

Windrush Voices Liverpool: From Harm to Repair - Moving from Listening to Action

'A foundation report for Windrush justice work in Liverpool, Merseyside and beyond'

Prepared by:

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Windrush Voices Liverpool, Liverpool Central Library, 25 April 2026

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

— Dr Martin Luther King Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail, 16 April 1963

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Report team: Liverpool Advocates For Windrush, including Tonika Stephenson, Barrister (Unregistered) and Dr Zana Vathi.

About Liverpool Advocates for Windrush (LAW)

[Liverpool Advocates For Windrush \(LAW\)](#) is a community-led legal and advocacy organisation based in Liverpool and working across Merseyside and the wider North West.

LAW supports people affected by the Windrush scandal and their descendants by improving access to justice, helping people understand available routes for documentation and compensation and building trusted partnerships with legal, academic, health and community organisations.

LAW's mission is to ensure that Windrush-affected communities can access free, professional, trauma-informed support and that lived experience informs policy, practice and public accountability. This report forms part of LAW's wider policy work to turn community evidence into practical support, institutional learning and lasting reform.

Patron's Supporting Statement

Dr I. Stephanie Boyce CBE FKC, Patron, Liverpool Advocates For Windrush

The Windrush scandal is one of the most serious failures of the British state in living memory. It was not an accident. It was the foreseeable consequence of policies that treated people with every lawful right to be here as if they were immigration offenders, stripping them of employment, housing, healthcare, dignity, and in some cases, their liberty. The communities affected were disproportionately Black British people of Caribbean heritage who had built their lives in this country, contributed to its institutions and trusted it to treat them fairly. That trust was catastrophically betrayed.

What this report makes clear is that the betrayal has not fully ended. The Windrush Compensation Scheme exists, the Independent Windrush Commissioner has been appointed and advocacy funding has been made available. These are welcomed. But for too many people, the gap between what the scheme promises and what it delivers in practice remains wide and, for some, unbridgeable without proper support. Long forms, complex eligibility rules, evidential barriers, and the emotional weight of revisiting years of harm are not minor inconveniences. They are structural obstacles that prevent people from accessing what they are owed.

As a solicitor, I know that complexity without support is not neutrality; it is a barrier. The absence of fully funded, independent legal advice within the Windrush compensation process is a serious gap. Advocacy matters enormously, but it is not a substitute for pro bono advice. Many claims involve questions of eligibility, causation, evidential strategy and the challenge of nil, low or rejected awards that require regulated legal expertise. The comparator schemes referenced in this report, including the Infected Blood Compensation Authority and the Post Office Horizon redress routes, demonstrate that funded legal support can be built into the design of a redress scheme. There is no principled reason why the same principle should not apply here.

As a former President of the Law Society of England and Wales, I am also conscious of the profession's responsibilities in this space. The legal sector must ask itself whether it is doing enough to ensure that Windrush-affected people can access the advice and representation they need, not one day, but now, while cases remain live and people's ability to claim is diminishing with age, health and the passage of time.

Liverpool Advocates For Windrush is doing what community-led justice organisations do at their best: holding the space between people and institutions, building trust where institutions have squandered it, and translating lived experience into evidence that decision-makers cannot ignore. Windrush Voices Liverpool is a model of what trauma-informed, community-led engagement looks like when it is done with integrity and skill. The findings set out in this report deserve to be read carefully, acted upon seriously and followed up publicly.

I commend this report to government, to public institutions, to the legal profession and to universities. The partnership between Liverpool Advocates For Windrush and higher education institutions is particularly significant; it shows how academic communities can meet their civic and equality responsibilities in a way that is practical, grounded and directly beneficial to those who need it most.

It is a privilege to serve as Patron of Liverpool Advocates For Windrush. The people at the heart of this work, those who have shared their experiences, their pain and their continued determination, deserve nothing less than full and lasting redress. This report is a clear and evidenced account of what that requires. I urge those within government to act and to do so without further delay.

Foreword quote

“A compensation scheme that cannot be navigated without legal support, but provides none, is not justice; it is process, it is structural unfairness. Windrush-affected people deserve independent legal advice as a matter of right, not as an afterthought. That gap must be closed.”

— Dr I. Stephanie Boyce CBE FKC, Patron, Liverpool Advocates For Windrush

Contributors and Voices

Rev. Clive Foster MBE, Windrush Commissioner

Reverend Clive Foster MBE is the first Windrush Commissioner. He brings extensive experience in community leadership, social justice, equality, faith-based public service, and advocacy for people affected by the Windrush scandal. His work has focused on ensuring that survivors' voices remain central to public understanding, policy reform, and institutional accountability.

Role and focus of the Windrush Commissioner

As Windrush Commissioner, Reverend Clive Foster MBE provides independent challenge and oversight of the Government's work to deliver justice for survivors of the Home Office Windrush scandal. His role includes ensuring that survivors' voices are at the heart of this work and advising the Government on measures to prevent future injustices.

The Commissioner's recommendations have already led to [changes in the compensation scheme](#), including prioritising claims and reviews from those aged 75 and over, compensation for pension losses and immigration fees, advance compensation payments of up to 75% while cases are reviewed, and adjustments for wage inflation and long-term unemployment. His three strategic priorities are Justice and Healing, Prevention and Legacy.

