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## KEGWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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### PRESS STATEMENT

**23 FEBRUARY 2023**

Kegworth Parish Council recently became aware, via our District Council, of a plan, via a Serco contract, to house up to 250 asylum seekers at the Yew Lodge Hotel, Kegworth.

The Parish Council is challenging this decision at the highest levels in support of residents who have serious concerns about the impact of housing such a huge number of asylum seekers in a rural, village location with a population of just over 4000 people, where there is insufficient infrastructure to support need, and there has been a lack of consultation and planning approval undertaken for the change. The specific concerns highlighted by the Council are as follows:

1. The ratio of asylum seekers to residents will be 1:17. This is unacceptable. Is this the worst ratio so far in any UK location?
2. The Orchard GP Surgery in Kegworth have stated that the "asylum seeker relocation process is a reckless move that compromises the healthcare of the local population"...and, after the Gotham surgery destruction by fire on Feb 16<sup>th</sup>, "puts at risk the healthcare of nearly 9000 local residents" from more than one village.
3. The lack of openness, transparency and consultation to the extent that due process has not been followed in spirit, whether or not the letter of the law, is tested. The local-owned hotel may not feel bound in the same way as Serco, the Asylum Accommodation Support provider but, as a very locally owned business they ought: "When working with Local Authorities, the Provider shall, as a minimum: • liaise and consult with Local Authorities regarding the location of Accommodation for Service Users, and the appropriate information to be shared with Local Authorities to support their planning and activities, in accordance with Paragraph 2.4, Paragraph 4.1.6 and Annex A of this Schedule 2;"[In Kegworth's case, the Parish Council is I suggest 'the local authority', albeit third tier:]
4. There are comparisons and apparent inconsistency with Quorn (January): [Plan to use Quorn hotel as asylum seeker refuge paused by Home Office, says MP - Leicestershire Live \(leicestermercury.co.uk\)](#) and Earl Shilton (February): [Asylum seekers moved from hotel after MP questions Home Office's handling of the case - Leicestershire Live \(leicestermercury.co.uk\)](#)

To quote: A Home Office spokesperson said: "The number of people arriving in the UK who require accommodation has reached record levels and has put our asylum system under incredible strain. We engage with local authorities as early as possible whenever sites are used for asylum accommodation and work to ensure arrangements are safe for hotel residents and local people."

5. There is a question about whether Planning Permission/Change of Use is required, as yet unresolved: [Is planning permission required to house asylum seekers in hotels? \(parliament.uk\)](#)

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