

- 1. We have a total lack of transparency on the site and the development thereof, we want to meet with the HO immediately to voice our concerns and listen to their proposals direct.**

A: We would be happy to arrange a meeting and to that end I have asked my team to be in touch with your office to find a convenient time.

- 2. Is this policy even legal? Have the government done any due diligence here to assess if the development of the site is legal?**

A: The government will comply with all relevant legal and regulatory regimes as the proposals develop.

- 3. The remarks from Suella Braverman which refer to those claiming asylum as having “Chanel migrants have values at odds with British people...coming here illegally and getting quickly involved with drugs, other exploitation, criminality and prostitution” and the risk therefore to our estate, the people on it, the security of our houses, the risk to the women and children on the estate – how can anyone claim that us as residents will be safe when the access route and gates for the centre are within 5 yards of the nearest properties – it is simply not something that can be managed.**

A: Migrants arriving in small boats are taken to facilities in Dover to begin processing. Searches are undertaken at Western Jet Foil followed by robust security checks and biometric tests at Manston. This includes checks against UK and international police databases. If anyone fails these checks, they are detained. Anyone transferred to the site will have been through these checks. The Government has a plan to stop the boats. Read more about it [here](#).

- 4. If there is a proposal to move the access gate for the asylum seekers, where would the intended access routes then be?**

A: At the present time, we are merely exploring proposals to use the site at Northeye and as such the full details of the site specifications are yet to be determined.

- 5. We have an estimated cost per asylum seeker of approx. £120/day, in addition to this we have the estimated refurbishment cost of all of the services that would support the site at £30-40m – how can this possibly be classified as value for taxpayer money when the existing cost of housing asylum seekers in hotels is approx. £115/day?**
- a. This above valuation excludes the cost of ongoing policing, management from the local authority and any additional security for the local residents.**

A: At the present time, we are merely exploring proposals to use the site and as such the full details of the site specifications are yet to be determined. Site surveys are extensive as we want to make sure this site is suitable for the community, area and asylum seekers. As you will understand these results will inform our plans and allow us to then assess the cost and value for money for the taxpayer. At present the asylum system is costing us £3bn per annum and the use of hotels to accommodate migrants now stands at £6m per day.

- 6. The cost and losses to the town itself will exceed expectations by a long margin – how is it acceptable for a town which has significant problems with regeneration to now be faced with this, the town of Bexhill will not grow, it will not attract new investment and will not be an attractive solution for people to consider to live close to because of this.**

A: This Government is taking action to address the unacceptable costs of housing migrants in hotels, which is costing the taxpayer around £6 million a day. Bexhill has been identified as an alternative to hotels as a site that is suitable for the purposes of asylum seeker accommodation. Alternative large sites such as surplus military land and this site at Bexhill are not only more affordable for taxpayers than hotels, but also more manageable and orderly than hotels for communities, thanks to healthcare and catering facilities on site, 24/7 security and purpose-built basic accommodation. The sites would open up jobs and investment to local areas through employment roles on site, for example through catering and maintenance roles.

These sites on their own will not end the use of hotels, but they will relieve pressure on communities and manage asylum seekers in a more appropriate and cost-effective way, reducing incentives for people to travel through safe countries and bringing us in line with the approach being taken by other countries around Europe.

- 7. Why is the site being referred to as HMP Northeye? This site is officially named “Land South of Coneyburrow Lane and Barnhorn Road” – this site has been derelict for over 15 years and has not formally been HMP Northeye since at least 1993.**

A: We are aware of the circumstances of the site. These terms have been used as shorthand and not intended to mislead.

- 8. When did the government decide that it was policy to purchase private land to house asylum seekers? The outward communications to the public have all stated the government would focus on ex-military bases.**

A: The Home Secretary is under a statutory obligation to provide accommodation for asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. As such and given the volumes of asylum-seekers we are seeing, the government needs to consider a broad range of options to meet this statutory duty.

