

Ben Bradshaw MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA



Exeter City of Sanctuary  
c/o CoLab  
King William Street  
Exeter  
EX4 6PD

20/11/16

Ref: Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

Dear Ben

We are writing to you to thank you for your recent letters and assistance as regards advocating for unaccompanied asylum seeking children. Clare Henry, who contacted you on behalf of our campaigns group, has passed on your letters to the group.

Following your contact with Labour County Councillors many of our supporters did subsequently write to their council representatives, some receiving very positive and supportive responses. As you know we were wanting Devon County Council to accept and care for some of those unaccompanied children who either make their own way to the UK or are eligible for transfer from Europe under Dubs or Dublin 111 agreement. We are pleased that Devon County Council has since released a public statement committing to accommodating up to 25 children in foster or host families by March '17 and hope this commitment will continue after this date. We did receive a reply from John Hart to our letters, informing us of this commitment, and you have seen our response to him saying how welcome this news was.

As you know more recently Devon has hosted a temporary Home Office emergency respite facility for UASC. This also was positive news. We understand that most of these children are being, or have already been moved, to other parts of the UK to reunite with their families. At this point therefore we are somewhat unclear as to whether any unaccompanied children have as yet been legally accommodated by DCC in foster/host families, to remain in Devon on a longer term basis- as their press release indicated?

As regards action by national government thank you Ben for raising this matter with the Home Secretary. It was good to see some positive movement last month in response to the impending demolition of the Calais camp and public pressure, with 300 children being brought to the UK after months of waiting.

The remaining children at Calais however, over 1,500, suffered desperately during the demolition and although currently in reception centres throughout France, 'Safe Passage UK' has this week reported that transfers to the UK have come to a halt. There is no confirmation as to when they will restart, or for how many. We are certain you share our concern for the trauma and suffering these children have endured. It is almost unimaginable that this is now being further added to by the UK Government's backtracking on their promises for swift assessment and transfers. Exeter City of Sanctuary had written to Amber

Rudd earlier this month as regards these issues and we enclose a copy of this letter for your information.

Our campaigns group will be meeting again very soon to consider any further responses. In the meantime thank you for your actions to date and your support for Exeter City of Sanctuary. If you have any further information you can share with us we would be very grateful to receive it.

Finally, as you can see above, we now have our own mail address separate from Refugee Support Devon.

Your key contact for administration and reporting is Wendy Milne: Exeter City of Sanctuary, C/o COLAB, King William St. Exeter EX4 6PD  
[info@exeter.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:info@exeter.cityofsanctuary.org)

With best wishes,

Signed: Wendy Milne on behalf of Exeter City of Sanctuary Campaigns Group

[info@exeter.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:info@exeter.cityofsanctuary.org)

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