

# Nottingham & Nottinghamshire REFUGEE FORUM

## Annual Report 2016

Working with and for refugees and asylum seekers in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire





## **Our Vision**

A society where Asylum Seekers and Refugees are welcomed, receive just and compassionate treatment and support in rebuilding their lives.

## **Our Mission**

To support Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Nottingham & Nottinghamshire to gain fair and just outcomes, rebuild their lives and integrate into society.

## **We seek to achieve this by:**

- Providing a welcoming community centre.
- Offering specialised advice & support services.
- Providing programmes to develop confidence, skills and knowledge.
- Campaigning for a just and generous response to Refugees and Asylum Seekers from government and the host community.
- Advocating on behalf of individual Asylum Seekers and Refugees in cases of injustice and hardship.

## CHAIRS REPORT

As ever this has been a busy year for all involved in the Forum. I don't need to tell anyone how great the demand is for our now, 16-year-old project. We have grown again this year to meet this and our new Centre is already bursting at the seams. We are not empire building, merely meeting the needs as they grow. As an indication of the needs our invaluable AdvicePro system tells me (well Erica tells me what it indicates) that since 1 January to now as write this on 4 November we have had 1892 service users come to us and we opened 10098 new enquiries. This is a phenomenal workload for us to have to deal with. As the DWP staff continue to approach their work, as "public servants", with such terrible zeal this alone is going to increase our workload.

One of the main features of our growth has been the settlement of Syrian refugees in the area under David Cameron's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme. Late last year we were involved in a series of meetings with local government and other representatives to prepare for the arrival of the first tranche of the families to be resettled in the UK between now and the year 2020. How this programme has run is detailed elsewhere in the Report but I want to pay tribute to the staff involved in the difficult task helping these families with their complex needs.

For two years from 2014, we were contracted to co-ordinate the City Council's Communities of Identity programme liaising with and supporting Refugee Community Groups. That contract was renewed in a slightly different form and once again it was awarded to us this year.

Several years ago, we lost our share of a contract (ILLS), providing support for Refugees who had newly secured their status, to our partner organisation. The City has now recognised that we are best placed to carry out that work. The work and one worker has now been transferred to us and I strongly believe that this is the best result for those Refugees, the worker and us.

In the year, you will know, we have gained a new Prime Minister and whilst I am no admirer of David Cameron, I am worried, to say the least, about Teresa May's ambition to restructure, not only this country's way we treat asylum seekers, but Europe's and even the United Nations'. In her first speech to the United Nations she argued that the world's wealthiest countries should offer only minimum protection to all but the most vulnerable of the world's refugees, and therefore ensure that more than 86% of the world's refugees are looked after by the poorest and middle-income countries. She seeks a review of the international legal definitions of who can qualify as a refugee or be rejected as an economic migrant to chip away at the 1951 Geneva convention definitions of those who should not be returned to countries where they face serious threats to their lives or freedom.

It is clear from what she said at the Conservative party conference that she wanted to limit the number of asylum seekers who made it to Britain to claim refugee status by suggesting that those who had made it across the Mediterranean to Calais or Britain were the "wealthiest, fittest and strongest" implying that they are in some way undeserving queue-jumpers. There's a real message to those vetting asylum claims. There are difficult times ahead and I would like to see us try again to involve ourselves in campaigning and hope that the new Board will address this early in the new year.

I take this opportunity to welcome all new staff and pay tribute to the commitment and hard work of all staff, our brilliant volunteers and Trustees and thank both Erica and Rebecca, both of whom have left us, for the great work they did for our service users, staff and Volunteers.

**Leo Keely- Chair of Trustees**

## MANAGER'S REPORT

I was looking at last year's annual report and I find that I started my report with the words "It's hard to believe...", which was exactly how I was going to start this one. Looking at the reports that have been submitted from projects and partner organisations, the numbers are incredible.

The effects of the refugee crisis which broke last Autumn have swept us through this year, and as an organisation, we are just now being able to catch our breath, and reflect on our new situation. The organisation has doubled in staff numbers and income in twelve months in order to keep up with the new demands, and has had to be even more responsive than ever before.

The Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme has perhaps been the biggest change over the year and now has its own team with dedicated staff. This project has given us a chance to work in areas of Nottingham unfamiliar to us, and to develop new relationships. As part of the provision for this project was ESOL classes, we have set up a whole new ESOL department providing classes for all those who are not yet eligible for statutory English, regardless of status.

