



Campaign Action 3: **Sleepout to end destitution**

Many people who came to the UK to escape conflict and human rights abuse, but have been refused protection are sleeping on the streets in the UK due to policies which leave them totally destitute, and without any recourse to state support at all.

For Action Week last year a whopping 1,000 of you slept outside for one night to make people aware of this scandal and to demand that no asylum seeker be forced into destitution while they are in the UK.

Why not hold a sleepout and reach more people in 2012?

Sleepouts are a fun and interesting way to talk to new people about the challenges faced by destitute asylum seekers and to get local activists from different groups to join together.

A sleepout can be combined with other campaign actions to have maximum impact.

1. Where to hold your Sleepout

The best and easiest place to hold your sleepout is your university grounds, e.g. outside your Students' Union or Guild. It's safe, will provide shelter and will ensure you get lots of attention from passers by.

If you are holding your Sleepout on campus:

There may be several people that you need to inform depending on where you hold your sleepout; this will vary from university to university. Contact your **Societies Sabbatical Officer** at your Union/Guild and they will be able to signpost you to the people you will need to get in contact with, as well as support you in your preparation.

If you are holding your Sleepout off-campus:

There are three bodies that you **MUST** get in contact with:

1. The local police – you must inform the local police of your event, where you are holding it, for how long, and how many people you are expecting to attend.
2. The owner of the site – if you are holding your Sleepout on private land then you must inform **AND** receive permission for your Sleepout to take place there. If you do not then you may be trespassing.

If you are holding it on public land then the police may put limits on your Sleepout, i.e. where, for how long and how many people attend. You should therefore contact them (as above) to discuss the plans.

3. Your Student Union or University external relations office – you should inform them of the event you are planning to hold.

Wherever you are holding your sleepout, don't forget to **tell STAR national the date and location** of your event. We might just bring our sleeping bags and join you!

For more information on the rights and legalities of holding a demonstration we strongly advise that you visit:

<http://www.yourrights.org.uk/yourrights/the-right-of-peaceful-protest/index.html>

2. Sleepout Checklist

This simple checklist will help you organise a sleepout to support the Still Human Still Here Campaign. There a number of steps to complete to ensure that it is safe and effective... but also fun!

Some dates have been included, but it's good to complete tasks and communicate results as early as possible.

Task	Date	Done
<p>CONTACT STAR national</p> <p>Contact us as soon as you have a basic plan: (campaigns@star-network.org.uk)</p>	1 st week of February	
<p>ASSIGN ROLES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a co-ordinator for your sleepout, to be the main point of contact for the event. Send us their contact details (phone number, email address). • Appoint people to other roles (e.g. media lead, speaker liaison, Safety officer, etc). Send us their contact details (phone number, email address). 		
<p>LINK GROUPS</p> <p>Co-ordinate with other STAR groups in your area who may be able to support the sleepout; get in touch if you have any difficulty doing this. Link up with other student societies, such as Amnesty, and try to reach beyond the usual suspects, e.g. a rugby club!</p>		
<p>LOCAL SUPPORTERS</p> <p>Contact local refugee organisations who might be able to support your event – there are over 50 organisations supporting the Still Human Still Here campaign!</p>		
<p>DATE & LOCATION</p> <p>Choose a date and location for your sleepout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check who is legally responsible for your chosen location. • Check that you will have access to toilets throughout the night and that your location is accessible for disabled participants. • Also check if there is shelter nearby, in case of bad weather. 		
<p>SAFETY</p> <p>Do a risk assessment for your event. You should ensure that participants are aware that they take part at their own risk and should provide their own refreshment and bedding. Consider weather protection and alternatives in the event of very poor weather. See the template risk assessment at the end of this Guide.</p>		
<p>SHARE YOUR EVENT</p> <p>Email the details of your event to STAR so that we can help to promote it (campaigns@star-network.org.uk)</p>	1 st week of February	

FACEBOOK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join the national Facebook page: www.facebook.com/STARAActionWeek2012 Create a facebook event for your sleepout; post a link to your event on the facebook page. 		
VOLUNTEERS / STEWARDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit stewards for your sleepout. They will be responsible for keeping the sleepout safe and enjoyable. You will need to create a rota so stewards aren't working really long shifts! One person at least should be awake at all times and responsible at that time. Make sure volunteers understand the aims of the sleepout and what measures you are taking to ensure the well-being and safety of the participants. Appoint a lead steward - they should be responsible for making any decision about moving or closing the sleepout. Recruit other volunteers for your sleepout – e.g. people to engage with the public and promote the quiz; people to bring flasks of hot drinks etc. 		
RESOURCES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order materials for your sleepout (stickers, balloons etc). You'll want to make yourselves visible on the day of your sleepout – the more people can see what you're doing, the more likely they are to come over and find out why! 	By 14 th Feb	
SPEAKERS Invite speakers to attend your event. These could be politicians (if they are supportive of the issue!), faith leaders, journalists, academics... If they cannot attend, ask them to send messages of support which you can read out at your event. Make sure you tell STAR national if any of them agree to come, and don't forget to share their messages of support with the network!		
CAMPAIGN ACTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise your quiz sheets and what paperwork and information you will need on the night. Remember to collect email addresses on the night to recruit new supporters! 		
PUBLICITY Advertise your event! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put up posters around campus, hand out flyers, put messages on notice boards, make a few lecture shout outs. Invite your friends via facebook. Work with student media and try to get articles and event listings in campus publications before the sleepout. 		
SLEEPER LIST! Create a list of all the sleepers that is updated and includes their contact details in case of changes to venue or schedule. It's very helpful to get a rough idea of numbers as early as possible. You may need this for permission from the body responsible for the location.		
PHOTOS Arrange for someone to be the 'official photographer '. Also try to find		

