# Altrincham housing crisis exposes gaps in asylum seeker support and sparks community backlash



In a significant development regarding the housing of asylum seekers, Altrincham, a market town in Cheshire, has been the focal point of community discontent following the covert relocation of approximately 300 single male asylum seekers to the Cresta Court Hotel in October last year. This operation, carried out under the cover of night, went unnoticed by local residents, only to become apparent when the hotel began housing these individuals.

As reported, many of the initial arrivals have since been evicted due to regulations governing accommodation for asylum seekers and have resorted to living in tents nearby, primarily concentrated outside the town hall in the adjoining area of Sale. This situation has arisen as a result of the '56-day rule' stipulated by the Home Office, which dictates that successful asylum seekers are afforded only a short period of accommodation post-approval before they must independently seek housing—a challenge that many find insurmountable.

Local residents have expressed their frustration at the lack of transparency regarding the decision to house asylum seekers in the Cresta Court Hotel, a venue historically renowned within the community. Nathan Evans, Leader of the Trafford Conservatives, highlighted the impact of the situation, stating, “It seems a number of the migrants get kicked out of the hotel and they have to find their own accommodation. But there isn’t any accommodation so they end up on the streets.” Many former guests of the hotel have now taken to sleeping in tents, with some indicating they have been living in such conditions for extended periods, facing daily challenges such as a lack of proper sanitation facilities.

A petition has garnered over 6,000 signatures, with constituents asserting the hotel is inappropriate for housing migrants. Some residents have reported feeling blindsided by the decision, with one local, Kenneth Lee, expressing that the council's actions appeared to disregard the residents’ concerns, commenting, “I believe the council are not worried about us residents and our council taxes are paying for it, whether we like it or not.” The frustrations have manifested in regular protests outside the hotel, involving both anti-migration and anti-racism demonstrators.

The hotel, which is owned by Vine Hotels, headed by former BBC Director General Greg Dyke, has reportedly received a contract worth £10 million for the accommodation of migrants, considerably above what would typically be generated from regular patrons. This adds a financial dimension to the controversy.

As the local housing situation becomes further strained, homes in the vicinity of the hotel average around £708,000, highlighting the economic pressures faced by the community. The situation has also ignited concerns about available healthcare provisions for the migrant population, after erroneous claims circulated suggesting that migrants would receive free private health coverage. In reality, Gtd Healthcare—a not-for-profit organisation—has been tasked with providing publicly funded NHS care to the migrants, a fact clarified amidst local unrest.

Trafford Council has noted the emergence of tents outside Sale Waterside and has engaged with the individuals living in them. A council spokesperson stated that while those in tents are classified as non-priority need homeless, efforts continue to source private rented accommodation for them. The spokesperson added, “Our housing options team will continue to engage with the people as we are firmly of the view that the current situation is not in anyone’s best interests, nor is it a suitable place for anyone to stay.”

As the asylum housing situation unfolds in Altrincham, community tensions remain high, highlighting broader issues of immigration, housing, and public service provision in the UK.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://altrincham.todaynews.co.uk/news/2024/12/05/trafford-council-confirms-scabies-outbreak-at-cresta-court/> - This report details a scabies outbreak at the Cresta Court Hotel, leading to the quarantine of asylum seekers, supporting the information about health concerns among the migrant population.
3. <https://altrincham.todaynews.co.uk/news/2024/11/05/cresta-court-asylum-seekers-have-had-background-checks-and-no-issues-were-found-says-local-mp/> - This article discusses the background checks conducted on asylum seekers at the Cresta Court Hotel, addressing concerns about the safety and vetting process.
4. <https://www.messengernewspapers.co.uk/news/24716702.mp-speaks-following-community-meeting-asylum-seekers/> - This piece covers a community meeting in Altrincham regarding the housing of asylum seekers at the Cresta Court Hotel, highlighting local residents' concerns and the MP's response.
5. <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/migrant-hotel-far-right-southport-refugees-b2684350.html> - This article examines the protests and counter-protests outside the Cresta Court Hotel, involving both anti-migration and anti-racism demonstrators, reflecting the community's divided response.
6. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8jyx8n4dpno> - This BBC report discusses the decision to house asylum seekers at the Cresta Court Hotel and the ensuing debates among local residents, corroborating the community tensions highlighted in the article.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14669083/town-convulsed-fear-male-migrants-arrived-hotel.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data