

Hosting - FAQs

What does hosting with Boaz involve?

Boaz hosts are amazing people who welcome people who have had their asylum claims refused to stay for a short time in their homes. Every host (individual, shared household or family) offers their guest a spare bedroom as well as access to kitchen, laundry and bathroom facilities.

The offer of a friendly, safe and welcoming environment in which to stay can be life changing for our clients, and also for our hosts.

The main aim of hosting is to provide a welcoming safe place to stay for a destitute asylum seeker. There is no expectation that hosts would provide any support with a client's case, or financial support or in-depth emotional support. Hosted clients are offered these different forms of support through their named Boaz support worker and our partner organisations.

Who would I be hosting?

The people we place to be hosted are adults (over 18) who have applied for asylum in the UK, but have had their claim for asylum refused. This means that they have no on-going entitlement to housing or financial support and are not allowed to work.

Individuals (and couples) can be referred to us by local organisations and projects, and we meet with all potential clients before offering them accommodation. We would not place anyone for hosting who is known to have a high level of extra support needs such as a significant physical or mental health condition.

How long does a hosting placement last?

We always ask that hosts are willing to commit to hosting placements of at least one month although there is always a one week trial period to check both host and guest are happy with the arrangement. The length of the stay will be agreed at the beginning of the placement. Usually clients are hosted for a period before moving on into one of our shared houses. Sometimes a hosting placement may only be required for a very short time- even just one night- although this is very rare. Please note that at different times we may specifically be looking for very short term hosts, or conversely, long term hosts.

What support does Boaz offer to hosts?

Our hosting scheme has been running since 2004, and we have learned a lot along the way. We have received invaluable feedback from hosts over the years that has helped us improve the way we support our hosts. We offer:

- An initial home visit to discuss hosting in more detail before you sign up
- An induction session (at the home visit or separately) with a member of the Boaz team prior to any hosting placement being set up
- A copy of the Boaz Volunteer Handbook including information on Boaz, the asylum system, case studies and Boaz processes
- Regular contact from Boaz to check how the placement is progressing
- An out of hours contact number for emergencies
- An allocated support worker for the hosted client alongside access to the full range of Boaz client support

Are hosts breaking the law by accommodating a 'refused' asylum seeker?

No. An individual who has been refused may be liable to detention or removal by Home Office officials at any time, but it is not illegal to offer free accommodation and support.

It is an offence to help someone hide from the authorities if they have escaped from a detention centre or committed a crime and also to deliberately withhold information from an official of the state if this is requested from you.

Criminal law does not prevent assistance being given to undocumented people to alleviate destitution or meet basic human needs. It is the Home Office's responsibility to remove those they believe should not remain in the UK.

Do you accept everyone who applies to be a host?

We have been overwhelmed by peoples' kindness and generosity in offering beds for asylum seekers and refugees, especially since the "refugee crisis" hit the headlines in 2015. In certain circumstances though, there are reasons why we might have to turn an offer down. For example if the host lives too far from central Manchester, if the accommodation isn't suitable (e.g. if there isn't a separate spare bedroom), or if the potential host has misunderstood the purpose of hosting (e.g. if they are looking for a carer or cleaner).

Sometimes we simply reach capacity in terms of the number of clients we can support here in the office and we don't want potential hosts to feel frustrated that they have signed up to host with us, but then don't get used!

We realise this can be frustrating when you want to reach out and make a difference, but if we can't sign you up to become a Boaz host right now, we'd be happy to chat through some other ways in which you can welcome asylum seekers and refugees.

How can I find out more?

Get in touch by email hosting@boaztrust.org.uk – we'd love to hear from you!