Michael McMahon, Adjudicator / Adjudicator's Office

Independence caveat

Michael McMahon and the Adjudicator's Office can only operate effectively if they are and are seen to be, independent. His participation in Windrush Voices Liverpool and contribution to this report should not be read as endorsement of LAW's recommendations. The independent nature of the role means the Adjudicator cannot directly advocate for one group over another. It is critical that the role and the work of the Adjudicator's Office remain scrupulously independent so that all parties to the scheme can trust that what the office says is truly independent.

Role of the Adjudicator's Office

The Adjudicator's Office is an independent organisation that deals with complaints made about His Majesty's Revenue and Customs. It is also the second-tier reviewer of claims under the Windrush Compensation Scheme. With regard to the Windrush Compensation Scheme, its role is to independently ensure that the scheme rules and guidance have been followed by the Home Office. If that has not happened, the Adjudicator's Office will refer the claim back to the Home Office for reconsideration. This may mean an

award is made or an award is increased. It may also mean the Home Office clarifies an issue that was unclear, but that the award level does not change. The Adjudicator's Office does not make a new decision.

Professor Dawn Edge

Professor Dawn Edge is Professor of Mental Health and Inclusivity at the University of Manchester, the institution's first Black woman professor and former Academic Lead for Equity, and Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) on race, religion and belief. She is a Governor of The Health Foundation and Director of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Research Unit within Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Trust. Dawn has also served as a Non-Executive Director on NHS Trust Boards and as a trustee of community organisations committed to tackling disparities in health service access, experience and outcomes.

As an expert health services researcher, Dawn is committed to using research to reform policy and practice, creating more equitable, effective and accessible care, treatment and outcomes for Black and other marginalised communities.

Catherine Evans

Catherine Evans has been a Senior Law Lecturer at London South Bank University since 2015, where she runs the University's Legal Advice Clinics. Catherine helped set up the Windrush Justice Clinic, a collaboration of university law clinics, law centres, advocates and activists. Her first job after leaving university in the late 1980s was as an adviser in a community centre in Peckham, South London, where a significant part of her role involved giving advice on the British Nationality Act 1981 and its implications.

Ngunan Adamu - moderator

Ngunan Adamu is one of the UK's most compelling hosts, presenters and keynote facilitators: a BBC broadcaster whose warmth, professionalism and storytelling instinct make every event unforgettable. With over 15 years at the BBC, Ngunan presents and produces UK Black in the North West and co-hosted Eurovisioncast, the BBC's official Eurovision podcast. She has hosted national awards shows, film premieres, corporate conferences and community events, bringing the same broadcast-honed precision and magnetic presence to every stage. Beyond hosting, Ngunan is founder and CEO of iWoman Media Ltd and iWoman Academy CIC, and the creator of Roots and Pride: a celebration of migrant communities in the Liverpool City Region. Named a Liverpool Icon and Merseyside Women of the Year Fellow, she is a speaker and host who moves audiences and moves culture.

Elliot Jesset - moderator

Elliot Jesset is a communications professional and senior journalist who has reported on several campaigns for justice, including the campaign organised by Liverpool Advocates For Windrush. His focus has been on conveying the lived experiences of the Windrush generations, raising public awareness and helping to illustrate why the campaign remains so important. More recently, Elliot has contributed to LAW's marketing campaigns and, drawing on his journalism experience, has moderated panel discussions and live events.

Executive Summary

Windrush Voices Liverpool: From Harm to Repair - Moving from Listening to Action was a community listening and action event held on 25 April 2026 and convened by Liverpool Advocates For Windrush (LAW). It brought together people affected by the Windrush scandal, family members, community advocates, legal professionals, students, volunteers, academics, health and wellbeing partners, and institutional representatives. The event was designed to move beyond listening alone: it created a trauma-informed, choice-based space where people could be heard, ask questions, share experiences, access support and shape practical next steps.

Core message: *Listening must now become action. The question is not simply whether people were heard, but what is done with what was heard.*

Key findings:

- a) *The Windrush scandal is not only a historic injustice. It is intergenerational. It continues to affect individuals, families, descendants and communities, including younger generations, through unresolved status issues, difficult compensation processes, evidential barriers, lack of support, poor communication, trauma, mistrust, and institutional delay.*
- b) *The Windrush Compensation Scheme remains difficult to navigate, particularly where applicants face historic evidence gaps, literacy barriers, digital exclusion, trauma, age-related barriers or mistrust of institutions.*
- c) Existing advocacy and awareness funding is welcome, but it does not remove the need for independent legal advice and representation for claimants. Legal support should not be limited only to the most complex claims: early advice can prevent errors, reduce trauma, improve evidence gathering and support fair outcomes in applications, reviews, nil awards, low awards and rejected claims.
- d) *The Patron's supporting statement reinforces that complexity without support is a barrier and that Windrush-affected people should have access to independent legal advice as a matter of right, not as an afterthought.*
- e) *Trauma, health and wellbeing must be treated as central to Windrush repair, not as an optional add-on or general signposting issue.*
- f) *Public bodies and institutions should approach Windrush redress through equality, accessibility, accountability and institutional candour.*
- g) *Universities can play a meaningful role through supervised clinics, research, public legal education, student training, impact evaluation and civic engagement in partnership with LAW.*

- h)** LAW's five targeted asks focus on the missing infrastructure needed to turn existing Windrush schemes and commitments into accessible, fair and trauma-informed justice. Readers who need the headlines ask quickly should go to [Section 6: Policy Recommendations](#).

