



Kent Refugee Help – Statement and Message of support for the Dover Action We stand with You, Saturday 5th September, 11 am, Dover Market Square.

We support the Dover peaceful action for Refugees and Migrants on 5th of September.
Kent Refugee help believes in equal rights for everyone.
We stand by people fleeing war, violence and extreme poverty.

Kent Refugee Help is a charity that assists foreign nationals detained in prisons who are liable to deportation. We think that the double punishment of deportation after completing a prison sentence is discriminatory and wrong. It separates families and friends and denies the positive contribution made by people who have been convicted of an offence who should be offered rehabilitation and the chance to make reparations. We are aware that many of our clients have been affected by trauma, poverty and racism and this has contributed to their offending.

We welcome refugees and migrants to the UK and are saddened by the negative and hostile responses to new arrivals expressed in the media and by politicians such as the Dover MP Natalie Elphick who shamefully advocated the return to France of unaccompanied asylum- seeking children! Now far right groups are planning to visit Dover and make political capital from this.

Under international law anyone has the right to apply for asylum in any country that has signed the 1951 Refugee Convention. A person seeking asylum is not bogus and no human being is illegal. International Law does not state that refugees must claim asylum in the first country they reach. In fact, it is developing countries, not the UK that look after the majority of the world's refugees. Asylum claims fell by 40% during the lock down period due to the Covid 19 virus. There are no safe routes which is why people, including lone children fall victim of traffickers and people smugglers. Many are drowning through crossing the channel in fragile boats or dying when smuggled into lorries like the 39 found dead in Essex at the end of last year

It is borders not migrants that create the problems; cruel barriers that prevent people in a desperate situation seeking sanctuary and beginning a new life. The latest anti-asylum campaign is a distraction from the way our government has failed us, imposing a decade of austerity and now unnecessary deaths from Corona Virus due to their incompetence. We have so much more in common with oppressed peoples than those who seek to divide us. Concern for others and cooperation was paramount during the darkness of Lockdown. Let us extend that good will and solidarity to people who need shelter from across the world.

Kent Refugee Help
www.kentrefugeehelp.org.uk

Image, Confrontation, by Nasrin Parvaz
<http://nasrinparvaz.org/>