people without immigration problems need to stand alongside those directly affected, to work together for change. We actively seek to involve allies. Solidarity is about doing things with people, rather than for people. We encourage allies to act from a place of solidarity and justice, rather than pity or charity, and our campaigning seeks to galvanise outrage leading to change.

SELF-HELP AND MUTUAL AID

These Walls Must Fall focuses on campaigning, but we aim to support people to understand the immigration system, how to mitigate some of the damage, how to help themselves and others. Our training and skill-share workshops help people to fight for their rights against the oppression of the immigration system, and to protect and support each other.

ANTI-RACISM

The border enforcement regime is a racist system. We are committed to the principles of anti-racism, and we see the campaign for migration justice as part of the wider struggle against racism in our society. We are opposed to racism, and recognise that to simply oppose it is not sufficient and a commitment to resisting it must be active and ongoing.

For more information about These Walls Must Fall, visit www.wallsmustfall.org



These Walls Must Fall campaigners, leading a demo in Liverpool

6 OUR ROLE IN THE MIGRATION JUSTICE ECOSYSTEM

We are proud to be one of the anchor organisations in the field that builds groups' and individuals' capacity to help each other, fight together and stand in solidarity with our community. We galvanise the migration justice movement. We are also aware that none of us can change this world alone.

That is why we take our role within this migration justice ecosystem seriously, and recognise the need to lift each other up in order to build a stronger migration justice movement. We want to articulate our approach and ethos and develop this area of work further in 2023/24. In the meantime, here are some examples of our solidarity work in 2022/23.

In July 2022, we hosted online discussions 'Preparing our community for the impact of the Nationality and Borders Act 2022' for our Toolkit users, as part of our strategic covering work. Over 30 groups attended our sessions, and explored the Act's impact at individual, group and societal levels. There was a strong consensus that we all need clear information on both the existing law and the new law. It was also stressed by those who attended that the same information needs to be shared repeatedly in a way that avoids legal jargon as many do not have direct access to lawyers or legal advisors. We agreed that the fear and confusion that the Act created would frighten our community, driving more people into despair. We also all recognised the need to get together regularly to pool and share information, and improve signposting functions.

WE GALVANISE THE MIGRATION JUSTICE MOVEMENT. WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT NONE OF US CAN CHANGE THIS WORLD ALONE.

In June 2022, as part of [the Solidarity Knows No Borders week of action](#), which marked the 10 year anniversary of the Hostile Environment, Right to Remain and These Walls Must Fall hosted six events that brought together many Campaigners and allies, who are united in their desire to end the Hostile Environment. The events included the 'Manchester coalition against the Hostile Environment' event, a discussion on 'Immigration enforcement in Birmingham', the 'Art of Resistance' exhibition in Wakefield, a protest in Sheffield to end the Hostile Environment, and the 'Festival of Resistance' in Halifax. We also launched our first-ever Knowledge is Power online workshops! In addition, we collaborated with Migrants in Culture to produce artwork which we made available to everyone taking part in the action.



BUILDING RADICAL SOLIDARITY

To inspire hope in an often bleak landscape, we began the Right to Remain ritual of 'honouring our collective power' at our Toolkit Festivals. We are often so busy fighting that we do not honour our strengths and wisdom enough: we need to celebrate the fact that we are surviving despite everything. To redress the balance, it has now become our tradition to start our Toolkit Festivals with a simple exercise of adding up the number of years of lived experience of being a migrant, refugee or other marginalised social group and/or working towards social justice gathered in the room. This has proved to be a popular and joyous icebreaker that supercharges the energy level of the room, revitalises our tired souls and creates connections between us.

We continue to distribute our [No One Is Illegal T-shirts](#) to our supporters in exchange for donations. It brings a smile to our faces when we see our supporters proudly wearing their T-shirts. We believe that this is a powerful way to normalise our message of hope and defiance, and we are planning to issue new T-shirt designs soon. We must change our culture so that society rejects hostile policies and practices that harm migrants. As a tiny organisation, we might not be able to influence the mainstream media, but we can influence what people see on the street. Let us fill our world with our message!



7 PREPARING FOR OUR COLLECTIVE FUTURE

Artwork by Hilary Jack

We recognise the existential threat that our community is facing. We are determined to step up.

The introduction of the Nationality and Borders Act and the Illegal Migration Act cast a deep shadow over our community's future. The changes in law that further undermine refugee and migrant rights and dignity also come at a time when other laws are being introduced which, in a compounded way, threaten our ability to dissent, resist, mobilise and act against injustice. The velocity with which politicians and the media whip up anti-migrant rhetoric and atmosphere has become turbo-charged, as traditional mechanisms to hold power to account are being corrupted or are under attack. Deteriorating socio-economic and climate situations, caused by historical exploitation and extraction, are likely to produce more crises in an unpredictable way. Powerful politicians, corporations and media are able to manipulate perceptions to hide the truth and craft a harmful narrative that shifts the blame of these catastrophes onto migrants, to maintain the societal status quo.

Our analysis is that unless we build power and shift the balance of power, this situation will never change. In fact, looking back on 20 years of migration justice work, we have constantly been on the back foot. We need to be at the decision making table to co-design our future, otherwise the fate of our community and other marginalised or disadvantaged people will continue to be at the whim of those who hold power. Essentially, system change is not going to happen as a result of a policy fix or even by a change in government: it requires a holistic change and transformation of our world.