The timing is urgent. Since 2018, public Windrush related schemes, funds and oversight mechanisms have been introduced, but LAW's survey evidence, Windrush Voices Liverpool and the first Windrush Commissioner's input, show that people still face the same practical barriers: complexity, evidential difficulty, insufficient legal support, mistrust, trauma, fragile trust in the scheme and a lack of transparent public accountability.

At a glance: Liverpool Advocates For Windrush's five targeted asks

1. Fund independent legal advice and representation, not only advocacy.
2. Redesign evidence rules, review nil, low and rejected awards, and publish learning.
3. Create a fully funded, Windrush-specific, trauma- and culturally-informed mental health and wellbeing care pathway.
4. Publish equality, accountability and performance data.
5. Invest in long-term regional Windrush justice infrastructure.

"Windrush Voices Liverpool was created because listening alone is not enough. Our communities need justice that can be accessed, support that can be trusted and commitments that can be followed up publicly. This report is LAW's contribution to making sure lived experience is not only heard, but acted upon."

— Tonika Stephenson, Barrister (Unregistered), Chair / Managing Director, Liverpool Advocates For Windrush

1. Introduction

The Windrush scandal exposed the severe consequences of policies and practices that wrongly treated people who had a lawful right to live in the UK as if they were immigration offenders. Many people lost employment, housing, healthcare access, benefits, education opportunities, family stability, liberty, dignity and trust in public institutions. Public findings and reports, including the [Windrush Lessons Learned Review](#) and the [Equality and Human Rights Commission's](#) assessment of hostile environment policies, provide important context for understanding the scale and seriousness of this failure.

Since the scandal became public in 2018, a number of governmental and community initiatives have been put in place, including the [Windrush Scheme](#) for documentation, the [Windrush Compensation Scheme](#), the [Windrush Help Team / helpline](#), the [Windrush Compensation Advocacy Support Fund](#), the [Windrush Community Engagement Fund](#), [advance payments and pension-related changes](#), the [Independent Windrush Commissioner](#) and the [Windrush Councils Network](#). These measures matter, but evidence from Windrush Voices Liverpool suggests that significant gaps remain.

LAW organised *Windrush Voices Liverpool: From Harm to Repair - Moving from Listening to Action* on 25 April 2026 to bring together affected people, public bodies, third sector organisations, civil society, legal and advice-sector partners, students, volunteers and the wider public. The event built on earlier Legacy of Windrush work and LAW's survey evidence by moving from reflection and awareness-raising to practical action.

The event aimed to:

- listen to people directly affected by the Windrush scandal;
- identify continuing barriers to justice and redress;
- support people to understand their rights and available routes of help;
- create a safe and trauma-informed space for discussion;
- gather evidence to inform future policy, funding and support;
- strengthen community, legal, academic, and institutional partnerships; and
- develop practical asks and commitments that can be followed up.

This report is LAW's foundational document for Windrush justice work in Liverpool, Merseyside and beyond. It builds on [LAW's earlier survey findings](#) on Windrush experiences in Merseyside and on LAW's [2025 Legacy of Windrush event](#), which amplified affected voices, legal analysis, public accountability, Commonwealth collaboration, and the preservation of Windrush voices. Windrush Voices Liverpool therefore moves LAW's work from evidence-gathering and public education towards action, accountability and follow-

up. It is intended to inform public institutions and the general public, support future training and partnership work, shape LAW's policy asks, support funding applications, and create a clear framework for accountability.

LAW's role is to hold together community trust, practical legal understanding, partnership working, and public accountability. The report should therefore be read both as a record of what was heard and as a practical guide to what needs to change.

2. Methodology and Evidence Base

This is a public-facing synthesis report, not an academic research paper or verbatim transcript. It uses a pragmatic, mixed-source thematic synthesis: community testimony, facilitator notes, speaker reflections, feedback, and public policy/comparator sources are read together to identify consistent themes and practical recommendations.

The report follows a qualified methodological pluralism approach and draws on:

- the original event aims and planning materials;
- attendee, guest and volunteer feedback;
- speaker and moderator reflections;
- facilitator and student notes from listening circles;
- feedback from online attendees;
- post-event speaker reflection discussions;
- LAW team debriefs;
- public reflections and social media posts;
- LAW's earlier Windrush survey findings and related data analysis;
- LAW's 2025 Legacy of Windrush event and follow-up materials;
- Liverpool Hope University research and impact context;
- LAW's wider casework, community engagement and survey experience; and
- publicly available comparator and policy material.

Public sources are hyperlinked in the sections where they are discussed and are also listed in the Appendix. Internal event materials, listening-circle notes, feedback, survey evidence, and reflections are held by LAW and have been analysed thematically and synthesised for the purpose of information and advocacy, rather than cited individually.

This report uses evidence selectively and respectfully, with attention to consent, confidentiality, safeguarding and anonymisation.

3. Public Landscape and Comparator Learning

Since 2018, the Government has introduced or funded a number of Windrush-related measures. Those measures matter. But the existence of Windrush schemes are not the same as access to justice. This report identifies why, despite those measures, many Windrush intergenerational affected people and descendants, still face barriers to fair, trusted and accessible redress.

