

CASE STUDY: 'I felt relief the moment I arrived ... But I still feel fear'

By [The Bristol Post](#) | Posted: September 24, 2014



David was smuggled from the Horn of Africa where his life was under threat

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IN November last year David spent an unknown number of hours in the darkness of a lorry being smuggled into England.

The political refugee was on the last leg of a journey from the Horn of Africa organised by people smugglers promising a safe passage away from a "brutal regime" where his life was in danger.

David*, now living in Eastville, is still uncomfortable talking about his home. Although he is roughly 4,000 miles from his country, he still fears for his family who he was forced to leave behind.

"The arm of the government is long," he says. "I felt relief the moment I arrived. But I still feel fear."

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David is one of hundreds of asylum-seekers in Bristol who are given leave to stay in the country every year.

With the help of [Ashley Community Housing](#) (ACH) he is now on the path to a settled life where the turmoil at home is becoming slowly more distant.

After arriving in Dover following the lorry ride he handed himself straight to the Border Agency who placed him first in Cardiff and then Bristol before granting him asylum for five years.

After being given legal status he had just 28 days to find a place to settle.

ACH found him a shared house in Eastville within a week and enrolled on courses to learn English and start on the road to getting a job.

“They helped me make contact with the job centre and applied for a job and attended employability class.

“I learned about the CV and how to apply for jobs and get my life back,” he says.

In under a year David has grown confident with English and has been accepted to do an electrical engineering degree in Middlesbrough.

As well as education and housing, ACH, funded by the council, also helps people like David with complicated immigration papers and general bureaucracy.

He has tried, unsuccessfully so far, to get his family the paperwork to join him.

He says: “Even if I have my status I still thinking about my kids and my family.

“I’m always worried. You can’t have full happiness here when half of you is there still.

“You don’t know what’s going on with your family sometimes.”

He adds: “For the time being now I have got this chance so I need to finish my degree. Then my dream is to become an engineer and live here safely with my family.”

* We have used the name David to protect his identity.

Read more: <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/8203-CASE-STUDY-8216-felt-relief-moment-arrived/story-22971869-detail/story.html#ixzz3McbthT2n>

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