# Home Office error lets convicted drug dealer stay in UK despite deportation risk



The Home Office's handling of immigration cases has come under scrutiny once again, as it was revealed that a convicted drug dealer was allowed to remain in the UK due to a significant administrative error. Olajiire Obafemi Shoyombo, a Nigerian national, was granted the opportunity to stay after the Home Office mistakenly accepted that he had legally resided in Britain for a majority of his life. This misunderstanding has led to a complicated legal battle over his deportation under what is known as the 'private life exception', which permits foreign nationals with long-term lawful residency to contest their removal from the UK.

Shoyombo's criminal activities have culminated in a jail sentence of three years and four months, following convictions for supplying heroin and crack cocaine. He has claimed that deporting him would bring about 'very significant obstacles,' presuming a return to Nigeria would jeopardise his future prospects. Although it is acknowledged that he has ties and integration into UK society, including social and cultural affiliations, the tribunal is now faced with the critical task of determining whether compelling factors warrant disregarding the public interest in his deportation.

The case has drawn attention to the broader issues surrounding immigration enforcement in the UK, particularly the discretion exercised in cases where individuals have long histories in the country, albeit often alongside criminal behaviour. This incident echoes other troubling deportation cases where individuals who have spent decades in the UK, like Anthony Olubunmi George—a disabled man facing removal despite no criminal record—have similarly found themselves at the mercy of the Home Office's inconsistent policies. George has lived in Britain since 1986 yet faces threats of deportation, bringing to light the inconsistencies in applying the law to different cases based on an individual's history and circumstances.

Shoyombo's past, fraught with unlawful residency, complicates his current situation. After initially entering the UK on a visitor visa at the tender age of three in 2005, he was unlawfully present for more than eight years. His eventual legal residency status, granted sporadically between 2014 and 2022, illustrates a fragmented profile that calls into question his reliance on the private life exception. This complexity not only challenges the notion of a 'lawful life' but also poses the question of how effectively the Home Office can balance individual rights against community safety.

During a recent altercation in Nottingham in 2022, Shoyombo was caught dealing drugs, prompting immediate police action. The evidence against him was corroborated by mobile phone records and further searches, which revealed a substantial cache of drugs and related paraphernalia. These incidents ultimately shaped the public's perception of his potential threat and the Home Office's position on his deportation.

The Home Office has stated its commitment to contesting Shoyombo's appeal, promising to enforce immigration rules more rigorously moving forward. This commitment comes amidst growing concerns about the department's effectiveness in managing and addressing cases involving criminals, particularly those who argue against deportation based on their attachments to the UK. Shoyombo's case will now be extensively re-examined, potentially setting a precedent for how similar cases might be handled in future.

As legal proceedings continue, the interplay between immigration policy, public safety, and individual rights remains a focal point of contention within British society. The decisions taken in cases like Shoyombo's and George's will undoubtedly influence perceptions of justice and fairness in the complex sphere of immigration law.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.channelstv.com/2024/12/09/uk-court-reverses-judgment-orders-deportation-of-nigerian-over-immigration-offences/), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk)
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* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk)
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2. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14746259/Blundering-Home-Office-allowed-convicted-drug-dealer-stay-UK-wrongly-accepting-lived-Britain-life.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - The Home Office permitted convicted drug dealer Olajiire Obafemi Shoyombo to remain in the UK after mistakenly accepting he had legally resided in Britain for most of his life. Shoyombo, a Nigerian national, was jailed in 2023 for supplying heroin and crack cocaine. He argued for the 'private life exception' to deportation, claiming significant obstacles if returned to Nigeria. The case is set for rehearing after the Home Office's error regarding his UK residency status.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk> - Anthony Olubunmi George, a 61-year-old Nigerian man, faces deportation after 38 years in the UK. Despite living in Britain since 1986 and having no criminal convictions, the Home Office refused his leave to remain application. George, who suffered two strokes in 2019, has endured periods of homelessness and has no family left in Nigeria. His lawyer attributes the situation to previous poor legal representation and has lodged an appeal against the refusal.
4. <https://www.channelstv.com/2024/12/09/uk-court-reverses-judgment-orders-deportation-of-nigerian-over-immigration-offences/> - The UK Upper Tribunal overturned a previous ruling that halted the deportation of Nigerian Olutobi Ogunbawo, convicted in 2019 for immigration offences related to false paternity claims. After serving a three-year prison sentence, Ogunbawo faced deportation. In January 2023, a first-tier tribunal judge ruled in his favour, citing his wife's claim that in vitro fertilisation was unavailable in Nigeria. However, the Upper Tribunal found the earlier decision flawed, stating the judge failed to verify the claim.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/may/19/home-office-in-threat-to-deport-disabled-man-to-nigeria-after-38-years-in-uk> - Anthony Olubunmi George, a 61-year-old Nigerian man, faces deportation after 38 years in the UK. Despite living in Britain since 1986 and having no criminal convictions, the Home Office refused his leave to remain application. George, who suffered two strokes in 2019, has endured periods of homelessness and has no family left in Nigeria. His lawyer attributes the situation to previous poor legal representation and has lodged an appeal against the refusal.
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