Event evidence and LAW's earlier survey work point in the same direction: awareness funding is not independent legal advice; advocacy capacity remains limited; evidential requirements remain difficult; forms and processes can be retraumatising; public data is not sufficiently transparent; and trusted regional infrastructure remains underfunded. LAW's survey findings also identified complicated application processes, lack of information, difficulties gathering evidence, concerns about compensation adequacy, and continuing need for legal assistance, public engagement, and trauma-informed support.

Comparator learning – Examples of other public compensation schemes

Comparator redress schemes are not identical to Windrush, but they demonstrate practical design choices that can improve fairness, accessibility and trust. Links are included so that readers, students, lecturers, advocates, and public bodies can move directly from the report to the relevant public source.

- The [Infected Blood Compensation Authority](#) provides a useful comparator because it uses approved solicitors to provide independent legal support paid for by the scheme. The schemes are different, but the principle is important: a redress scheme can build legal support into its design.
- [Post Office/Horizon redress routes](#) show that independent legal advice can be reimbursed or funded within complex compensation schemes. Existing redress infrastructure demonstrates that legal support can be built into a scheme where the issues are complex and the harm is serious.

Community, legal and university support models

- The [Windrush Justice Clinic](#) model shows that universities, law centres and community organisations can work together to provide advice, representation, research and strategic support.
- University legal clinics show that students can contribute meaningfully where they are properly trained, supervised and embedded within trusted community partnerships.
- Universities like [LJMU LAC](#), [Liverpool Hope University](#) and University of Liverpool which work with LAW, can also help meet equality, civic and educational responsibilities by supporting supervised clinics, public legal education, community-based research, student training, accessible information, impact evaluation and trauma-informed practice. This moves equality commitments into practical community impact.
- Community organisations such as [BEO](#), [GMIAU](#), [Windrush Defenders](#) and others demonstrate the importance of awareness, advocacy, legal information, outreach, and community trust.

The [Adjudicator's Office](#) has also confirmed that it is able to share independently developed training and information to support clearer understanding of the scheme and the second-tier review process. This contribution is included for clarity and public understanding, not as endorsement of LAW's recommendations.

LAW's position is to build on this landscape, not replacing existing initiatives. The gap is long-term, regional, legally informed, trauma-aware and equality-conscious infrastructure in Liverpool, Merseyside and the wider North West.

4. Equality Act and Public Duties Framework

This report identifies equality risks, relevant duties and practical steps institutions should consider in light of what was heard at the event. The [Equality Act 2010](#) protects people from discrimination connected to protected characteristics, including age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, and other characteristics. In the Windrush context, race, ethnic and national origins, age, disability, health impacts, language, literacy, trauma and digital exclusion are particularly relevant to whether people can access redress in practice.

Given the time that has passed since the scandal became public, equality-conscious action is urgent.

Equality Act 2010 provision	Why it matters here	Event finding / practical implication
Section 149 - Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)	Public authorities must have due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. When designing redress schemes, public authorities should also consider equality between comparable schemes and be able to justify significant differences in access, support or process.	Redress processes should be designed around affected communities, with attention to race, age, disability, trauma, digital exclusion, language, literacy and mistrust. Differences between redress schemes should be transparent and capable of explanation.
Section 19 - Indirect discrimination	Seemingly neutral rules can disadvantage particular groups in practice.	The current design of the Windrush application forms, rigid evidence rules, online-first processes, and complex guidance may create unequal access for older applicants, disabled applicants, Black and minoritized communities, people with literacy barriers, people without digital access,

		and people affected by intergenerational vicarious trauma.
Sections 20-21 - Reasonable adjustments	Disabled people must not be placed at substantial disadvantage. Although the reasonable-adjustment duty is disability-specific, the event also highlighted broader accessibility needs linked to age, trauma, literacy, and digital exclusion.	Applicants may need assisted digital support, alternative formats, longer appointments, quiet spaces, advocate involvement, home/community appointments, trauma-informed communication, and non-written routes for explaining harm.
Section 29 - Services and public functions	Public bodies and service providers must not discriminate in services or public functions.	Compensation, documentation, health, advice, and local support routes should be accessible, culturally competent and fair.
Section 91 - Further and Higher Education	Further and Higher Education institutions must not discriminate in access to education, benefits, facilities, or services. Universities also have civic and equality responsibilities that can be advanced through supervised community partnerships.	University and college partnerships can support supervised clinics, research, public legal education, student training, accessible information, impact evaluation, and trauma-informed practice with LAW.

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) previously found that the Home Office did not comply with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when developing, implementing and monitoring hostile environment policies. This makes equality-conscious design, monitoring and public accountability especially important in the Windrush context.

5. What We Heard: Key Findings

The event identified five core themes.

1: Access to justice and legal support

“Advocacy alone is not enough; legal advice alone may not reach those who distrust institutions. A properly funded model must bring both together.”

— **Anonymised attendee feedback**

“Our work on the Windrush Compensation Scheme shows us that too many people come to the scheme unclear what it can and what it cannot do. This duty falls on people like me to ensure that the parameters of the scheme are understood. We are taking steps to do just that.”

