# Residents near Chesterfield’s Sandpiper Hotel express rising safety concerns over asylum seeker accommodation



Residents near the Sandpiper Hotel, situated on a quiet country road just outside Chesterfield in rural Derbyshire, have expressed growing discontent over the presence of asylum seekers at the facility. This hotel has been housing individuals seeking asylum for approximately two years, following its closure as a three-star Best Western, a popular choice for visitors to the Peak District.

Locals have reported several issues attributed to the hotel’s residents, stating that antisocial behaviour has escalated significantly in recent months. Complaints include noise disturbances, littering, and groups of men loitering in the area, asking for money, and peering through windows. Gary Cook, whose family previously operated the hotel, commented, "I think there are about 80 blokes in there and it has lowered the value of the houses around here," expressing concern over the property's impact on the local economy.

Shannon Freeman, a local resident, shared her observations, stating, "We see the comings and goings," and highlighting that families in the area feel increasingly uncomfortable. Reports have circulated on social media warning against walking in nearby natural trails, with residents recounting instances of men allegedly following women.

The situation escalated in December 2023, when a 27-year-old man residing at the hotel was arrested on suspicion of possessing explosives. Although he was released on bail, police stated that nothing found posed a danger to the public. This incident has further intensified the residents' concerns about safety and security in their neighbourhood.

Concerns have also been raised about the suitability of the hotel as a refuge for asylum seekers. Chelsea Lodge, a mother of two, commented, "I would rather just get rid of them to be honest," citing instances of individuals approaching her for money. Marina Tamasauskas, 41, a local mother, added, "I'm not racist but they are causing problems," noting that residents have felt compelled to alter their routines for safety reasons.

The Sandpiper Hotel, now managed under a contract with the Home Office, was relaunched as accommodation for asylum seekers without local consultation, prompting resentment among community members. One resident lamented, "We had no idea," referring to the lack of communication regarding the hotel’s new purpose.

Several individuals reported feeling unsafe allowing their children to roam freely, with one mother stating she no longer permits her daughter to walk the dog alone due to concerns about groups gathering near the hotel. The perceived decline in community safety has led some residents to contemplate relocating.

The situation has created divisions within the community, with some residents expressing solidarity with the asylum seekers while others demand the discontinuation of the arrangement. Caroline Winn, a local mother, stated, "There is no problem with people who come here and want to work and contribute," indicating a nuanced perspective that distinguishes between different groups of asylum seekers.

Local opinions vary, with some residents preferring to remain anonymous due to fears of backlash for voicing their criticisms. One resident noted, "You cannot go in to complain because when you get to the door someone from the Home Office comes out and tells us they can do what they like." The issue appears to extend beyond individual grievances, reflecting broader societal tensions surrounding immigration and the accommodation of asylum seekers.

The Home Office has been contacted for comment regarding the situation at the Sandpiper Hotel and the concerns raised by residents.

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

## Bibliography

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* <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14671189/A-migrant-hotel-turned-lives-upside-quiet-country-road.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data