

GoWell is a collaborative partnership between the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, the University of Glasgow and the MRC Social and Public Health Sciences Unit, sponsored by Glasgow Housing Association, the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde.

The graphic features two stylized human silhouettes. The one on the left is teal and contains the title text. The one on the right is grey and contains the date. Both are positioned in the lower half of the page.

**GoWell  
Findings:  
Asylum Seekers  
and Refugees in  
Glasgow's  
Regeneration  
Areas, 2006-7**

April 2009

*GoWell is a planned ten-year research and learning programme that aims to investigate the impact of investment in housing, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. It commenced in February 2006 and has a number of different research components. This paper is part of a series of Briefing Papers which the GoWell team has developed in order to summarise key findings and policy and practice recommendations from the research. Further information on the GoWell Programme and the full series of Briefing Papers is available from the GoWell website at: [www.gowellonline.com](http://www.gowellonline.com)*



## INTRODUCTION

The city of Glasgow has been accommodating asylum seekers since 1999, under contractual arrangements with the UK Home Office dispersal programme. By the end of the first five-year contract (2005), some 12,000 asylum seekers had been accommodated in the city, with 2,500 social rented housing units having been made available for this purpose. The research reported here took place in the two years after this initial period of settlement, when the initial contract with the Home Office had been extended.

Initially, asylum seekers were housed in particular areas across the city, mostly in mass housing estates of high-rise flats where there were higher levels of empty properties. These estates are generally well located for access to services in the city centre. At the time of our research, 885 flats had been let to Glasgow City Council (GCC) for use under the National Asylum Seeker Support (NASS) programme in four of the estates included in our study (Red Road, Sighthill, Shawbridge, and Scotstoun multi-storey flats); this was out of a total of around 7,200 dwellings in all sectors in these four locations<sup>1</sup>. A further 115 flats in these areas were occupied as 'leave to remain' properties, where a temporary tenancy has been given to families granted refugee status pending rehousing. So, around 1-in-7 of all properties in the four estates were being used for asylum seeker and refugee (ASR) accommodation. In addition, a significant number of asylum seekers who achieve refugee status (after being given leave to remain in the UK) become Scottish Secure Tenants in the same property (rather than occupying the dwelling under a licence to the NASS Programme).

Over 400 properties in these areas were also let to GCC under a separate agreement to provide temporary furnished accommodation for homeless people. The nature of the population of these areas has therefore changed significantly since 1999, from estates let largely to Scottish households in Scottish Secure tenancies (albeit with high turnover) to estates with high proportions of ASRs and those temporarily housed as homeless.

The estates in question were declared as regeneration areas in 2005 in a joint approach agreed between GCC (the strategic authority) and Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) (the landlord in the areas following housing stock transfer in 2003). So, at the same time as seeking to accommodate and integrate large numbers of immigrants, the communities were also undergoing the early stages of transformational redevelopment involving the demolition of high-rise flats and the construction of newly built houses.

<sup>1</sup> Based on GHA data for 2005. See GoWell Working Paper No.2. *Selection, Definition and Description of Study Areas*





## METHODOLOGY

The findings reported here come from the first wave of the GoWell community health and wellbeing survey in 2006 and focus group discussions in 2007. The survey and focus group discussions were conducted for GoWell by BMG Research Ltd. GoWell is a long-term study of the health and wellbeing impacts of housing investment and regeneration upon individuals, households and communities in Glasgow.

Although the situation of ASRs is not the main focus of GoWell, given the lack of research evidence on this group in Glasgow and Scotland generally, we thought it would be worth presenting the evidence we have gathered on the experience of ASRs, together with some of the views of other local people, as a contribution to recording the progress of communities which undergo this unique experience of accommodating and integrating displaced groups from other countries.

### *The Community Survey*

A stratified random sample of householders was interviewed across 14 study communities in Glasgow. The achieved sample of 6,016 adults included 730 people who described their citizenship status as being an asylum seeker or refugee; all but 33 of these people lived in six regeneration areas. The vast majority of our ASR participants lived in four high-rise estates: Red Road, Sighthill, Scotstoun multi-storey flats, and Shawbridge.