We were able to raise enough money to refurbish our community kitchen, and since it opened in April we have served almost 6000 meals, free of charge to our clients, some of whom come here just for lunch. We are continuing to work on improving this area of the organisation, and are just about to launch an external catering project.

Our new interpreting project has been set up with the triple goals of providing excellent interpreting services for our clients, providing jobs for refugees and vulnerable migrants and generating an untied income for the Forum. We have so far employed six people on small contracts and have just started sending interpreters out into the community. So far it has proved to be an overwhelming success.

**We continue to provide services to everyone who comes through our doors, and if we turn people away, it's because we're asking them to come back tomorrow. This is a remarkable achievement given the amount of people we are seeing.**

The dreadful political upheavals of the past year have also affected NNRF deeply. It seems that we are living in a world which is lurching towards the right, and that our government is in the forefront of that movement. The immigration act 2016 has so far produced the virtual end of in-country immigration appeals, many of which are human rights based, the right to rent checks, and will see an end to support for children of families who are appeal rights exhausted. There has been talk about the withdrawal from the European Human Rights Act and even from the 1951 Refugee Convention.



This political atmosphere negatively affects press coverage which is leading inexorably towards Mrs May's "hostile environment". We have seen a steep rise in the number of asylum seekers who are victims of assault, and a lack of willingness on the part of victims to approach police.

To end on a bright note, we have been lucky enough this year to get a nomination for the National Diversity Awards which was attended by three of our very glamorous staff, and have also been awarded a Joint City Division and Community Protection Commendation Award by Nottingham City Council. And for this, and all their hard work, I would like to say "Thank you", to our staff, trustees, volunteers, supporters, funders and partners and all the other people who support refugees and asylum seekers in Nottingham and throughout the world.

**Fiona Cameron - Director**

## GENERAL ADVICE SERVICE

General Advice has had another very busy year. Thanks to the hard work of over **40 General Advice volunteers**, an average of **33 clients** have been seen at each drop-in session in September alone. Over the course of the last year, **2098 clients** have been helped by our General Advisers.

Various changes have been introduced during the year to help things run more smoothly. Previously, when referrals were made by General Advice to our One Stop Shop and Welfare Benefits advisers, clients would be contacted at a later stage to be given an appointment. Appointments are now given to clients before they leave General Advice whenever possible. This is greatly appreciated by the clients, and significantly reduces the amount of follow up work to be done within the Advice Team. Interpreters trained by NNRF are now being used routinely during General Advice sessions, so reducing the need for phone interpreters, and improving the clients' experience.

Regular updates have been provided to staff and volunteers on any changes that have taken place affecting General Advice. A Handbook has now been produced to help support advisers in responding to the very wide range of issues that they are asked for help with, and this will be updated on a regular basis.

Working alongside General Advice, another dedicated group of volunteers have been working very hard in the New Refugee Clinic. They have been helping an average of **16 new refugees every week** with a range of issues, including claiming benefits, providing information about opening bank accounts, applying for integration loans and helping clients access emergency hardship support.

Improvements have been made to the way that appointments are given to new refugees, so that they are helped by the New Refugee Clinic and One Stop Shop in a way that is coordinated and ensures that the clients' various needs in relation to benefits and housing are addressed. As in General Advice, a Handbook has been produced to help support the New Refugee Clinic volunteers.

In the coming year, I am looking forward to challenge of trying to ensure that the General Advice sessions run as efficiently and effectively as possible. For example, following on from the success of the New Refugee Clinic, I would like consider creating opportunities for General Advice volunteers to become skilled in other areas too, such as housing, so enabling General Advice to deal with a wider range of issues.

**I would like to extend a huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers who have given so much time during the year to General Advice and the New Refugee Clinic, in order to help so many clients with such a wide range of issues. You are a great team, and all your hard work is hugely appreciated.**

**Hermione Berthels - General Advice Coordinator**



## ONE STOP SHOP

The One Stop Shop (OSS) Advice Project is a flexible support service funded by Nottingham City Council for asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham City and County. The aim of the project is to provide clients with information about their options and entitlements, to support people to make informed choices and to assist them to access services. The OSS can provide in depth case work support as well as signposting or referring onto other agencies.

