

LEWISHAM BOROUGH OF SANCTUARY

A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE



The Borough of Sanctuary campaign is an initiative set up and led by the Lewisham Migration Forum and Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network.

We are a community, grassroots campaign seeking to make Lewisham a place where migrants, refugees and asylum seekers can find sanctuary and rebuild their lives.

Our aim is ambitious but simple: We want to create a place that is welcoming, safe and which promotes integration and a sense of belonging. A place which recognises that differences can bring us together if we want to.

We want this to be a movement led by people who live and work in Lewisham and who want to help create a borough which can be a safe home for people moving here.

To achieve this we have developed a manifesto for change which can help visualise what a borough of sanctuary could look like, but we encourage everyone to contribute their ideas.

In collaboration with over 30 organisations we have come up with 10 steps we believe are key to initiate this process.

Our vision is one where:

1. Children in need can access Free School Meals, regardless of their parents' immigration status
2. There is adequate provision of free ESOL classes
3. Migrants are not charged for accessing NHS services and are able to register with a GP to access primary health care
4. A network of Schools of Sanctuary is established by the community and is actively supported by the Council
5. Buddying, mentoring and hosting schemes exist to help people integrate and feel less isolated
6. The banking sector respects the right of refugees to open a bank account
7. Have a network of local 'champions' able to embed the Sanctuary campaign in various sectors and areas
8. The Council supports key national campaigns aimed at improving the wellbeing and human rights of migrants
9. There is a garden of Sanctuary - a place where people can reconnect with nature and improve their mental wellbeing
10. There is a regular forum where migrants and refugees, and those supporting them can meet, learn from each other and collaborate