### *Focus Groups*

Twelve focus group discussions were held in August and September 2007, in six regeneration areas and in two of the areas surrounding multi-storey flats. The locations concerned were: the Red Road, Sighthill and Shawbridge estates (all Transformational Regeneration Areas); the Local Regeneration Areas of St Andrews Drive, Gorbals Riverside, and the Scotstoun multi-storey flats at Kingsway Court and Plean Street; and the wider Red Road and wider Scotstoun areas. The majority of focus groups had six to eight participants, recruited from databases of contacts supplied by GHA. Of the 81 focus group participants, 30 were men and 51 were women, with a mixture of ages or life-stages in each group.

Most of the focus groups were with local adults, but four of the focus groups were held specifically with ASRs: in Red Road, Sighthill, Shawbridge and Scotstoun. The participants in these groups were immigrants who could communicate in English.

The focus group discussions were intended to collect people's views about their sense of belonging and community in their area; the area's image and reputation; recent changes in the area; and what they thought about the regeneration process.



## FINDINGS

We report findings in relation to the following areas:

- Profile of ASRs.
- The human capital of ASRs: health and education.
- ASR views on the environment and fixed capital of neighbourhoods.
- The social and community capital of ASRs.
- The views of the local Scottish population.



## PROFILE OF ASRS

ASRs include a wide range of nationalities and ethnicities; the largest groupings are of African and Asian (other than Indian) origin, with much smaller numbers from white or Chinese ethnic groups.

We found that ASRs tended to be younger (very few over the age of 65) and less likely to have a disability or long-term illness than the local Scottish population. The average household size was larger than local Scottish households with a higher proportion of families with children: over three-quarters of ASR households were families with children, compared with only 40 per cent of Scottish households in the same areas.

Most of the ASR population had no choice about moving to Scotland. They were told that they were moving and that accommodation would be allocated on arrival:

**“Before I came here I lived in Newcastle. That’s when I claimed my asylum so my husband and kids, they joined me a year later. So when they came they were sent here to Glasgow because they said in England they don’t have accommodation in families, so I had to move from Newcastle to here.”**

*(ASR, Sighthill)*

**“We had no choice with some of the places we were at. We were just given a letter saying you’re going to Glasgow. Some went to Birmingham but mainly families came here.”**

*(ASR, Sighthill)*



## THE HUMAN CAPITAL OF ASRS

We can consider the potential human resource represented by ASRs by examining their health and educational status compared with the local Scottish population. Being healthy and well-educated are important foundations for achieving integration, both through paid work and through unpaid voluntary activity.

### Health

From the community survey in 2006, we found ASRs to be in better health than their Scottish neighbours, even controlling for age and sex differences:

- Overall, 95 per cent of refugees and 88 per cent of asylum seekers rated their health as 'good' or 'excellent', compared with 78 per cent of Scottish residents.
- Beyond age 39, for both men and women, residents from minority ethnic groups (the majority of whom were ASRs) had experienced fewer recent health problems (such as sleeplessness, coughs, pain) than their Scottish counterparts. For example, while only a fifth of ethnic minority males aged 40-54 reported a health problem in the past four weeks, this was true of more than a third of Scottish males in the same age group.
- Similarly, we found lower rates of reporting of long-term health problems (lasting for a year or more) among ethnic minority males and females in most age groups, apart from no differences for males aged 40-54, and females aged 16-24.

We also looked at health behaviours in the Transformational Regeneration Areas alone, so controlling for any environmental influences upon behaviours (since all respondents were in the same deprived areas). Here, we found large differences in the prevalence of health-damaging behaviours:

- While a majority (56 per cent) of the local Scottish population reported being current cigarette smokers, this was true of less than a fifth (18 per cent) of ASRs.
- Very few (8 per cent) of ASRs said they drank alcohol, compared with 44 per cent of Scottish residents in the same areas. Furthermore, those ASRs who did drink alcohol, consumed on average a third less units per week than the Scottish residents.