Most referrals to the OSS come from General Advice but we also receive referrals from other NNRF projects and from external agencies. In the 12 months since October 2015 the OSS has supported **441 clients** and assisted with **835 different cases or issues**. The most common support need for OSS clients is housing with homelessness being the most frequent reason for referral. Other common housing issues are overcrowding, property disrepair and Home Link applications, and other areas where clients have accessed support include issues around domestic abuse, mental health, referrals into Social Care and accessing education.

The OSS has always supported new refugees with resettlement during the transition period after refugee status has been granted. From November 2016 NNRF will be contracted to provide this support to refugees given leave whilst living in Nottingham. This work will sit within the OSS and will work closely alongside the New Refugee Clinic and Welfare Rights projects. Accommodation seeking remains a challenge but the OSS team have developed good links with direct access hostels and local lettings agencies which helps to increase the housing opportunities for new refugees. Lengthy benefit processing and errors with Home Office documentation can cause unnecessary delays for clients applying for housing and financial support and new refugees often find themselves with no support whatsoever having to rely on friends for a floor to sleep on.

The OSS also provides casework support to destitute families who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). This includes families who at the time they made their claim for asylum claim did not require support but have since found themselves destitute due to a change in their circumstances. Asylum Support claims are dealt with by Migrant Help and NNRF is fortunate to have one of its three outreach workers offering face to face appointments each week. However waiting times are excessively long with frequent further information requests from the Home Office delaying the start of support and prolonging periods of destitution. New protocol requiring all correspondence with the Home Office having to now go through Migrant Help is adding another unnecessary level of bureaucracy which adds to processing time. The local authority may offer interim support but only after lengthy assessments and sometimes only with intervention from a solicitor. Although details about new support arrangements for destitute families are not yet clear the implications of The Immigration Act 2016 are likely to increase the number of families with NRPF. NNRF has been working closely with British Red Cross to ensure we are as prepared as we can be for changes expected in early 2017.

Pressure on accommodation for asylum seekers is requiring single people having to share rooms more and more often. A lack of privacy, and differences in lifestyle and culture is resulting in conflict within households. There was even an example where three men were expected to share a room but following enquiries by the OSS the third occupant was moved to an alternative address. Complaints about property standards for asylum seekers remain commonplace with very little remedy despite constant follow-up with the accommodation providers.

There continues to be a chronic shortage of school places in certain year groups and this impacts hugely on clients who regularly wait many months before a school place is offered. The academy system complicates further the admissions process as schools can now manage their own pupil intake and do not always communicate with the local authority the number of places available. Many families struggle with the logistics of having to take their children to different schools in different directions in time for the start of the school day. The situation is further complicated as clients can be moved at short notice and so their local school becomes not so local. With money already extremely tight families are prioritising bus passes over other household expenses. Where statutory provision is restricted because of immigration status the OSS can apply to charitable trusts for money towards, for example, school uniform costs, bus fares to school and school dinners.

Earlier in the year the Advice Team was joined by an administrator and further restructure has seen the creation of Team Leader positions including one for the OSS team. These positions have greatly improved the efficiency of the OSS Advice Project and allows advisers more time to focus on the needs of the client. Well done to everyone in the team for their continued hard work in the face of increasing demands for support, tighter deadlines, higher thresholds for accessing external services and a rise in expectations from both clients and other organisations.

**Fiona Broome - One Stop Shop Project Lead**

## **WELFARE RIGHTS**

Due to benefit system complications and language barriers, our clients, like many UK born citizens, are unable to deal with the majority of benefit issues they face and are unable to resolve them independently. The project continues to assist refugee clients to access all welfare benefits, enabling them to maximise their income by assessing their eligibility to certain benefits, grants and loans.