This is why, at Right to Remain, we made a strategic decision some time ago to focus on community work to build more relationships. Notwithstanding the anticipated General Election, due to parliamentary arithmetic, policy reforms and legislative changes are currently almost impossible to achieve, and there are many other groups with much bigger budgets who can continue to operate in that sphere.

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Instead, we want to build our community's collective capability and power, as the first step to challenge and change the system. Our public legal education work is already designed to strengthen movement structure and bring more diverse people into it – and we want to do this more effectively. Our movement must be located within a broader social justice framework and connected with others on the principle of radical solidarity so that we can create an alternative society that protects us all. Radical solidarity across different groups will guard us against the force of division too.

2023/24 will be a long year of reflection and an exercise in stretching the powers of imagination for Right to Remain, as our world becomes ever more bleak. To prepare for our future, an era of predictable unpredictability, we are doing a deep dive, thinking with our community again through one-to-ones and gatherings, about how we are going to achieve our mission. What steps can we take to build more [radical solidarity](#) and power in this climate? How are we, alongside our



community, going to collectively survive and thrive? We want to identify the limits of our current work and how to go beyond them. We want to clarify our role in movement building. We want to articulate better how and why our work is relational and why our ethos of mutual aid and radical solidarity matter. These deliberations will help us set out a clearer strategy for 2024/25 and beyond.

We don't know what's around the corner – but whatever happens, our relationships within our community remain our immediate line of defence and for this reason, we are prepared to invest our time to do this reflection and strategising exercise. If you want to have this conversation with us, please do get in touch. We are also planning to revive our Annual Gathering event in early 2024 – so do [stay tuned!](#)

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Therefore, for now, there are three elements that guide our work in 2023/24.

- 1. We will continue to increase the legal capability of people going through the asylum and immigration system**, and those who support them, to secure their status – by building, sustaining and growing communities of knowledge and praxis.
- 2. We will build more radical solidarity in our community and between movements and causes**, by increasing and diversifying the people and groups who are brought into the migration justice movement through alliance building, grassroots organising and communications work.
- 3. We will develop a clear strategy for our future** and establish and maintain an adequate organisational infrastructure which supports staff to be able to deliver strategy.

This means, amongst other things:

Through our legal education (Toolkit) and community organising (These Walls Must Fall) work, we will continue to **build relationships and radical solidarity with others**, strengthening the foundation of defence and support, as we face our uncertain future. We will be implementing a better structure to connect with our hub of Toolkit users and collaborators, particularly those who are new to this field, and organising and hosting more events and workshops to energise each other and plan for the future.

Last year, we were busy updating the Toolkit in light of the changes introduced by the Nationality and Borders Act. This year, **we anticipate a huge upheaval to the system when the Illegal Migration Act is introduced and will update our resources accordingly**. There is an immense level of anxiety and worry in our community about the impact of the Illegal Migration Act – this is a challenge unlike any other. We will be responding to this to find a way forward [together with our community](#).

We will strengthen the immigration (non-asylum) aspects of the Toolkit, on the topics for which there is no or little legal aid available. As a starter, we've just added a new Toolkit page on [the 10 year route to indefinite leave to remain](#). We want to speak to groups to get feedback and develop more action sections and workshops (tbc!). We are also in the process of collaborating with some specialist groups to produce more Toolkit pages.

We will strive to be the lead cheerleader of [grassroots groups doing amazing work](#) to support, defend and survive with people going through the asylum and immigration system. **People organising at the community level are the essential workers of the social justice movement, who create radical solidarity. We salute and value them.**

In 2023/24, we will be paying particular attention to how we do things and think more deeply about our relational work. In running our workshops and Toolkit Festivals in 2022/23, we learned that how we do our public legal education work determines whether we are really able to nurture radical solidarity on the ground. If we simply put our resources on the Internet, no matter how good they might be, they are only consumed as information that helps individuals. We need to deliver our resources in the context of community and relationships so that people can join the dots between individual struggles of securing their immigration status and collectively defending the community and challenging and changing the system. There was one piece of feedback from our Toolkit Festivals that we saw repeatedly – that our community felt *re-energised* through their interactions with us and others at these events. Where before they were demotivated, exhausted and burnt-out from relentless attacks on refugees and migrants, they now felt their collective power, both practically and deep within their spirit. There is clear value in

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us showing up again and again, sharing our approach of mutual aid and radical solidarity and what we can do together to amplify each other through connections. People who attend our workshops recognise this power. We want to leverage these connections to build even more power to fight for migration justice together and create an alternative society that protects us all.



These Walls Must Fall gathering Sheffield May 2022

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SOLIDARITY

We would like to thank everyone who has worked with Right to Remain in 2022/23.

Everyone who used our Toolkit, shared our social media posts, wore our No One Is Illegal T-shirts, came to our events – every one of you helped us reach closer to our goal of creating a world where everyone has the right to remain where they need to be.

We are grateful to the funders who believe in our vision and have supported our work, including A B Charitable Trust, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Evan Cornish Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Legal Education Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Society of Holy Child Jesus.

In particular, we appreciate individual donors, who make regular and one-off donations to us.

Last but not least, thank you to our community of migrants, refugees, people seeking asylum and everyone else who stands in radical solidarity with us and has joined our journey to create a world where no one is illegal. You gift us with courage, and are the reason we fight on.



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**RIGHT
TO REMAIN**

Charity number 1192934

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**MIGRATION IS LIFE.
NO ONE IS ILLEGAL.
THESE WALLS MUST FALL.**