— **Michael McMahon, Adjudicator / Adjudicator’s Office**

“In Liverpool, and at listening events across the country, people told me clearly that trust in the Windrush Compensation Scheme is still fragile. Although the scheme has improved in response to my recommendations, and decisions are coming more quickly, too many people still find the process exhausting and painful. Survivors feel like they are having to fight the state all over again and they do not feel properly supported. That feedback directly informed the evidence I recently gave to the Public Accounts Committee, including my view that funded legal support is essential if the scheme is to be truly fair.”

— **Rev. Clive Foster MBE, Windrush Commissioner**

People continue to struggle to access the support they need to understand and pursue Windrush redress. The legal aspects of the scheme are not properly built into its design. There is no clear legal aid or funded legal support pathway for most applicants, despite the complexity of eligibility, evidence, compensation categories, causation, and review routes.

Advocacy support is also spread out and inconsistent. Trusted advocates exist, but they are often underfunded, overburdened and unable to meet demand. The evidence suggests that a blended model is required: community advocacy, early triage, eligibility screening, evidence support, legal advice, training, supervision, and referral to regulated representatives where needed.

2: Evidential burden and scheme complexity

“The process can feel designed to discourage people from completing the form, forcing them to revisit years of trauma and stress.”

— **Anonymised attendee feedback**

The Windrush Compensation Scheme remains too complex for many people to navigate alone. Attendees and contributors raised concerns about long forms, historic evidence requirements, records that no longer exist, difficulties proving employment, housing, banking and living costs, and the emotional burden of revisiting years of harm.

The evidence points to the need for clearer guidance, more flexible evidential standards, practical support and a more humane process.

The Commissioner’s final response also reinforces the significance of nil awards. Too many people go through a long and difficult process only to receive no compensation, which is deeply damaging to trust and can deter others from applying.

Elliot Jesset noted that justice is not rooted solely in the compensation scheme, although compensation remains central. Justice also requires full and unequivocal acknowledgement of harm, recognition of how government policy shaped and perpetuated that harm, improved accessibility, better communications and safeguards to ensure recurrence is prevented.

3: Trauma, health and wellbeing

“The impact is not historic in some distant, disconnected way, but living, felt and still unfolding in people’s lives.”

— **Ngunan Adamu**

“It was very informative, but upsetting in parts, to hear that real people’s lives are still in turmoil.”

— **Attendee feedback**

“People see others go through a long and difficult process and end up with nothing, and they understandably ask themselves: ‘why put myself through it?’”

— **Rev. Clive Foster MBE, Windrush Commissioner**

“Windrush repair must include fully funded, culturally informed, trauma-informed health and wellbeing support that recognises the physical, psychological, vicarious and intergenerational impact of the scandal.”

— **Professor Dawn Edge**

Trauma is central, not peripheral. The scandal has caused continuing emotional, psychological, physical, and family harm. The process of applying for compensation can itself be retraumatising, particularly where people must repeatedly retell painful experiences, chase responses or feel disbelieved.

Participants and speakers highlighted the need for culturally informed mental health support, trauma-informed casework and better recognition of vicarious and intergenerational trauma. There is also a need to understand the wider health impacts on those directly affected, their families and communities.

Professor Dawn Edge’s contribution reinforces the need to treat trauma, health and wellbeing as core to Windrush repair. Her expertise in mental health, inclusivity and health-service reform supports the report’s call for a dedicated, fully funded, Windrush-specific, culturally informed and trauma-informed mental health and wellbeing care pathway, rather than general signposting alone.

4: Accountability, transparency and institutional candour

“Listening without accountability can become another form of delay. Listening without action can deepen hurt. Listening without repair can feel hollow.”

— **Ngunan Adamu**

“Justice is not solely rooted in the compensation scheme alone. It is also about advocating for a full and unequivocal acknowledgement of the harm caused by the Windrush scandal, how it was shaped and perpetuated by government policy, and why new policies are needed to ensure it never happens again.”

— **Elliot Jesset**

“It is time to stop ignoring the survivors of the Windrush scandal; it is time for accountability, truth and repair; it is time for justice.”

— **Catherine Evans**

Catherine Evans' contribution also framed recognition as an important element of justice. She emphasised that the British state has failed to recognise the severe harm caused to thousands of people through the deprivation of citizenship rights without grounds or due process. Her contribution links accountability to recognition, truth and repair, and supports the report's wider call for public candour, comparator learning and reform beyond compensation.

There remains deep frustration about delay, lack of progress and lack of visible accountability. People want to know what institutions have heard, what will change, who is responsible and when updates will be given.

The Commissioner's contribution confirms that fragile trust in the scheme makes public follow-up, transparent data and visible accountability even more urgent.

“Windrush Voices Liverpool made it clear that listening alone is not enough. Trust depends on candour, clear commitments, named actions, and public follow-through.”

— **Tonika Stephenson, Barrister (Unregistered)**

5: Community outreach, education and future capacity

“Windrush repair requires historical understanding, not only scheme awareness.”

— **Anonymised attendee feedback**

The event showed the importance of trusted community spaces, local and regional engagement, student and volunteer involvement, and partnership working. LAW's ability to bring together affected communities, legal professionals, academics, students, public bodies, and community partners demonstrates the value of a community-led model.

