

Report to Community Committee

17th March 2025

Town of Sanctuary Action Plan

1. Introduction Faversham Town Council (FTC) is committed to developing a welcoming environment for refugees, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable migrants. Becoming a Town of Sanctuary aligns with FTC's values of inclusivity, community cohesion, and social justice. This action plan outlines steps to achieve this goal in collaboration with local organisations, residents, and national sanctuary networks.

2. Objectives

- Establish Faversham as a Town of Sanctuary.
- Provide practical support and advocacy for refugees and asylum seekers.
- Raise awareness and celebrate the contributions of displaced people to the local community.
- Strengthen partnerships with Faversham & Villages Refugee Solidarity Group and other local, regional, and national organisations.

3. Key Actions

3.1. Official Commitment

- Pass a council motion affirming FTC's commitment to becoming a Town of Sanctuary.
- Integrate and develop sanctuary principles into FTC policies and strategies.
- Designate a lead councillor and officer to oversee implementation.

3.2. Awareness and Community Engagement

- Organise public events, workshops, and campaigns to promote understanding of refugee issues.
- Work with local schools, faith groups, and businesses to promote sanctuary values.
- Ensure refugees and asylum seekers have a voice in local decision-making processes.

3.3. Practical Support and Services

- Map existing support services and identify gaps.

- Partner with local organisations to offer language classes, employment support, and social integration activities.
- Facilitate access to housing, healthcare, and other essential services.

3.4. Networking and Advocacy

- Join the City of Sanctuary Town and Parish Network.
- Collaborate with neighbouring councils and support groups to share best practices.
- Advocate for fairer policies on a regional and national level.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Develop key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure progress.
- Conduct an annual review and report on activities and achievements.
- Engage stakeholders in evaluating and refining the action plan.

5. Conclusion By implementing this action plan, Faversham can demonstrate leadership in creating a more inclusive and compassionate society. The Town of Sanctuary initiative will enrich the town's cultural and social fabric while offering vital support to those in need.

Draft Motion

This council is committed to support an initiative to make Faversham into a recognised 'Town of Sanctuary' welcoming those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries. We recognise their potential contribution to our town, and also recognise that a comprehensive, co-ordinated and forward-looking approach is needed if the welfare of people moving into the town, and community cohesion between new and existing communities, are to be supported effectively. To this end, we:

- Acknowledge the contribution of refugees and people seeking sanctuary to the town of Faversham
- Are willing to add our organisation's name to the list of supporters of City of Sanctuary
- This council will work to implement the City of Sanctuary pledges through its actions and policies, and with its partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

- This council is committed to support an initiative to make Faversham into a recognised 'Town of Sanctuary'

Louise Bareham

Town Clerk

10th March 2025