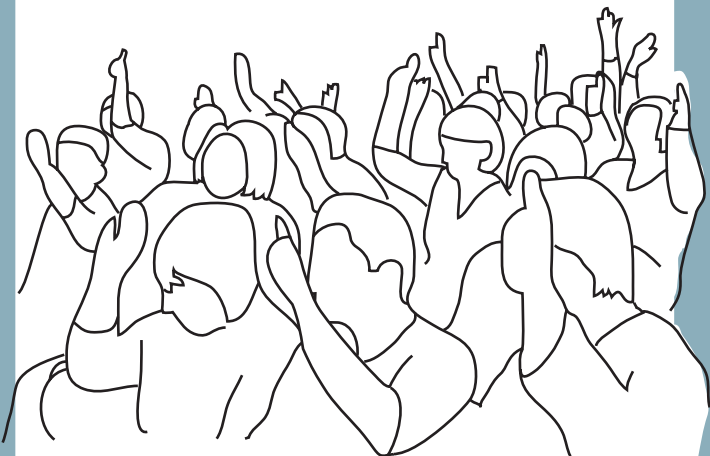


DEFEATING RACISM

in the Local Government Elections



This leaflet gives political campaigners the **facts about migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees and Travellers.**

It dispels commonly held myths and outright lies spread by far-right groups.

It is for council candidates, their agents and party activists when canvassing and producing campaign materials for the local government elections in May.

Whether far-right groups stand in your community or not, **it is important that all campaigners are not drawn into divisive, racially-motivated messages.**

DEFEATING RACISM

Steps to take if racism and prejudice become a part of the campaigning in your ward:

DO NOT engage in that agenda either directly or through campaign materials. Never try to answer prejudice with prejudice.

CONTACT your Wales party headquarters for advice. They are working with us to address and counter the threat from the far right.

REPORT any activity that simply exploits prejudice to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

I weld y pamffled hwn yn Gymraeg, ewch i wtuc.org.uk



DEFEATING RACISM

Further advice and information



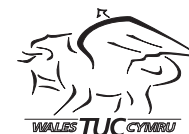
Wales TUC Cymru

029 2034 7010

wtuc@tuc.org.uk

wtuc.org.uk

equalatwork.org



**Equality and Human Rights
Commission**

0845 6048810

equalityhumanrights.com

Welsh Refugee Council

029 2048 9800

welshrefugeecouncil.org

Facts about TRAVELLERS

There are various communities across Wales whose traditional lifestyle means they are not settled in permanent housing. Most are from Gypsy or Irish Traveller backgrounds. Some have moved into bricks and mortar homes, but still face prejudice from some in their local community.

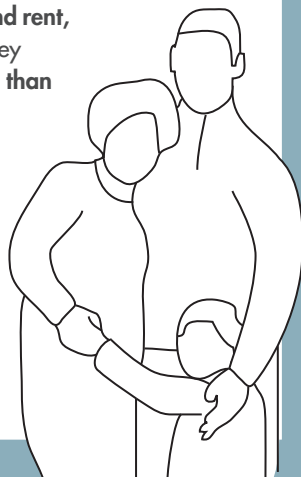
Others live in caravans for which, in some cases, there are not sufficient pitches on recognised sites. Local councils have a responsibility to plan properly for their accommodation.

The exact number of those who see themselves as Gypsies or Travellers in Wales is not known. There are somewhere up to 3,000 in caravans around Wales.

Because many Traveller families cannot find space on council and other sites, they have to stop where they can. Yet the total amount of land required to provide sufficient spaces for the caravans that need them in Wales would be little more than the area of a couple of football pitches.

Travellers and Gypsies pay taxes and rent, and the police around Wales say they are no more likely to commit crime than anyone else.

Yet their health is much worse - they live about a decade less than the average life expectancy - and face widespread prejudice, with their children often bullied in school and some caravans subjected to attacks.



Facts about REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

A **refugee** is someone who has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of their race, religion, nationality, social group, or political opinion, is outside their country of origin, and is unable, or owing to such fear, unable to return to it.

An **asylum seeker** is someone who is waiting for his or her application to be recognised as a refugee to be considered by the Government.

Asylum seekers come to the UK seeking protection. They do not come to the UK to claim benefits and most know very little about the asylum system before they arrive.

A single asylum seeker aged 25 or over gets just £39.34 a week. Those aged 18 to 25 years old get £31.15. This is around two-thirds the level of income support. Asylum seekers are not allowed to work to support themselves, despite the fact that many are professional people, such as doctors, engineers and teachers, whose skills are in short supply in Wales.

The cost of supporting and housing asylum seekers does not come out of local Council Tax. The full costs of housing and supporting asylum seekers are paid by the Home Office direct to the Council and to private sector housing providers.

Health authorities do not prioritise asylum seekers over local people. Asylum seekers are entitled to register with a local GP and do receive most services from the NHS, but they must go through the same processes as everyone else.

Facts about MIGRANT WORKERS

A **migrant worker** is someone who has come to the UK specifically to find or take up work, whether intending to remain permanently or temporarily and whether documented or undocumented. Migrant workers come from all across the world, including Europe, the USA, Australia and China.

Migrant workers are crucial to providing services, and evidence shows that migrant workers contribute more to the economy than they receive in benefits and services.

A number of migrant workers are in professional and highly skilled occupations and help to fill key skills gaps. Most migrant workers take on low-paid and low-skilled work where there are labour shortages.

Both Welsh workers and migrant workers can face poor conditions of employment. What distinguishes migrant from UK workers is migrant workers' inability to speak English and their lack of awareness of their rights in the UK.

Language barriers prevent migrant workers from accessing services and advice, which makes it much harder to integrate into local communities.

There were over 50 recorded incidents of racism, abuse and attacks UK-wide on Polish migrants in the media in 2007, with many more going unreported.

More information about migrant workers can be found at wtuc.org.uk.