

SALFORD RAPAR

(Salford Refugee and Asylum seeker Participatory Action Research)

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7th November 2002

Dear

There follows a research based report of a sequence of events currently affecting the personal safety of 2 people who are asylum seekers living in Salford. The report concludes with key recommendations and your organisation is asked to respond to us as soon as possible

Yours sincerely

Donna Hewitt, Project Manager, Salford RAPAR

Names: F S NASS Ref: 01*
A A B A NASS Ref: 01*

Address: ***** Eccles, Salford,

1. Case Study

1.1. **20.10.02**

The balcony door of property is broken and people enter and lock the front door from inside. The following items are stolen from the house: £70, Cassette and CD Tapes, Clothes (shirts and trousers). The tenants call the police. The police use a ladder to enter the house. Tenants advised not to touch anything.

1.2. **21.10.02**

Police return to scan for fingerprints. They promise to contact the Salford Housing Asylum Team and Eccles Housing Association.

1.3. A second attack takes place. Kitchen and bedroom windows are broken. The tenants call the Police. Once again the police scan for fingerprints. Police advise the tenants to call again if anything else happens. Tenants stay in the house.

1.4. **22.10.02**

One of the tenants visits the Salford Housing Asylum Team office at 10:30am and tells L* (a member of the asylum team) that the flat has been broken into. Linda tells him to go home and she promises to talk to the staff. Tenant says that he can't go home because it is not safe. L* repeats that she will talk to the staff.

1.5. **23.10.02**

Tenant receives a note from J D of the Salford Asylum Team asking him to contact the office on *****

1.6. **24.10.02**

Tenant rings Salford Asylum Team office and an appointment is made for a member of the team to visit the house and assess the damage.

1.7 **25.10.02**

Support worker (J D) visits and writes a report about the situation and looks around the flat. She instructs the tenant to call her immediately if he has any other problem.

1.8. One of the broken windows is repaired, the balcony door is not properly repaired – it cannot be opened. The Eccles/Irlam Housing Group send two letters confirming, firstly, a visit on 28th October with the job completed by 4th November and, secondly, that they will come to repair the door on the 5th November and the job will be completed by November 12th

1.9. **29.10.02**

Third break in. Tenants call the police. The advice given by the police is: "We can't do much you are living in Salford and it is not very safe for you". The experience of the tenants is that the police are not sympathetic at all and they keep on laughing as if nothing bad has happened to the tenants.

1.10. **30.10.02.**

M*, a housing support officer from Salford Asylum Team comes at 11.00am. He writes and he looks around the flat. M* says that the area is not safe. He takes the tenants phone number and they are still waiting for him to call. A tenant tells M* that he cannot stay here and M* says "OK, but when you go leave the lights on."

1.11. The tenants decide to not stay at the house and begin to live with friends.

1.12. **3.11.02**

Tenant tries to get into the house to retrieve some papers. He is confronted by 13 teenagers (they and three motor bikes) who insult him. He enters the property and then leaves very fast. He chooses not to report this incident to the police.

1.13. **4.11.02.**

Tenant goes back to Salford Asylum Housing team and is advised to contact NASS and let them know what has happened to him and his flatmate.

2. Key Points/Questions

2.1. When the incident of attack was reported to Salford Asylum Team on the 23rd October, the following agents should have been contacted immediately and a quick solution to the problem found:

- Anti Social Behaviour Team
- Police
- NASS Racial Harassment Team
- Tenant Participation Unit
- Community Safety

2.2. Asylum Seekers who have been housed in * and * on S* Rd have always experienced racial harassment - it is not a new problem at these properties. Why has there been no communication with the relevant agents in order to solve this problem in the past?

2.3. Were the local community police contacted for protection until alternative accommodation could be provided?

2.4. Was an alternative accommodation offered?

3. Recommendations

3.1. Tenants should be rehoused within Salford where there are people who know them and speak their language and where they can experience some support.

3.2. Both these houses should be taken of the NASS contract as it is not safe for Asylum Seekers to be housed at these addresses.

- 3.3. The Salford Asylum Team has responsibility for the safety and well being of their clients and therefore procedures should be followed by this team in order that they meet their remit of support.
- 3.4. There should be communication links established between different services in the city who are involved with the safety of Salford communities. For example Community Safety Unit, Anti Social Behaviour and the local area housing office.
- 3.5. There should be a strong communication link between agencies, asylum seeking communities and the local police in areas where Asylum Seekers are being placed.
- 3.6. The information sent out by the police should be in the appropriate languages.
- 3.7. Staff in support and service provision agencies should be supported themselves to develop their understanding and abilities to respond to the needs of asylum seekers.
- 3.8. Opportunities need to be developed for dialogue to begin within localities between asylum seeking people and other local residents.