



Suggested post-election engagement strategy to address the (Immigration) Legal Aid crisis

Summary

The [Right to Remain Toolkit](#) is a comprehensive, accessible, step-by-step guide to the UK immigration and asylum system. Its dissemination amongst Members of Parliament (MPs), their staff, and constituents will significantly increase literacy around and navigation of the legal system, particularly for those constituents who are without legal representation, and increase their understanding of the issues faced by people without legal representation.

Issue

Civil Legal Aid is facing a [crisis](#), with a majority of eligible individuals left unrepresented as they move through the immigration, and particularly asylum system. Many resort to seeking help from their MPs, as they are not able to access quality legal advice.

Immigration law and policy has changed drastically in the last five years: from the introduction of the Inadmissibility Rules, Streamlined Asylum Process, and Illegal Migration Act, to graduate and seasonal worker visas. These changes have impacted the ability of those in the system, those supporting them, and decision makers, to navigate it.

In turn, multiple backlogs (for instance, of initial [decisions](#) from the Home Office, of First-Tier Tribunal [appeal hearings](#), or receipt of [BRP](#) residence permits) are causing further challenges for those who remain trapped in the system, and those advocating on their behalf.

Recommendation

To, through the Right to Remain Toolkit, provide MPs and their staff teams the opportunity to build knowledge of and education around the immigration system. This will better equip them to understand the demands and the issues raised by local groups and constituents, and increase their ability to handle constituents' inquiries. Critically, this helps them understand the real impact of the Legal Aid crisis.

The Toolkit is a tried and tested resource, used regularly by over 400 groups across the UK, from small grassroots organisations to national charities. Our public legal education initiatives and Toolkit are widely considered to be the infrastructure that underpins the entire migration sector and supports many others. Most importantly, the Toolkit is designed for non-specialists in mind; perfect for MPs and their staff.

Contact

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