

Hotel will no longer house asylum seekers

Datchet: Government confirms residents will move out by end of May

By Adrian Williams
adrianw@baylismedia.co.uk
@AdrianW_BM

Asylum seekers will no longer be staying in the Manor Hotel in Datchet after May this year, the Government has said.

The hotel's housing of asylum seekers has long been controversial, with villagers hitting out at the 'undemocratic' decision to place them there in 2022.

There were concerns that new arrivals could 'overload' local services and that there would be an increase in anti-social behaviour – though police did state two months later that there was 'no crime reported that directly relates to that hotel'.

The former Conservative Royal Borough administration was also not keen, partly because of the short-notice nature of the decision coming directly from the Home Office, without giving the council a say.

Former leader Andrew Johnson described the Manor Hotel as 'the most unsuitable location to host asylum seekers'.

The hotel continued to be used for asylum seekers until the arrangement ended in early 2024.

But in late October, Windsor MP Jack Rankin was told by the Home Office that the village hotel will be used again with immediate effect due to a lack of capacity.

Mr Rankin described it as an 'outrageous decision from the Home Office' and wrote to the Home Secretary and raised the issue in Parliament.

However, it now looks as though asylum seekers will not be there much longer.

In a letter shared by Mr Rankin on Tuesday, Tim Rymer, deputy director of adult and family asylum accommodation at the

Home Office, wrote: "I am writing to inform you that the Home Office is terminating the contract with The Manor Hotel... as asylum accommodation."

"[I can] confirm it will cease being used before the end of May 2025, reflecting the contractual notice period of this property."

"Any residents currently accommodated in the hotel will be moving to other parts of our asylum estate and we aim to complete all relocations in advance of the final closure date."

"Residents will be notified a minimum of five days in advance and moved by the Home Office in line with our existing contractual agreements."

Mr Rymer also said the Government 'inherited an asylum system which is under exceptional strain, with tens of thousands of cases in the asylum backlog and a range of

challenges across the system'.

"We have taken action to address these challenges by re-starting asylum processing and establishing the new Border Security Command, but we cannot resolve all the challenges overnight," he wrote.

"It remains the Home Office's commitment to reduce the costs of asylum accommodation, including ending the use of asylum hotels."

"However, the size of the existing backlog means we need to continue to use hotels in the meantime."

Upon receiving the letter, Mr Rankin said in a statement that this was 'great news for the village of Datchet' and will help alleviate the concerns of businesspeople and residents who faced an influx of asylum seekers 'thrust on their community with next to no notice.'

The Manor Hotel.