Health-enhancing behaviours were more common among ASR respondents:

- 40 per cent of ASRs reported eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables per day, compared with 31 per cent of Scottish residents. However, consumption of takeaway food was similar between the groups, with 30 per cent and 27 per cent respectively eating two or more main meals per week from a fast food outlet.
- From age 25 upwards, walking around the neighbourhood (which we can consider as a form of physical activity) is more common among ASRs than among the Scottish population in the same areas.

## THE HUMAN CAPITAL OF ASRS

### Education

We found very little difference in levels of educational qualifications between ASR respondents and their Scottish neighbours:

- The vast majority of all resident adult groups within Transformational Regeneration Areas had no educational qualifications: 75 per cent of Scottish residents; 76 per cent of refugees; 86 per cent of asylum seekers.
- Very few ASRs had a degree: 1 per cent of asylum seekers; 8 per cent of refugees. This finding is in contrast to a report from a few years earlier which gave the impression of a higher rate of university-level qualification, stating that a fifth of ASRs had “completed a university education”<sup>2</sup> (Fraser of Allander, 2005).

While the wording of our questions (which was different from the previous study) may not have elicited full information on educational qualifications from respondents, we think the apparent drop in the proportion of ASRs with high-level qualifications is most likely explained by the shifts that have taken place over time in the country of origin and circumstances of departure of ASRs (i.e. leaving a conflict zone will disrupt the completion of one’s education).

## ASR VIEWS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND FIXED CAPITAL OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

All respondents in the study were asked to rate the quality of their local neighbourhood environments along several dimensions. As expected, ratings in the Transformational Regeneration Areas, where most ASRs live, are lower than in other social housing areas. Within this, we can identify some similarities and differences in the views of ASRs living in the four high-rise estates:

- The ratings given by ASRs are lower (by up to 8 percentage points) than those of the local Scottish residents for the attractiveness of the buildings and environment: around two-in-five ASRs rate these things as ‘fairly good’ or ‘very good’.
- The ratings of ASRs are very similar to those of the local Scottish residents in respect of parks, open spaces and play areas, with around a third considering these things to be ‘fairly good’ or ‘very good’.

ASRs particularly value the local schools and churches; both being institutions which have made efforts to support the immigrant groups:

**“The only thing which I see in this area which is good is the church and is the schools our children, the schools they are in. That’s what can make me stay in this area if I can move from this, that’s the only thing.”**

(ASR, Red Road)

<sup>2</sup> Fraser of Allander (2005) The Impact of Asylum Seekers on the Glasgow Economy. Glasgow: University of Strathclyde.



### *Social Networks and Social Support*

Both the community survey and the focus group discussions provide information about the social networks and social support available to ASRs.

Generally, asylum seekers fared better than refugees in terms of the availability of social contact:

- Frequent social contact is less common among refugees than among asylum seekers: typically 33-44 per cent of refugees (depending on household type) have daily contact with someone (friends, relatives or neighbours), compared with 41-57 per cent of asylum seekers.

ASRs appear to have more sources of social support available to them than the local Scottish population:

- Sources of social support (practical, financial and emotional) are more common among ASRs than among the Scottish population in the regeneration areas. 63 per cent of asylum seekers and 65 per cent of refugees report having all three supports available, compared with 58 per cent of Scottish residents.
- A quarter of Scottish residents and of refugees lack all three forms of social support, compared with 17 per cent of asylum seekers.

The higher levels of social support reported by ASRs may be due to the availability of special services provided to them, but may also be a function of the fact that ASRs, almost by virtue of their circumstances, provide a social support network for each other:

**“Maybe we feel we belong to this area because most of the people are asylum seekers, they have the same problems they can share their experiences. So if you can find anybody that can take you to a lawyer, or if you need something you can ask anybody, and nobody knows anything about asylum seekers in other areas, so you feel safer in here, integrated together.”**

*(ASR, Shawbridge)*



## THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY CAPITAL OF ASRs

### *Safety and Belonging*

Both local Scottish residents and ASRs talked about the wider problems they perceived in the areas. These included teenagers hanging around on the streets, gang activity, vandalism /graffiti and people being drunk or rowdy in public places. Not feeling safe, however, was a major reason for people not feeling that they belonged in the area.

