# Controversy erupts over bathtub baptisms of migrants seeking asylum in UK



A Christian charity linked to the minority Christadelphian sect has reportedly been baptising migrants in bathtubs at taxpayer-funded asylum hotels, sparking debate over the authenticity and motives behind these conversions. Carelinks Ministries, whose volunteer Duncan Heaster confirmed baptising an asylum seeker in a hotel bathroom, carries out these ceremonies where migrants are submerged in water and subsequently considered to have converted to Christianity. This practice has stirred controversy amid fears that some Muslim migrants might be exploiting these conversions to bolster their asylum appeals in the UK.

The baptism rituals appear to be simple yet symbolically significant, often conducted in the modest facilities available within migrant accommodation. A now-deleted social media photo showed a female asylum seeker being baptised in a bath, highlighting the unusual setting. Mr Heaster, who travels globally to welcome converts into the Christian faith, stated that he baptises anyone who wishes to become Christian but claimed that the majority of his converts are not migrants. Carelinks Ministries insists it plays no part in the asylum application process and does not influence the decisions made by immigration authorities.

Nevertheless, the practice has drawn sharp criticism from political figures. Chris Philp, the shadow home secretary, described baptisms in bathtubs as "insanity" and urged for the entire asylum system to be dismantled. Speaking to The Telegraph, he expressed concern over the abuse of religious conversion as a basis for asylum, calling for the government to cease recognising such conversions automatically and suggesting that clergy who endorse questionable conversions should face prosecution for assisting immigration fraud.

Since 2019, at least six migrants have sought asylum in the UK after converting to Christadelphian Christianity, a sect rejecting certain mainstream Christian doctrines such as the Holy Trinity. While four of these claims were dismissed, one Iranian man succeeded in 2019 after the court acknowledged his credible fear of persecution in his home country due to his religion. Cases like these illustrate the complex interplay between faith, legal asylum criteria, and the challenges faced by immigration authorities.

Concerns about the genuineness of some conversions have been sharpened by worrying incidents such as that involving Abdul Ezedi, an Afghan national granted asylum following his baptism. Ezedi subsequently became the subject of a nationwide manhunt after attacking a woman with a chemical substance in Clapham, south London. His background, including previous refusals of asylum and criminal convictions, led the Baptist church he attended to establish a safeguarding contract aimed at protecting parishioners. Following his death by suicide, he was given a Muslim funeral, casting further complications over religious identity in asylum processes.

This pattern of conversion extends beyond the Christadelphian community. Around 40 asylum seekers aboard the Bibby Stockholm barge in Weymouth have reportedly been converting to Christianity, supported by local churches such as Weymouth Baptist Church. These conversions, sometimes happening en masse even on local beaches, have drawn scrutiny from the Home Office, which maintains that religious conversion alone does not guarantee refugee status and that each asylum application is subject to rigorous individual assessment.

The Church of England, often at the centre of these discussions, acknowledges that some migrants perceive converting to Christianity as a means of strengthening their asylum claims. However, it denies operating any 'conveyor belt' of baptisms and emphasises that conversions must be genuine. In parallel, some churches like St. Mark's in Stoke-on-Trent have embraced Muslim asylum seekers through baptism and comprehensive support, including medical aid and English lessons, despite some congregants’ discomfort with this diversification.

Commentators such as Patrick Christys of GB News criticise the baptisms in migrant hotels as symptomatic of broader exploitation of the UK’s asylum system, arguing that this undermines both immigration integrity and the national religion itself. Similarly, Pastor Phylip Rees from Bethal Baptist Church in Wales noted that while he has baptised hundreds of asylum seekers, many do not continue church involvement, casting doubt on the sincerity of some conversions.

