

QUESTION BY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

Please return your completed question form to Democratic Support, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ or email:

democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk

Question to be submitted no later than 5 clear working days before the meeting.

Question submitted by: Gerry Parmenter
To the Cabinet Member or Chair for: Councillor Penberthy
To be asked at the next (Council, Cabinet or Planning Committee) Meeting: City Council
Date: 15 September 2025
Question (to be no longer than 50 words): Can you please explain why you have total disregard for local British people when illegal immigrants get everything they want but our own people in Plymouth are homeless? You follow the government like a lost lamb, not caring about the people of Plymouth.
Will you be attending the meeting in person to ask your question? No.
Response: (for completion by City Council officers and Cabinet Members / Chairs) Thank you for the question, although I would strongly dispute the sentiment it contains. Today I expect to disagree with members in this room on many things but I'm confident in saying that there is not a single elected member sitting here on any of the benches, nor a single officer employed by the Council that, in your words, 'has a total disregard for local British people.' We have multitude of projects and programmes that we run to help vulnerable people across our city. I'm all too aware of the homelessness crisis in this city. You will have heard me talking about it at every opportunity I get. We know that people are suffering because we are the ones who support them. We provide temporary accommodation to families who need it; we are a leading partner in the Plymouth Alliance, supporting rough sleepers with a range of complex needs; we stimulate and support the housing market to build more homes as part of our Plan for Homes; we encourage empty homes back into use; we buy and sell land and assets to fund and enable additional

accommodation across the city; we work with partners and other organisations to accelerate the provision of new homes. All this and much more.

Your insinuation about a lack of care is utterly insulting to Council staff who right now are meeting people at their lowest ebb, desperate for help with their housing situation. Even as we talk, Council officers are providing solutions, options and most importantly, empathy and compassion.

In your question, you use the term 'illegal immigrant', which although is not a recognised term in UK legislation, I am taking to mean that you are referring to asylum seekers.

I want to be absolutely clear once again, the housing and welfare of asylum seekers is not the responsibility of Plymouth City Council. It is the responsibility of the Home Office.

So there is no correlation between local people being homeless and any support that is offered to people seeking asylum because they are reliant on two different systems.

Incidentally, asylum seekers only receive basic living necessities from the state – just £49.18 a week to cover essentials, including sustenance. Not flash cars, phones or homes.

Sometimes charities or organisations may allocate goods, clothes, and food parcels to asylum seekers, many of whom arrive in this country with little or no belongings but this is not something funded by the government or the council. It's misinformation to suggest otherwise.

So thank you again for your question. I hope that this has gone some way to allaying your fears.