ASRs faced a particular kind of infringement on their safety and belonging in the form of harassment from local youths:

“...the surrounding community, especially the kids are very abusive. You meet them on the way if you are going to the shops, they block the way you came from. It is vandalism. You feel like you don’t belong to the area. Maybe you are supposed to be somewhere else.”

(ASR, Red Road)

“You know the security here is day-to-day, you don’t know what you are going to go through. There are times when you are going to work and meet the youths and all right they will be saying a lot and you feel that you want to move away, but then the following day is something else, so it just depends on the days when you feel like you belong.”

(ASR, Sighthill)

### *Mixing with the Local Population*

Some ASRs were concerned about their reception before they arrived:

“I specifically heard from London that there was so much racism in Scotland. You know people, when I tell them that the home office has asked me to move to Scotland, they were like oh my god you will get killed.”

(ASR, Sighthill)

“Before I arrived here someone say there was no good areas in Glasgow and the people they doesn’t like the foreign people when I arrive here at Dover.”

(ASR, Scotstoun)

However despite this perception, many were grateful to be away from the dangers in their own country and often found that Scottish people were friendly:

“It’s not true though. I used to live in London, I lived there for 18 months and I find the Scottish people friendlier than the English people. You know they’re not rude in England but it’s just that, it’s easier to expect people to come to you and laugh with you.”

(ASR, Sighthill)

“I have to say we’ve been here seven years now we haven’t got any problems here.”

(ASR, Scotstoun)





## THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY CAPITAL OF ASRs

ASRs report positive things about making friends with local, Scottish people:

**“I like this area and I like the people, I have so many friends, even Scottish friends. They come to my flat and I talk to them, even though theirs is a different culture and everything, but I think I’m managing. They know I have some restriction but they’re dealing with me very nicely.”**

*(ASR, Shawbridge)*

**“Yes now it is very good, because the people understood, and the Scottish people, now they mix really, they are our friends.”**

*(ASR, Sighthill)*

Many ASRs are pleased with the way their children have made friends with other local children:

**“For me, the kids. They have integrated so well, got loads of friends and most of them come around the house and we just feel like a family you know.”**

*(ASR, Sighthill)*

The churches also appear to have played a major role in harmonising the community and encouraging social integration. Churches were mentioned in many groups as a key place where the community can mix.

**“St Mary’s, it makes us like one community because they will call Muslim, Protestant and so when we are there, we feel we are one community.”**

*(ASR, Red Road)*

But some ASRs also say that they need help to know how to go about mixing with local people. It may be, for example, that the fact that many ASRs do not drink alcohol may limit their opportunities to mix.

**“You don’t have any time to participate with them. My wife and the family are from the same country, but don’t have time to participate with the Scottish people. But they don’t know what is the good way to do so.”**

*(ASR, Shawbridge)*

Nonetheless, there was a desire to be more mixed in the future:

**“They should not put all of asylum seekers into one area, there should be some other Scottish people living as well.”**

*(ASR, Red Road)*

**“We don’t want to separate this community from Scottish community, we want to be mixed. We are the same, we want to be part of this community and be treated like humans.”**

*(ASR, Red Road)*



## THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY CAPITAL OF ASRs

At the same time, some people wanted to mix with people (parents) who had a stronger orientation to educational achievement, conveying this to their children:

“So because I can see that most of them their children don’t like to go to school. They are friendly ok and they are helpful...I would like to live in area where the level of education is...I would like my children to integrate with more educated people than area I am living in.”

*(ASR, Shawbridge)*



## THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL SCOTTISH POPULATION

At the point in time when this research was conducted, the dominant narrative among local Scottish residents was one of the decline of the estates, associated with a lack of care of the housing, the removal of local amenities, and the presence of drug users and dealers. This decline provides a powerful context for residents’ views about ASRs, whose arrival is seen as further contributing to the decline:

“There’s been no investment has there? They moved a lot of people, the place just started wearing down and wearing down, it was anybody and everybody.”

