

***Migrant Voice
members' key
asks For the
West Midlands
Mayoral
candidates***



Get In Contact

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POSITIVE MESSAGING

At Migrant Voice we believe that now is the time for leaders across the country in whatever position they hold to use their powers to take action to combat anti-migrant hatred, and also to promote the positives that migrants bring to the UK and support them in their lives here.

Specifically, we are asking all candidates in the West Midlands Mayoral election to commit to using their platforms to reinforce the positives that migrants bring to the West Midlands, the roles migrants play within our communities, and at all costs avoid pandering to xenophobic and racist statements that have been thrown about during elections for too long.

Sadly, anti-migrant rhetoric has become a normalised part of political campaigns, even more so with the words of some political commentators in the press, on radio, and TV. With this emboldenment over many years, we have seen a sustained and significant rise in Racially Aggravated Hate Crimes as these abhorrent views hit streets across Britain.

Migrant Voice believes that we can advance our country together only by listening to the opinions, stories and voices of migrants – and that by doing so we will advance towards a more unified, peaceful and integrated society.

POST-BREXIT

European migrants have been treated as bargaining chips for years and this has left many now, even though Brexit is a reality, still unsure of their rights and their status.

We know that many migrants in the West Midlands and across the country have still not received their Settled Status, and that these issues have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

What the Mayor can do

- Advocate an extension of the deadline for applications to 2022 to account for delays due to Covid-19 and the lack of access to legal support during this period.



Use your powers

- Ensure the right funding is in place for support and outreach to EU nationals applying for settled status, especially those in at risk groups.
- Create public information campaigns and direct communications to ensure that guidance is issued to employers, landlords and banks to prevent discrimination and individuals becoming caught in the hostile environment.

"CAN'T STAY, CAN'T GO"

Many undocumented migrants in the West Midlands cannot return to their country of origin, for various reasons. This is accepted by the Home Office. However they are not granted any form of leave to stay in the UK and are left in limbo.

We want the next Mayor of the West Midlands to work towards the regularisation of these individuals and further ensure that more people do not inadvertently become undocumented and become at risk of exploitation.

What the Mayor can do

- Advocate for a national policy of regularisation and the development of policies that address the causes of people becoming undocumented.
- Implement a policing strategy in which support to victims of exploitation and discrimination is ringfenced and separated from immigration enforcement.
- Call for and support the development of policies and practices that can prevent people from becoming undocumented in the future, e.g. safe, legal, and accessible routes.

Use your powers

- Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner and victims of exploitation to implement a policing strategy that cracks down on those who exploit migrants and ensures protection from exploitation.



INTEGRATION

The West Midlands is incredibly culturally rich and diverse and we want this to be fostered as a core value by the next West Midlands Mayor.

We want to ensure that communities across the West Midlands have the opportunities to work together, live together, and share their cultures with each other so that they can learn from one another and build a stronger, united and more prosperous region.



What the Mayor can do

- Call for the voices of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees to inform national integration strategies and for asylum seekers to be included in these strategies.
- Call for the right to work for asylum seekers to prevent them becoming de-skilled and enable them to support themselves and their families. This will also allow them to better integrate into life within the community.

Use your powers

- Work with migrant-led organisations to ensure the creation of a West Midlands integration strategy, which includes and is informed by asylum seekers, migrants and refugees.
- Support the availability of English as a Second Language classes as part of the devolved Adult Education budget and minimise any barriers to accessing them.
- Work with banks, landlords, and council teams to ensure that refugees have the support they need in the 28-day period from being granted Leave to Remain to when they leave their NASS accommodation.