Facilitator feedback identified a shared view that the national curriculum should include mandatory teaching on Caribbean and wider Commonwealth history and colonialism, so that the Windrush scandal can be properly contextualised. This widens the education ask beyond awareness of the compensation scheme: communities are asking for historical understanding, public education and prevention of future institutional harm.

The event also supported legal education and social justice learning. Nine university law student volunteers supported the event: five from the University of Liverpool and four from Liverpool John Moores University. Student and early-career legal contributor feedback indicates that LAW is helping to develop future lawyers and socially conscious professionals.

Feedback also highlighted the importance of skilled, sensitive facilitation and careful management of institutional participation so that affected people are not silenced or crowded out.

Ngunan Adamu's reflections also highlighted that the event connected people directly with trusted advice and support, helping to move the conversation from harm and frustration, towards practical steps for repair.

Elliot Jesset's contribution further highlights the role of communications, journalism and public storytelling in helping wider audiences understand lived experience, sustain public awareness and connect individual harm to the need for policy change.

6. Policy Recommendations

In the aftermath of the Windrush scandal, the UK Government introduced or funded a number of Windrush-related measures. LAW's recommendations focus on the gaps that remain. References to independent bodies or office holders, including the Adjudicator's Office, are included for factual context, clarity and public understanding. They should not be read as endorsement of LAW's recommendations unless expressly stated.

1: Fund independent legal advice and representation, not only advocacy

The Advocacy Support Fund is welcome, but advocacy is not the same as independent legal advice or representation. Legal support should be available to all claimants at an early stage, with additional specialist support for complex claims, reviews, complaints and challenges. Many claims require legal analysis, immigration/status understanding, evidential strategy, causation arguments, review advice, complaint drafting and challenge of nil, low or rejected awards.

This recommendation is reinforced by the Commissioner's input and his recent evidence to the [Public Accounts Committee](#): funded legal support is essential if the scheme is to be truly fair.

Comparator redress schemes are other schemes that can be used to learn what effective and equitable support is possible. They are not identical to Windrush, but they show that funded legal advice can be built into compensation schemes. The [Infected Blood Compensation Authority](#) uses approved solicitors paid for by that scheme and [Post Office/Horizon redress routes](#) have included funded or reimbursed independent legal advice.

Recommendation: Create a ring-fenced, independent, funded legal advice and representation route for both Windrush Schemes' applicants' cases, where legal issues are reasonably foreseeable. This should cover early advice, initial applications, complex claims, deceased estates, reviews, complaints and routes of escalation. This does not duplicate advocacy funding. It fills the legal advice gap and may also reduce retraumatisation by helping people understand the process before harm is repeated through avoidable errors or rejected claims.

2: Redesign evidence rules, review nil, low and rejected awards, and publish learning

Recent compensation scheme changes, including advance payments and pension-related reforms, are welcome. However, attendees described both Windrush schemes and the associated evidence processes as discouraging, stressful and retraumatising.

The Commissioner's acknowledged and reinforces that high rates of nil awards remain a serious trust issue, particularly where people endure a difficult process and receive nothing.

The issue is not only speed. It is decision quality, evidential fairness and whether both status/documentation decisions and compensation decisions properly reflect current realities of historic harm, missing records, family circumstances, age, trauma and mistrust. Public reporting on redress schemes highlights the importance of reaching eligible people, supporting claims, avoiding unreasonable delays and maintaining confidence in fairness.

Recommendation: Establish an independent review of nil, low and rejected compensation awards, publish learning from those reviews and redesign evidential requirements across both Windrush routes, so that lived experience, witness evidence, circumstantial evidence, and missing historic records are treated fairly and consistently. The purpose should be to enable fair reassessment where appropriate, reduce repeat errors, improve published guidance, identify whether particular groups are being disadvantaged, and ensure that missing historic records are not treated as a claimant's failure.

3: Create a fully funded, Windrush-specific, trauma- and culturally-informed mental health and wellbeing care pathway

Current support is not enough if it relies mainly on general signposting or vulnerability escalation. Windrush-affected people need a dedicated, fully funded care pathway that recognises trauma, mistrust, age, race, disability, family impact, vicarious trauma, and culturally specific barriers to care.

This recommendation is strengthened by Professor Dawn Edge's contribution and biography, which underlines the need for health-service responses that are equitable, accessible and informed by the experiences of Black and other marginalised communities.

Recommendation: Co-design and commission a culturally competent, trauma-informed mental health and wellbeing care pathway for Windrush-affected people, families and communities, including counselling, health navigation, referral pathways, NHS engagement, and support for vicarious and intergenerational trauma.

4: Publish equality, accountability and performance data

The Commissioner's role is welcome, but communities still need clear public reporting on what is changing, what has been implemented and what remains unresolved. Public accountability should include data on outcomes, equality impacts, complaints, reviewed learning, and the implementation of recommendations.

The Commissioner's ability to drive change would be strengthened by statutory powers or a statutory framework capable of securing binding accountability, requiring formal responses to recommendations, monitoring implementation, and ensuring that lessons from the Windrush scandal are not left to discretion or goodwill alone.

Recommendation: Publish a Windrush accountability dashboard covering applications, outcomes, nil awards, review outcomes, complaints, PHSO role and learning, regional data, equality impacts, implementation of Commissioner recommendations, and progress against public commitments. Government should also consider placing the Commissioner's accountability function on a statutory footing, with clear powers to require responses, track implementation, and report publicly on progress.