*(Resident, Sighthill)*

### *Unease and Resentment*

In the first place, there was a view that there were simply too many ASRs in the area:

“There’s an attitude now where we’ve all got too many immigrants coming in, it’s not actually racial, it’s too many of them.”

*(Resident, Shawbridge)*

“I think they should actually scale down the amount of people they are letting in because I think they’re letting too many people in and there’s not enough houses, even for our people, to house them.”

*(Resident, Gorbals Riverside)*

Although the Scottish population in all these estates is considerably larger than the ASR population, it was clear that the significant immigrant population led to feelings of social unease and discomfort for some people:

“Just the black faces, there’s hundreds and just the odd white person. You feel intimidated.”

*(Resident, Scotstoun)*

“For somebody who used to be able to go down the park...now I wouldn’t walk down there. I used to go out in the summer down my block, sunbathing out having a laugh. The asylum seekers coming down...you don’t feel comfortable in your own place.”

*(Resident, Sighthill)*



## THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL SCOTTISH POPULATION

Local Scottish residents also echoed the views expressed in some sections of the national UK media that ASRs were given too much, too easily, and over and above what local people in need are given. Some felt that this amounted to discrimination against local 'working' people. This is partly due to the deprived nature of the areas concerned and the fact that improvements are long overdue:

**“And they get too much. The thing is that we’ve worked for years, getting a place. But as soon as they move in they’re getting brand new furniture everywhere. It’s kitted out right down to a brush and shovel, hoover, brush, everything.”**

*(Resident, Shawbridge)*

**“If they were treated equal to us instead of over us, being honest. It’s a case of they’ll get everything that’s going and the local community are told ‘oh yes we’ll get this done and that done eventually’.”**

*(Resident, Scotstoun)*

**“It’s causing the feeling that we’re being discriminated against.”**

*(Resident, Wider Scotstoun)*

Some people had the mistaken impression that ASRs would get priority access to new build housing:

**“I see them building the new houses across the road to me and there’s quite a few people have put their names down for them, but GHA I don’t think is right in saying that they prefer the coloured people from the flats are getting first priority, which I don’t find is right.”**

*(Resident, Red Road)*

Others were concerned that activities and facilities were provided for ASRs while none were provided for local people:

**“There’s a lot of things there for them, they’re in there and then Sunday’s you see them, not so much our kids, you know...”**

*(Resident, Scotstoun)*

We have not attempted to verify whether any of these perceptions of favourable treatment are well-founded, but clearly it would be unhelpful to allow them to go uncorrected (if correction is appropriate), since they foster resentment.

There was also resentment at the way ASRs had been brought into the estates without any or enough consultation with local people:

**“No, they never even approached the people within this area to say we’re going to bring in...but we should have been brought out to say we’re going to bring in however many there is.”**

*(Resident, Shawbridge)*



## THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL SCOTTISH POPULATION

### *Negative Impacts on the Area*

Local Scottish residents identified a number of ways in which they felt that the presence of ASRs was having a negative effect upon their area, starting with its image, i.e. that their neighbourhoods would become known for their ASR populations:

**“When I’m coming here from work on the bus, there’s coloured people, you can be sitting on the bus and you can hear people say ‘refugee city’.”** *(Resident, Sighthill)*

There was also an issue about the impact of foreign children on the local educational services:

**“It would help if they could separate the children who have adequate English and those who do not and bring those who do not up to standard before they bring them into main classes.”** *(Resident, St Andrews Drive)*

Residents complained about drug problems in many areas, claiming either that ASRs had caused or exacerbated the problem:

**“The trouble with kids, it started when the asylum seekers came in, there’s a big drug problem because they’re bringing it into this country. Prostitution, everything.”** *(Resident, Shawbridge)*

**“...they’re bringing them over and they’re using the flats to make crack cocaine.”** *(Resident, Wider Scotstoun)*

This narrative about the advent of drug problems on the estates (and similarly the concerns about the decline of the estates) gives the impression that these things were not problems before the arrival of asylum seekers; yet, reports from service-providers would confirm that this was indeed the case, suggesting that, to an extent, local problems are projected onto the newly arrived group.

