

For immediate release: 16 September 2025

The Churches' Refugee Network announces The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin as the new Chair to champion the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants across Britain and Ireland



The [Churches' Refugee Network](#) (CRN), a leading ecumenical network dedicated to advocating for the dignity and rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants within Christian churches, is pleased to announce the appointment of **The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Bishop of Dover**, as its new Chair.

Bishop Rose, currently the Bishop of Dover in the Diocese of Canterbury, brings a wealth of experience in humanitarian leadership, advocacy and policy within the Church of England, and has long been a champion for those forced to flee conflict, persecution, and hardship.

"I am honoured to take on this role at such a critical time," said Bishop Rose. "The challenges being faced across Britain and Ireland are urgent, but I believe this network's work – rooted in compassion, justice, and faith – has the power to bring real and lasting change to the current narrative."

The appointment comes at a pivotal moment. According to the latest data:

- In the UK, over **85,000 asylum applications** were made in the past year, with over **109,000 people** currently awaiting an initial decision.
- In Ireland, over **18,000 applications** were lodged in 2024 – 5,000 applications more than in 2023.
- Across the four nations, thousands remain in limbo in hotel accommodation or direct provision, many facing poor living conditions, uncertainty, and limited access to support, with continued worrying and ongoing demonstrations outside of accommodation housing asylum seekers on these shores.

Against this backdrop and alongside the cynical weaponisation of asylum and refugee issues by some politicians, the CRN's work has never been more vital. The network brings together churches, faith-based organisations and community organisations to advocate for just policies, support welcoming communities, and amplify the resources and support available to help make a difference. The importance of churches and Christians being a voice of compassion, mercy and hope in this situation aims to counter the hostility and negativity that is ever present. The network also comes together to share updates, learnings for best practices and provide networking opportunities for its members.

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Under the guidance of Bishop Rose, the network aims to expand its engagement, deepen partnerships, and continue to stand in prophetic witness to the shared values of hospitality, justice, and offering places of sanctuary.

Richard Reddie, Director of Justice and Inclusion and programme lead for the CRN says:

"We are delighted to welcome The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin as Chair, whose leadership and commitment will help guide us through the challenges and opportunities ahead."

The CRN will meet in the coming months to work on plans for the year ahead to find ways to help advocate, educate and offer a voice for those working with refugees and asylum related issues within England, Wales, Scotland and across the island of Ireland through meetings, webinars, events and related resources. Bishop Rose will also play a key role in the organisation of our bi-annual conference next year, scheduled to take place mid-2026.

For more information, please contact:

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Website: [Churches' Refugee Network - CTBI](https://www.churchesrefugeenetwork.org.uk)

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

Churches' Refugee Network (CRN)

The CRN encourages churches in Britain and Ireland to proactively engage in issues linked to asylum, refugees and migration *per se*. The network consists of a growing number of church-related organisations who share a commitment to support and advocate for refugees, both those overseas and those who have come to these islands. The CRN was established because of the importance and value of collaboration, sharing and coordination. CRN is a project of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

For more information visit: [Churches' Refugee Network - CTBI](https://www.churchesrefugeenetwork.org.uk)

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI)

CTBI is an ecumenical organisation working for unity, peace, and social justice. We bring churches together across Britain and Ireland, supporting ecumenical efforts, and promoting collaboration, mission, and justice.

For more information, visit: [Home - CTBI](https://www.ctbi.org.uk)

Statistics sources

- [Top facts from the latest statistics on refugees and people seeking asylum - Refugee Council](#)
- [Ireland saw record number of asylum applicants in 2024 – The Irish Times](#)

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