

The Church of England has published a 'toolkit' of resources for parishes seeking to help refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan in the wake of the Taliban takeover of the country.



The material, [available online](#), brings together links and information on how churches can welcome people arriving from Afghanistan through giving, longer-term practical support such as community sponsorship, prayer and advocacy.

Staff in the Church of England's national Mission and Public Affairs team say they have been overwhelmed with messages from churches and individuals concerned by the situation in Afghanistan and asking what they can do to help.

The toolkit includes a range of prayer and theological resources from the Church of England and other sources alongside details of an array of charities and NGOs also working to support refugees and asylum seekers.

It also includes a simple explanation of the two main resettlement schemes and the asylum system and offers suggestions on how Christians can speak out on behalf of those unable to do so.

In a foreword to the toolkit, the Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler, the Church of England's Lead Bishop for Refugees and Asylum, said: "The challenge for the whole nation is to welcome these families and help them build new lives here in the United Kingdom.

"Alongside this is the reality that there are thousands of Afghan citizens already here and stuck in the asylum system awaiting a response to their claim.

"God's call on God's people has always been to welcome the stranger and help provide for them.

"So here is a fresh opportunity to live out this calling.

"It has to be very practical; hence this toolkit.

“It is not a quick short-term response that is most needed but a willingness to befriend families and support them for the long haul.

“It is also a call to stand up for justice and advocate for the most vulnerable.”

The Church of England is a longstanding supporter of refugee programmes including the Government’s [Community Sponsorship scheme](#) set up in 2016 to offer support to Syrian refugees coming to Britain.

Bishops in the House of Lords regularly raise issues relating to refugees and asylum seekers and last year played a key role in supporting series of amendments to the Immigration Bill calling for child refugees to be reunited with close relatives in the UK.

**Notes to editors:**

- The toolkit has been [published on the Church of England website](#).
- More detailed [guidance for Church of England clergy on supporting asylum seekers](#) is also available.

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