Local Scottish residents were also concerned about the turnover in occupants, in both the asylum seeker flats and those leased to GCC for homeless people:

**“Now where I am living there’s a lot of short term tenants I think for various reasons whether they’re immigrants coming and going or people under rehab from different things and then moving on but there’s an awful big turnover.”** *(Resident, St Andrews Drive)*

Lastly, in the context of the regeneration of these areas, local Scottish residents who were frustrated about the slow progress of improvements link this to the arrival of ASRs, even though there are many reasons for delay relating to the practicalities of the regeneration process itself:

**“...there’s nothing getting done and I don’t mean this as racist, there’s more asylum seekers coming and the more that’s coming in, the less work that’s getting done. Every other area’s getting done.”** *(Resident, Scotstoun)*



## THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL SCOTTISH POPULATION

### *Clashes of Culture*

Some local Scottish residents see ASRs as behaving differently to themselves, and sometimes express affront that ASRs do not follow perceived rules of courtesy and collective behaviour. Of course, these comments raise the question as to whether local people are always courteous and rule-abiding to the same extent as expected of others. Further, some of the differences in collective behaviours may be because the flats occupied by ASRs are not directly managed by GHA in the same way as others, or as a result of language difficulties and not understanding the rules on the part of ASRs.

ASRs are seen as not following simple rules regarding stair-cleaning within the blocks, nor the disposal of rubbish:

**“They tell you directly they will not do the landing. They will not clean stairs. I’ve been told that umpteen times. We’ve reported them and nothing gets done.”** *(Resident, Sighthill)*

**“Beautiful houses and then all of a sudden it started to deteriorate. You’ve got the asylum seekers who would not put their rubbish down the shoot, you had sanitary towels lying all over the place...if they’re in my country they should respect the rules. They get so much given to them as well too.”** *(Resident, Shawbridge)*

On the other hand, some residents just thought that there was a general deterioration in the enforcement of standards, without blaming specific groups:

**“I think the blame lies with Glasgow City Council and then GHA who took over. They do not have any control over the tenants. If you go and report something you see they don’t do anything about it. When we first moved here there were lots of conditions, no dogs, no washings hanging out on the verandas. That’s all gone and nobody does anything about it.”** *(Resident, St. Andrews Drive)*

(Note that from a GHA perspective, although there have been some issues with ASRs in terms of estate management and anti-social behaviour, they are generally thought to be ‘good’ residents who keep their homes clean and tidy and behave well).

More generally, some local residents complain that ASRs do not speak English and do not exhibit common courtesies (which assumes that ASRs can speak English and know what the simple rules of behaviour are), associating both these things with ignorance in a basic sense:

**“Saying that the different types of, some of the immigrants can be very, very ignorant. Really, totally, truly ignorant. You see the door at the flats, they don’t hold it open for you, it’s let go. You get into the lift and they mutter away in their own language, and you don’t know what they’re saying.”** *(Resident, Scotstoun)*

**“...you can be standing at the bottom of the foyer, waiting in the lift and you can hear them blah, blah and I think that’s so ignorant, you can hear it as clear as day. If you’re speaking English, speak English when there’s somebody else there. That’s what I don’t like.”** *(Resident, Sighthill)*



## THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL SCOTTISH POPULATION

### *Sense of Community and Social Mixing*

The decline of community is a dominant narrative in many of the areas. These comments are typical:

“In the last 10/15 years it’s went downhill, it’s no longer a high amenity area...”  
“...there used to be [a strong sense of community ] but not now.”  
“There’s nothing to do.”

*(Residents, Shawbridge)*

Views about ASRs compound this perception of community decline with remarks such as:

“...they keep to themselves”; “they just ignore you”; “they’re very unsociable, they don’t mix.”

*(Residents, Sighthill)*

But as well as the claim about general attitudes, other factors are also seen as contributing to a lack of interaction and familiarity between local Scottish residents and ASRs. The rapidity of turnover and the concentration of ASRs in certain blocks and streets are seen as barriers:

“The biggest pain I’ve got with it is, I don’t know how many neighbours I’ve had to that side and that side. It’s like a conveyor belt. And they don’t care, but you’ve not got any time to build up any kind of relationship because they’ve no sooner move in and they’ve moved out.”