Overall, the issue raises difficult questions about the intersection of faith, immigration policy, and humanitarian concern. While religious conversion is recognised as a legitimate ground for asylum in cases of genuine persecution, the rising number of baptism claims prompts calls for greater vigilance, clearer guidance, and robust safeguards to prevent fraud without undermining sincere seekers of refuge.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/asylum-seekers-baptised-migrant-hotel-bathtubs-support-claims)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/asylum-seekers-baptised-migrant-hotel-bathtubs-support-claims)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.gbnews.com/politics/migrant-crisis-asylum-seekers-bibby-stockholm-christianity-conversion), [[5]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/patrick-christys-gobsmacked-guest-reveals-asylum-seekers-mass-baptisms-weymouth-beach-video)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.christiantoday.com/news/u-k-church-opens-door-to-muslim-refugees-who-get-christian-baptism-even-as-many-white-congregants-leave)
* Paragraph 8 – [[4]](https://www.gbnews.com/opinion/illegal-migrants-abusing-britain-blasted-patrick-christys), [[7]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/pastor-christian-conversion-abdul-ezedi/)
* Paragraph 9 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.gbnews.com/politics/migrant-crisis-asylum-seekers-bibby-stockholm-christianity-conversion), [[4]](https://www.gbnews.com/opinion/illegal-migrants-abusing-britain-blasted-patrick-christys), [[7]](https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/pastor-christian-conversion-abdul-ezedi/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-15210127/Migrants-baptised-hotel-bathtubs-Christian-charity.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/asylum-seekers-baptised-migrant-hotel-bathtubs-support-claims> - A charity is reportedly baptising asylum seekers in hotel bathtubs to support their asylum claims. Carelinks Ministries, linked to the Christadelphian sect, conducts these baptisms in migrant hotel bathrooms. Volunteer Duncan Heaster stated he baptises anyone wishing to become Christian, noting that most conversions are not migrants. The Church of England has acknowledged that some migrants believe converting to Christianity will aid their asylum claims. The Home Office clarified that religious conversions do not guarantee refugee status, and all asylum applications are individually assessed.
3. <https://www.gbnews.com/politics/migrant-crisis-asylum-seekers-bibby-stockholm-christianity-conversion> - Approximately 40 asylum seekers aboard the Bibby Stockholm barge are reportedly converting to Christianity, raising concerns that such conversions may be used to bolster asylum claims. The Weymouth Baptist Church has been involved in supporting these conversions, with some attendees participating in church services and Bible studies. The Home Office has initiated an investigation into these conversions, emphasizing that religious conversions do not automatically grant refugee status and that all asylum applications are carefully considered.
4. <https://www.gbnews.com/opinion/illegal-migrants-abusing-britain-blasted-patrick-christys> - GB News host Patrick Christys criticises the practice of asylum seekers being baptised in hotel bathtubs, suggesting it is a strategy to secure asylum in the UK. He highlights cases where individuals have converted to Christianity to avoid deportation, despite having criminal convictions. Christys argues that this exploitation of the asylum system is detrimental to Britain and its national religion, calling for stricter measures to prevent such abuses.
5. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/patrick-christys-gobsmacked-guest-reveals-asylum-seekers-mass-baptisms-weymouth-beach-video> - A resident of Portland, Kate, informs GB News host Patrick Christys about mass baptisms occurring on Weymouth beach, with reports of 20 individuals being baptised in a single week. This practice has raised concerns about the authenticity of conversions and their potential use in asylum claims. The Church of England has acknowledged that some migrants believe converting to Christianity will aid their asylum claims, prompting discussions about the role of religious conversions in the asylum process.
6. <https://www.christiantoday.com/news/u-k-church-opens-door-to-muslim-refugees-who-get-christian-baptism-even-as-many-white-congregants-leave> - St. Mark's Church in Stoke-on-Trent has been baptising Muslim asylum seekers, leading to a more diverse congregation. While some local congregants have left due to discomfort with the new members, the church continues to offer support, including medical assistance, food, shelter, and English lessons. Reverend Sally Smith emphasises the church's commitment to welcoming all individuals, regardless of their background, and views the church as a global family without dividing barriers.
7. <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/pastor-christian-conversion-abdul-ezedi/> - Pastor Phylip Rees of Bethal Baptist Church in South Wales reveals that he has baptised up to 500 asylum seekers, but more than half have not returned to church services post-conversion. This raises questions about the sincerity of some conversions and their potential use in asylum claims. The case of Abdul Ezedi, who was granted asylum after converting to Christianity, has further highlighted concerns about the authenticity of such conversions and their implications for the asylum process.