

*Eight Bridgend Friends decided to write to four politicians about the refugee crisis
Here is the reply of Carwyn Jones, First Minister and AM for Bridgend (below).*

National Assembly of Wales - Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru
Rt Hon Carwyn Jones, Assembly Member for Bridgend - Aelod Cynulliad dros Ben-y-Bont ar Ogwr

Ref sgw/Harries

22nd September 2015

Dear Mr Harries

Refugee Crisis

Thank you very much for your recent letter. Along with many people from across Wales, I have been moved and appalled by the heartbreaking scenes we have witnessed during this humanitarian crisis.

Within my role as First Minister, I have noted that while many of the key issues are non-devolved, Wales stands ready to play its part in resettling refugees who are fleeing war zones, just as we have always done.

Last week's Welsh Government summit brought together key agencies and service providers in Wales to help develop a plan for implementing and expanding the Vulnerable Person Relocation Scheme for Syrian refugees in Wales. The new Syrian Refugee taskforce will be chaired by the Minister, Lesley Griffiths AM and will lead the Wales-wide approach to the crisis by co-ordinating the work of all organisations to ensure Syrian refugees are resettled in Wales as efficiently as possible.

A consultation paper has been launched to seek people's views on the Welsh Government's Delivery Plan for Refugees and Asylum Seekers. The three year plan, which was developed in partnership with local authorities and the third sector, prior to recent events in Europe, sets out how services for refugees and asylum seekers can be improved.

The consultation focuses on health care provision, children, community cohesion and housing and provides a timely opportunity to consider the current crisis and ensure the plan is fit for purpose in light of the changing circumstances. At the end of the summit a short Communique was agreed by all partners, setting out their commitment to working together to develop a co-ordinated approach to responding to the Syrian crisis.

The Welsh Government will continue to work with the UK Government to ensure the necessary arrangements are put in place to help successfully resettle refugees in Wales. While the Welsh Government has welcomed the announcement that the UK Government has committed to help an additional 20,000 refugees, it is concerned about the pace at which this help will be provided and how it will be funded.

Thank you again for writing to me about this matter.

Yours sincerely

[signed]

CARWYN JONES AM/AC