5: Invest in long-term regional Windrush justice infrastructure

Short-term awareness grants and national advocacy funds help, but they do not replace sustained local infrastructure. Trusted organisations need stable funding to provide outreach, triage, casework support, assisted digital help, training, research, and partnership coordination.

LAW's work with universities also creates a practical route for institutions to meet equality, civic and educational responsibilities through supervised clinics, public legal education, research, student training, community engagement and evidence-based policy work.

Recommendation: Fund a long-term regional Windrush justice model in Liverpool, Merseyside and the wider North West, combining community champions, legal triage, assisted digital support, university clinics, student and volunteer training, research, local authority referral routes, curriculum and public education work on Caribbean and wider Commonwealth history, colonialism and the context of the Windrush scandal, and partnerships with health, legal and advice-sector organisations.

7. Follow-up and Accountability Framework

This section records the follow-up points and offers arising from Windrush Voices Liverpool and the subsequent speaker reflection process. It is designed to help LAW, contributors and the wider community track what was heard, what action was offered and what remains to be followed up.

Where institutional wording has been supplied, it has been reflected carefully. The Commissioner's confirmed commitments and follow-up points are recorded in the table below.

Relevant office / area	Follow-up area	Source / status	30-day follow-up	90-day follow-up	How the public can track progress
Windrush Commissioner's Office	<p>Commissioner - health impacts and trauma.</p> <p>Make a formal approach to the NHS about Windrush-related health impacts, including trauma.</p>	<p>Confirmed through amended Commissioner commitments.</p> <p>LAW to track with the Commissioner's Office and relevant health partners where possible.</p>	<p>Initial contact has been made with the NHS to arrange a meeting with the Windrush Commissioner.</p>	<p>Update on learning, responses, referrals, recommendations or practical routes for affected people that can be shared publicly.</p>	<p>LAW public update, report addendum and/or publishable Commissioner or NHS update where available.</p>
	<p>Commissioner - vicarious trauma.</p> <p>Review vicarious trauma caused by the Windrush scandal.</p>	<p>Confirmed through amended Commissioner commitments, including attention to families, descendants, advocates, caseworkers and community organisations.</p>	<p>Update on proposed approach and any organisations or experts to be consulted.</p>	<p>Update on findings, referral routes, recommendations or further work.</p>	<p>LAW public update and any agreed Commissioner update.</p>
	<p>Commissioner - culturally informed support.</p> <p>Connect with the Black and Asian Therapy Network.</p>	<p>Confirmed through amended Commissioner commitments. LAW to track whether a practical culturally informed support route can be identified.</p>	<p>Initial contact has been made with the Black and Asian Therapy Network to arrange a meeting with the Windrush Commissioner.</p>	<p>Update on whether a practical referral, signposting, partnership or support route is possible.</p>	<p>LAW public update and any agreed partner / Commissioner update.</p>
	<p>Commissioner – connect CoLab with community voices from Liverpool.</p>	<p>Confirmed through amended Commissioner commitments.</p>	<p>The Commissioner's team has been tasked with connecting CoLab with community</p>	<p>Update on whether engagement has taken place and whether any learning or next steps can be shared publicly.</p>	<p>LAW public update, community update and any publishable Commissioner / CoLab update.</p>

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			voices from Liverpool.		
	<p>Commissioner - funded legal support and nil awards.</p> <p>Continue to raise the need for funded legal support and the impact of nil awards with Government.</p>	<p>Confirmed through the Commissioner's final bio, quote and key points. The Commissioner has also recently raised funded legal support with the Public Accounts Committee.</p>	<p>Confirm how the legal support case is being taken forward with Government.</p>	<p>Update on any Government response, policy movement or further evidence shared publicly.</p>	<p>LAW public update, Commissioner update, Public Accounts Committee material and any Government response.</p>
Adjudicator's Office	<p>Adjudicator - role, review process and independence.</p> <p>Explain the Adjudicator's role, second-tier review function, limits of the role and independence caveat.</p>	<p>Wording supplied by Michael McMahon / the Adjudicator's Office and included with the independence caveat.</p>	<p>Agree final wording for inclusion in public information note.</p>	<p>Publish or host approved explanation where appropriate.</p>	<p>Final report, LAW website/resources and any approved Adjudicator's Office material.</p>
	<p>Adjudicator - training and scheme understanding.</p> <p>Share independently developed training with advocacy groups to aid better understanding of the scheme.</p>	<p>Offer recorded from the event and reflected alongside the independence caveat.</p>	<p>Identify what training or information can be shared.</p>	<p>Develop or share accessible guidance, training or public Q&A resource if agreed.</p>	<p>LAW public update, training materials and approved information from the Adjudicator's Office.</p>

LAW public reporting and community accountability	<p>LAW to publish only confirmed commitments and approved wording.</p> <p>LAW to avoid presenting recommendations as institutional commitments unless expressly confirmed.</p> <p>LAW to confirm anonymisation, consent, source accuracy and speaker/institutional approval before publication.</p>	Offer recorded from the event and reflections post event.	Share confirmed report and short update.	Publish progress update on commitments, gaps, responses and next steps.	LAW website, LinkedIn, newsletter/broadcast channels, community meetings and any future listening or accountability event.
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8. Conclusions

Windrush Voices Liverpool: From Harm to Repair - Moving from Listening to Action made one thing clear: the work of repair is not finished.