*(Resident, Sighthill)*

“See where I live there’s not any asylum, so I don’t know any asylum seekers, even when they come over here the centre puts them all in the [high] flats, all in the one patch so it’s on that street, they just put them all together...it feels like we don’t want them here.”

*(Resident, Red Road)*

The comments about ASRs keeping to themselves are somewhat qualified by a recognition that there is in fact a language barrier, and that having multiple nationalities makes things practically difficult:

“...there is no sense of community as such because you do get multi-cultural people staying in there, so just the language itself, you cannot even talk to each other so you find people just keep themselves to themselves. When you go out to the shops or you are going to the city, you can walk on your own so you are living in isolation.”

*(Resident, Red Road)*



## THE VIEWS OF THE LOCAL SCOTTISH POPULATION

Despite the negative views reported above, there is some interest among local Scottish residents in mixing with ASRs, having gala days, both to learn things from each other and simply to avoid the confrontation that can flow from separateness:

**“We could learn things about them and they could learn things from us. I think if everybody’s put together for fun days and things, and learn other people’s culture then people would understand about people that’s come into this country, rather than just stick them...”**

*(Resident, Red Road)*

**“They should mix us instead of keeping us separate. That’s the problem. It’s them and us.”**

*(Resident, Scotstoun)*

There was evidence that social integration was occurring. Both ASRs and local Scottish residents talked about the children getting on well together, and visiting one another’s homes, also thereby helping parents to know one another:

**“The children mix, well mine do. Mine have all sorts of friends round in. Then you have to go to the effort of making a vegetarian meal but it’s not that big a deal.”**

*(Resident, St Andrews Drive)*

Some of the ASRs also talked about the support they received from neighbours (both other ASRs and local people) when the Home Office was carrying out dawn raids to deport people:

**“...the neighbours, even the Scottish people, we have so many cases of this happening. They help the asylum seekers and they keep them inside their homes. And the Home Office comes and there’s nobody there as people try to help.”**

*(ASR, Shawbridge)*



## FUTURE RESEARCH

These findings from the first phase of GoWell raise a number of issues we shall return to examine in subsequent waves of the study, provided we retain sufficient participation by ASRs in the programme to do so. These issues include the following:

- At this stage, many ASRs have relatively good health, but low educational attainment. We are interested to see whether these aspects of human capital change over time as ASRs spend longer in Scotland. It is possible that their health and health behaviours could worsen, approaching local norms. On the other hand, a strong orientation towards education could reap advancements.
- Refugees appear to have lower social capital and a lower sense of community than asylum seekers. This may be due to the fact that pressures increase following the granting of 'leave-to-remain', and because refugees are perhaps distanced from the wider asylum seeker group at this point. However, over time, as more of the 'legacy' cases are dealt with, the refugee population should increase in size, and refugees may resolve some of the issues they face in achieving a form of settlement in Scotland. In the second phase of GoWell, we have collected additional information on length of residence in Scotland, and on the time which has elapsed since people's leave-to-remain decision, which may enable us to look more closely at differences between asylum seekers and refugees, and at how people's wellbeing changes with time spent in the country.
- Like other people living in regeneration areas, ASRs will be subject to residential disruption. It is clear that ASRs value the degree of integration and local familiarity they have achieved so far. Conversely, some feel that there are better places to live and bring up their children than the places they were placed in. Therefore, we will be interested to see how ASRs who move location fare compared with those who remain in the same estates over time.
- Although local schools, churches and voluntary groups in particular have played a major role in encouraging integration, it is clear that some sections of the local population, who are themselves very disadvantaged, feel resentment towards the new-comers and blame them for deterioration of the area and for a lack of improvements in the area; they also associate the presence of ASRs with a sense of community decline. Placing ASRs in areas subject to regeneration has clearly complicated the challenge of achieving integration. However, we shall be looking to see whether community relations improve and feelings of social unease recede as regeneration progresses and the areas are improved physically and in terms of the provision of local amenities.





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This paper has been produced on behalf of the GoWell team. The current GoWell team is as follows:


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