



Baptist Union of Great Britain Hong Kong Response Project Newsletter 20 – Summer 2025

Immigration White Paper – A Time for Prayer and Awareness

Introduction

In May, the UK government released a new Immigration White Paper proposing a series of changes aimed at reducing migration. Among the proposals is a significant shift from the current '5+1' route to settlement – five years of residence before applying for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) and one year of residence before applying for citizenship – to a much longer '10+1' pathway. If adopted, this would greatly extend the journey toward settlement for many migrants. And the White paper does not specify how such changes would affect the British National (Overseas) (BNO) humanitarian visa route.

Other proposals include raising the income threshold for family visas, limiting dependants in certain visa categories, raising English standards and placing further restrictions on care worker sponsorships. These changes, though, may go for consultation and could create additional challenges for individuals and families seeking to build a stable future in the UK.

[\(Click here for the link to the White Paper\)](#)

As a community shaped by God's welcome and compassion, we are called to pray for wisdom for policymakers, peace for those affected, and awareness of how we can offer support and solidarity. Let us continue to walk alongside our brothers and sisters in this season of uncertainty.

BU Response

Thank you for a rapid response from our Baptist family. The Revd Lynn Green, our General Secretary, has signed a letter written to the government as a group of faith leaders to express their deep concern about the language used in recent discussions around migration.

In the letter, it urged policymakers to adopt a more respectful and constructive tone - one that recognises the dignity of all people and supports a more inclusive national conversation. They call for policies that balance the needs of host communities with compassion for those seeking safety and a new life in the UK.

They asked the government to speak with greater care, truth and compassion as well. They urged them to recognise the dignity of every person - whether born here or newly arrived - and to promote policies that are just and respectful to all. [Here's the letter.](#)

As a church community, we need to respond to the White Paper about the immigration system.

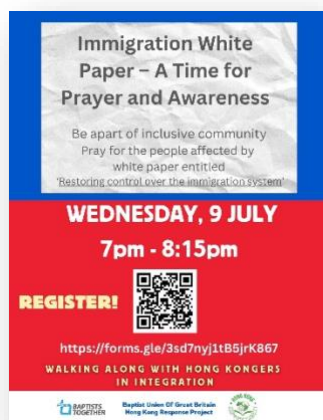
This is not about politics, but about people. It's about living out our faith by standing up for the vulnerable and reminding our nation of the values of hospitality, fairness and unity. Please continue to pray for wisdom for our leaders, and for all those affected by these decisions and words.

Another article worth reading, [a reflection on welcoming the stranger](#) is on the JPIT (Joint Public Issues Team) website. We encourage our churches, brothers and sisters to read it and reflect on it. In the meantime, there may be some newcomers who need a chat. We encourage our HK-welcoming churches to prepare for that. We ask for prayer from our readers as well. Please join us prayer in such a stressful and uncertain period.

Our next bi-monthly online prayer meeting will pray for it.

Next Online Prayer Meeting

9 July, 2025 (Wednesday, 19:00-20:15)



Please come together and pray together for BNO visa holders and other migrants. Pray for those people who are in fear, disappointed and unsecured by the White Paper entitled '[Restoring control over the immigration system](#)'.

Register here: <https://forms.gle/3sd7nyj1tB5jrK867>

Please mark your diaries on Tuesday 9 September 19:00-20:15 and Wednesday 12 November 19:00-20:15 to join our bi-monthly prayer meeting.

For more information, or if you need a chat, please contact us on: sshek@baptist.org.uk or lchan@baptist.org.uk