I recognise that there will be concerns raised by local communities. We will continue to engage with local authorities and key stakeholders to ensure the impact of the sites is minimised and that appropriate support is in place for the wider community.

This includes working closely with the local authorities, police, health providers and other agencies in matters relating to the operation of the sites, safety and security. The safety and security of the local community, asylum seekers, staff and visitors to the sites is of paramount importance.

- 9. The policy of choosing 1200 young men only, why is this appropriate for the site? Why would the government not consider a mixed solution – do the government think that because this is in one of the worst areas for regeneration in the country that putting men only here would not be a problem? Do they assume that we the electorate would not care in this location?**

A: The Home Office understands the concerns of the community and wants to work with key stakeholders to manage the impact of using these sites, this will include liaising with local police to make sure appropriate arrangements are in place.

The vast majority (c.80%) of those arriving via small boat are single adult males under the age of 40 with the government under a legal obligation to accommodate those who would be

otherwise be destitute. However, because we do not as yet have a confirmed suite of plans, no decision has been made on any cohort for the site at Bexhill other than these would be asylum seekers. Whoever is accommodated will go through security checks that include safeguarding and Police checks and checks against international databases. A specialist security provider would be on site 24/7, introducing measures such as mobile CCTV units to deter and identify any vandalism, criminal, or anti-social behaviour. We are working with local police to ensure appropriate policing for the site and local community. By designing the site to be as self-sufficient as possible we would minimise the impact on local communities and services.

**10. Will the government follow process and provide an impact assessment for the development of the site? If anything on the properties is changed right down to changing a window on any of the existing properties there has to be an impact assessment performed. As we understand it there will be a requirement for a total refresh of the properties including new buildings needing new footings, services etc – When will confirmation that the impact assessment will be made and provided?**

A: The proposals currently under investigation for Bexhill are to provide safe, secure and fit for purpose accommodation. Onsite facilities would be designed to ensure the essential needs of those accommodated there are met. There would be robust processes in place to assess and manage the requirements of anyone who would be accommodated at the site.

- i. **We have a significant issue on the estate with the existing services provided to our properties, any increase in the number of people being on the site would have significant impact on our own services to our houses – everything needs to be updated.**

A: We are dedicated to engaging with the community and stakeholders - including the police and NHS - to ensure we take on board their views as plans develop.

**11. When will we be provided with a copy of the toxicology reports? As residents on site we have significant concerns on the impact that could happen, with us being so close to the site, and the clear up operations to remove asbestos for example would have on us.**

- 12. Has anyone asked the services providers i.e. Southern Water / UK Power Networks etc – how they would intend to increase the capacity and also how they would intend to ensure that us as residents have no disruption to our supply. For example currently all power lines are overhead and date back to the 1940's, our sewage network flows into the site and then back to Cooden through a pumping station etc etc.**
- 13. The entire estate have deeds that state that light and air pollution cannot be increased – how will the government ensure that this is not breached considering the current starting position that can be argued due to the site being abandoned for such a long time is zero emissions from the site? Are they prepared for a legal challenge and compensation claim request from the 48 occupied houses if they do go ahead for a breach of agreement?**
- 14. The noise pollution will be significantly increased to all residents on the estate – is that an acceptable situation for us to be faced with? The noise of 1200 men, the music, the calls to prayer etc etc. We will be faced with constant noise night and day – this is absolutely not acceptable when the closest houses back direct onto the fence of the property and the furthest away houses are still within 200 yards from the entrance.**
- 15. There will be a significant increase in air pollution from the traffic which has to service the site and the people which will manage the site – where is the impact assessment for this?**
- 16. How will the local road network cope with this significant increase in traffic, we already have a major problem in this local area for traffic and this increase on the population for the estate is going to cause even more traffic – that cannot be acceptable.**

A: In respect of questions 11 to 16, please note site surveys are extensive as we want to make sure this site is suitable for the community, area and asylum seekers. As you will understand these results will inform our plans and allow us to then share further detail with the community

**17. Our population density in Bexhill is already 3 times higher than anywhere else in the country and 17 times higher density than the national average – how can there be any justification on this basis to increase our density even further, especially for this area which is in dire need of regeneration and relies heavily on tourism?**

A: This site at Bexhill has been assessed on a number of factors to determine suitability. These assessments continue. When looking at proposals for new sites, the Home Office takes into account the impact on the local community, and that is why we are working with local partners through the Multi Agency Forum, and will hold regular meetings with a wide range of different representative groups within the community – from elected officials, town councillors, local residents groups and those with, business and commercial interests, as well as charities and community organisations.

