

The costs of illegal migration

On Monday the government sought to restore some sense to the legislation against illegal migration. It is difficult to comprehend the Lords who watered down the Bill to make illegal migration easier, and who argued that 600,000 legal and illegal migrants coming a year was not enough. They had no working suggestions on how we could house more, or where the extra school places, surgery appointments, roadspace, electricity and other essential services would be provided. If we invite people into our country we should want them to have a decent life here. That requires making proper provision for where they live and how they access services. We read about Bishops complaining that we are not helping enough migrants without offering up places in their own palaces and extensive Church properties for accommodation. Where do they suggest we house the additional illegals coming in?

Before covid the EU suggested a cost of Euro 250,000 was an estimate of how much additional capital needs to be provided for a new arrival so they have a home and all the services that go with that. If we upgrade that modestly for inflation to just £250,000 today to cover the capital costs, that means a single day of 600 illegal migrants requires the state to apply £150m of capital to provide for them assuming they stay as many do. People on the current housing waiting lists are concerned if recent arrivals get priority. Many towns and cities are worried at the extensive take over of hotels for migrants, removing their services for local businesses, for weddings and events and for tourism.

The Prime Minister boldly promised to stop the small boats. This summer they are still coming. He is right to reverse unhelpful amendments from the Lords, and must be ready to do more if there are further attempts to prevent the UK saying No to illegals who are not asylum seekers fleeing persecution.