LAW is not asking for symbolic recognition alone. We are asking for the practical infrastructure that Windrush-affected people and their descendants need to access justice: independent legal support, fair evidence rules, trauma-informed care, transparent public data, regional capacity, and accountability that can be seen, measured, and followed up.

Justice cannot begin and end with status rectification or compensation. It must also include acknowledgement of harm, recognition of how policy created and sustained that harm, accessible routes to support, culturally informed healing, institutional candour, and safeguards strong enough to ensure that this injustice is not repeated.

The event showed the depth of continuing harm, but it also showed the strength, courage, and clarity of the community. People came not only to share painful experiences, but to insist that those experiences lead somewhere. They called for a system that does not require survivors to fight the state again in order to be believed, supported or compensated.

This report turns what was heard into a clear public record and a practical agenda for action. The question is not simply whether people were heard, but what is done with what was heard. The next step is not more listening without consequence. It is funded legal support, clear asks, binding institutional accountability, public follow-through, and practical reform.

The measure of this work will not be whether people were invited into the room. It will be whether institutions act on what was said there.

‘Listening must now become action.’

— Tonika Stephenson, Barrister (Unregistered)

Appendix: Public Sources and LAW Evidence Base

These sources informed the public landscape, comparator, equality and LAW evidence-based sections. Key links and organisation links are included here to support transparency, further reading and public education.

Source	Publisher	Link
Windrush Councils Network launch/update, including Liverpool listed as a participating council	Office of the Windrush Commissioner	Councils Network launch/update
Windrush Compensation Advocacy Support Fund 2026 to 2027	GOV.UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-advocacy-support-fund-2026-to-2027
Windrush Community Engagement Fund 2025 to 2026 grant-funded projects / background	GOV.UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-community-engagement-fund-2025-to-2026-grant-funded-projects
Windrush compensation scheme overhaul - advance payments and pension changes	GOV.UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/windrush-compensation-scheme-overhaul-to-deliver-faster-justice
Government's compensation and financial recognition schemes	National Audit Office	https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/governments-compensation-and-financial-recognition-schemes/
Legal support paid for by IBCA	Infected Blood Compensation Authority	https://ibca.org.uk/get-support/legal-support-paid-for-by-ibca
People need legal help: the value of legal representation in the Windrush Compensation Scheme	JUSTICE	https://www.justice.org.uk/reports/people-need-legal-help-the-value-of-legal-representation-in-the-windrush-compensation-scheme

Source	Publisher	Link
Public Sector Equality Duty assessment of hostile environment policies	Equality and Human Rights Commission	https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/public-sector/public-sector-equality-duty/public-sector-equality-duty-assessment-hostile
Memorandum of Understanding between the Windrush Commissioner and the Home Office	GOV.UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/memorandum-of-understanding-between-the-windrush-commissioner-and-the-home-office
Letter from Birmingham Jail quotation: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."	Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial / National Park Service	National Park Service quotation page
Windrush Lessons Learned Review	Home Office / GOV.UK	GOV.UK publication page
LAW Windrush Survey Report / Understanding the Experiences of the Windrush Generation in Merseyside	Liverpool Advocates For Windrush / Liverpool Hope University	LAW survey analysis, 2024. Held by LAW / available on request.
Legacy of Windrush Event, 30 July 2025	Liverpool Advocates For Windrush	https://www.liverpooladvocatesforwindrush.org/news
Windrush Scheme: get proof of your right to be in the UK	GOV.UK	GOV.UK Windrush Scheme page
Apply to the Windrush Compensation Scheme	GOV.UK	GOV.UK compensation scheme page
Windrush applicant information / Windrush Help Team	GOV.UK	GOV.UK Windrush applicant information collection
Ask the Adjudicator's Office to review a Windrush Compensation Scheme decision	GOV.UK	GOV.UK Adjudicator review guidance

Source	Publisher	Link
Liverpool Advocates For Windrush	LAW	LAW website
LJMU Legal Advice Centre	Liverpool John Moores University	LJMU Legal Advice Centre
Liverpool Hope University	Liverpool Hope University	Liverpool Hope University website
University of Liverpool / Liverpool Law Clinic	University of Liverpool	Liverpool Law Clinic
Broudie Jackson Canter	Jackson Lees Group	Broudie Jackson Canter website
JUSTICE / JUSTICE North	JUSTICE	JUSTICE website
Black Equity Organisation	BEO	BEO website
Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit	GMIAU	GMIAU website
Windrush Defenders Legal C.I.C.	Windrush Defenders Legal C.I.C.	WDL website
Windrush Justice Clinic	Windrush Justice Clinic	Windrush Justice Clinic website
Liverpool City Council	Liverpool City Council	Liverpool City Council website
Preston Windrush Generation and Descendants	PWGD	PWGD website
Public Accounts Committee: Government compensation schemes update	UK Parliament / Public Accounts Committee	Public Accounts Committee inquiry page
Office of the Windrush Commissioner - About Us / Commissioner role	Office of the Windrush Commissioner	Office of the Windrush Commissioner - About Us