**18. The population of asylum seekers compared to the local residents would outnumber us by 7 to 1 at 1200 people on site – how can this be justified and doesn't this suggest the significant risks that would be posed to us directly on the site i.e. safety, security of our property, danger to our women and children through different values etc.**

19.A: We would propose running an orientation service when asylum seekers arrive on site, which would be provided by third-party suppliers ensuring that people understand how best to integrate with the community. We are working with local police to ensure appropriate policing for the site and local community. On arriving, asylum seekers would receive an induction pack, briefing and orientation about the site and engage in education on the wider locality and community. This would inform them of how to access the services they would need on and off site, as well as their responsibilities and what is expected of them as good neighbours.

**20. More specifically, the population density of St Marks parish is ~4967 so this would equal to a 24% increase in our parish – how can that be justified?**

A: The site has space for anyone located there to spend time in the grounds. The site would create new jobs and bring new investment into the area, following the draw-down of the facility. The site would be designed to be as self-sufficient as possible, helping to minimise the impact on local communities and services. We would take steps to minimise the impact on residents including 24/7 security to reduce the need for police patrols, on-site catering, healthcare and transport provisions and recreational facilities for those housed on site.

**21. For all of the residents on site and for all of the residents of Bexhill and the wider area who are suffering with the stress being caused by the HO proposal for this site – how does the government justify this, how does the government warrant putting people through this without any regard for our wellbeing. The HO should know very clearly and I would stress that you make this point that we as British Citizens feel totally ignored, we feel that the government has more care for the asylum seekers than they do for us – please make that clear.**

A: The Home Office understands the concerns of the community and wants to continue to work with key stakeholders to lessen the impact of using these sites on the local community. Last year, 45,000 people crossed the Channel illegally in small boats and the Home Office is under a statutory obligation to accommodate those who would otherwise be destitute. The Government is doing a number of things to stop the boats. Read more about this [here](#).

**22. We have a significant amount of care homes just up the road from our property and some residents have family within these homes – they have significant concerns for their family due to this proposal – how can the HO justify this and ensure that they would be completely safe?**

A: Full screening of people's identity, security checks, initial asylum screening and processing is undertaken at the Western Jet Foil in Dover and Manston, Kent. They will have had their fingerprints and identities recorded by the Home Office prior to being securely moved to suitable accommodation locations as quickly as possible. They will, have been through extensive security checks that includes safeguarding and Police checks and checks against international databases. Information captured during screening will be used to assess the suitability of individuals for our sites.

To ensure security forms an integral part of the proposed site, a specialist security provider will be working on site, introducing measures such as mobile CCTV units. The project is committed to working together with the Sussex Police team to ensure appropriate security measures are in place as part of operational delivery.

**23. Our property values have been decimated since this proposal was made – how does the HO justify this, we have our life savings invested in our properties which is currently disappearing before our eyes.**

A: The Home Office understands the concerns of the community and want to continue to work with key stakeholders to lessen the impact of using these sites on the local community.

**24. There will likely be an increase in drugs and criminality with those living in the centre and inviting this illegal activity towards it and our estate – we have significant concerns for this and the fact we are so close to the property.**

A: The Home Office understands the concerns of the community and wants to continue to work with key stakeholders to lessen the impact of using these sites on the local community

To ensure security forms an integral part of the proposed site, a specialist security provider will be working on site 24/7. We are working closely with Sussex police to ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place. The safety and security of the local communities, those asylum seekers on the sites and the sites themselves are of the utmost importance.