someone with filming /editing skills to film the event.		
<p>FIRST AID</p> <p>Identify qualified first aiders and include their contact numbers on a contacts list for participants. Ensure they bring a first aid kit to the sleepout.</p>		
<p>UPDATE MEMBERS</p> <p>Send an update to all participants confirming arrangements. Advise them to wear warm and waterproof clothes, bring a sleeping bag, come prepared for rain (bring an umbrella, cardboard & bin bags). Remind them not to bring items of personal value with them unless necessary. For reasons of health and safety we recommend participants don't drink alcohol during the sleepout.</p>	4 days before the sleepout	
<p>WEATHER</p> <p>Check the weather forecast in the morning, and remind participants to come prepared for bad weather!</p>	On the day of the sleepout	
<p>ON THE NIGHT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lead steward should take names and contact details of everyone joining the event. This should be used as a checklist against the previous list of participants, and is vital to aid follow up work for future events – and of course for thanking people. It is confidential information and should only be given to the organisers. • The lead steward should always have a fully charged mobile phone. • At the start of the sleepout, brief all volunteers and sleepers about the plan for the night, safety issues, and the campaign itself. Give advice about how to answer public enquiries, especially from hostile or abusive people. Background information about the campaign and a FAQ sheet are included in this pack. • As a matter of course ensure that all rubbish is removed at the end of the event. 	On the night of the sleepout	
<p>AFTER THE SLEEPOUT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let STAR know how your sleepout went! It's crucial that you send us your photos and any feedback. • Contact everyone involved to thank them and tell them what you achieved (e.g. number of responses to the quiz) • Try to arrange a meeting with your MP to discuss your event and the responses you received to the STAR Action Week quiz. 	After your sleepout	

3. Key Info

Date:
Location:
Time:

Lead Organiser:
Team Roles: (e.g. Publicity, Safety, Media, Lead Steward)
1.

- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Volunteers / Stewards (names of volunteers on the night)

Local politicians/ celebrities to invite to the event:

Local organisations supporting:

Speakers & Entertainment:

4. Top Tips for engaging with the public on the night of your sleepout:

- Have the courage of your convictions! While many people will be sympathetic, there may be negative responses to your action. Don't contradict what people tell you, it will make them resentful. And remember, if people are willing to engage with you then at least that's something.
- Take a look at the 'Frequently Asked Questions' section of this pack to familiarise yourself with responses for some of the tricky questions you may be asked. If someone asks you a question that you find difficult to answer, take their name and contact and try to find out the answer and get back to them. No one is expected to be an expert on refugee issues, so don't feel pressured to answer everything.
- **Make sure that those nagging with the public through the quiz are familiar with all the answers and have read the one-page 'quiz brief'.**
- If someone becomes abusive walk away – don't engage. Channel your energies into those who want to listen and have a discussion, not an argument.

5. Top Tips to make an impact!

- **Be visible at all times** - This is all about getting noticed, so make sure you can be seen during the evening, through the night and even in the morning!
- **Make it fun!** It's tough to sleep outside in the cold so do your best to create a fun and friendly atmosphere
- **Take pictures** – A key strength of the sleepout is that it's a powerful visual image, so make sure you get a bunch of fantastic photos to share afterwards! We can use the sleepouts for continued campaigning if we can show the support for this issue.
- **Quiz the public!** - Make the most of the opportunity to get people to do the STAR Action Week Quiz. We're doing this to put pressure on the Government so make it count!

6. After the Sleepout

Let us know how your sleepout went! We want to know:

- How many people participated in your sleepout
- How many people took part in the quiz and what the responses were
- If your sleepout gained coverage in the local media

Email your experiences to campaigns@star-network.org.uk

And don't forget to send us your photos!

7. Safety: Template Risk Assessment

It is **ESSENTIAL** that you conduct a risk assessment before your sleepout goes ahead.

Below are some ideas of the risks that you may need to think about and how you could control these. This list is not exhaustive - it is important you and your group think about other risks you may face.

Write down a list of all possible risks and identify the action to be taken to avoid likely safety hazards.

What is the Risk?	What will you do?
Theft or loss of possessions	All sleepers advised to avoid bringing valuables and keep money and phone on them at all times
Public hostility leading to verbal or physical abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid areas where trouble may arise, i.e. outside busy pubs and clubs. • Stewards awake and on duty at all times. • Include the contact number of the local police, the main public steward and lead steward on a contacts list for all sleepers. • Head steward should be briefed to call the police if they feel anyone's safety is in danger. Ensure Head steward has fully charged mobile 'phone. • Advise people not to get drawn into an argument. If someone becomes abusive walk away – don't engage. • Encourage everyone to be in pairs • Participants to be recognisable as participants by the use of arm bands or high visibility vests.
Bad weather – cold or rain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear warm and waterproof clothes • Try to use or create sheltered area • Organisers to provide extra sleeping bags, blankets and hot drinks in flasks
Location, i.e. near busy road or pubs	Choose a suitable location that avoid any possible dangers
Visibility	Ensure you are clearly visible for personal safety.
Public reputation	No alcohol to be consumed during the event.
Illness or injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify qualified first aiders and include their contact numbers on a contacts list for participants. • Have a first aid kit.
Safety of participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewards to have torches and wear high visibility jackets. • Lead steward to have a list of all participants and contact details.

Do not hesitate to get in touch with STAR for further support or advice when completing your risk assessment: campaigns@star-network.org.uk