**In 2015 – 2016 The Welfare and Debt Advice Project supported 188 refugee clients; 127 males and 61 females from 21 different nationalities, dealing with 22 debt cases and 166 welfare benefit cases.**

Refugees, especially those who have not been in the UK for a long period of time, with limited language skills and a lack of knowledge of the UK benefit system, are extremely vulnerable, many falling into poverty. The recent benefit changes and restrictions imposed on claimants, particularly benefit sanctions and the benefit cap, are the cause of much of the hardship faced. The future restrictions and cuts will push our clients into further difficulties, and will require us to be more prepared to assist our clients to cope and encourage them to think outside of the benefit system, looking at skill development. The main benefit changes that will impact our clients are as follows:

**Benefit Caps will take an affect** from 7 November 2016 for outside London

**£384.62 a week if you're a couple -  
with or without dependent children**

**£384.62 a week if you're a lone  
parent with dependent children**

**£257.69 a week if you're a single  
person without children**



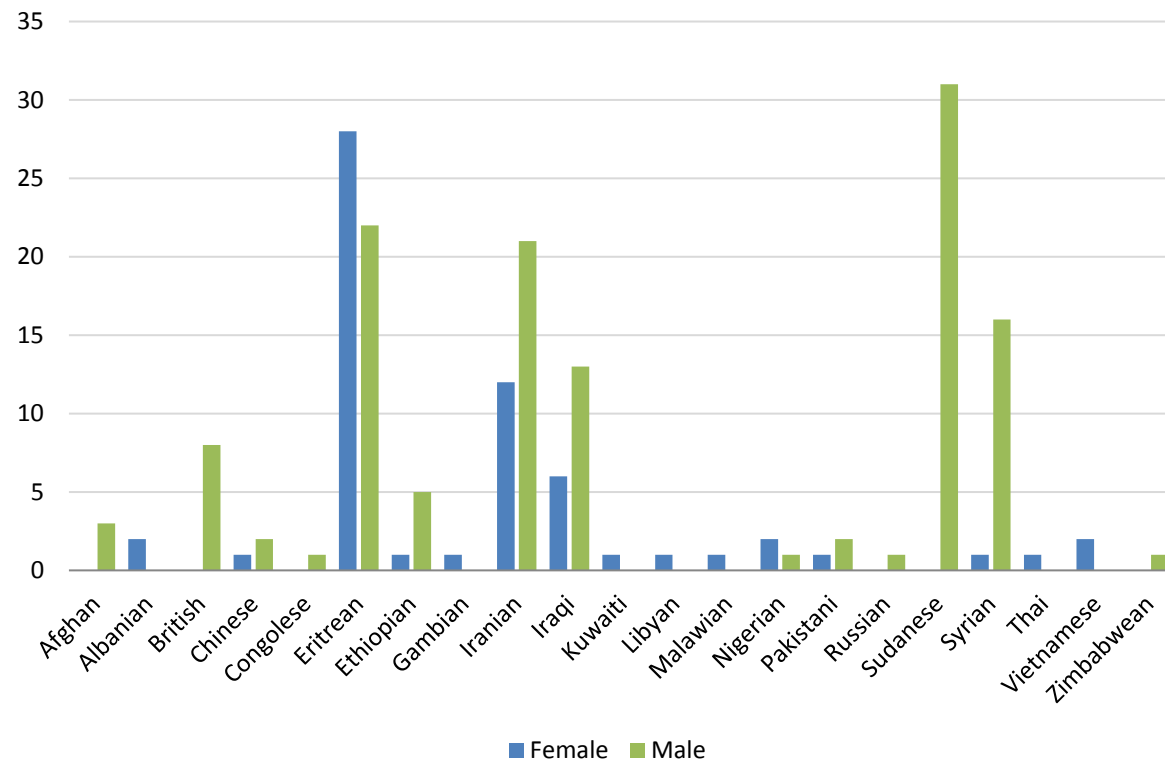
**The cap will apply to the combined income from:** Bereavement Allowance, Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Employment and Support Allowance - except where it's paid with the support component, Housing Benefit, Incapacity Benefit, Income support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Maternity Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance, Widowed Parent's Allowance, Widowed Mother's Allowance, Widow's Pension.

**Further Benefit Changes from April 2017**

The following benefit changes are set to take effect from April 2017. Some may be subject to change or approval.

**Child Tax Credit changes:** Child Tax Credit will be limited to 2 children, so that any subsequent children born after April 2017 will not be eligible for further support. In addition to the 2 child limit the 'family element' of £545 per year will be abolished.

**New claimants of Employment and Support Allowance:** who are placed in the Work-Related Activity Group will receive the same rate of benefit as those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance because the Work Related Activity component is being abolished.



**Case study**

“Client S” applied for tax credit as single mother, when her partner and elder child arrived on the 19 November 2015, I supported them to add their child to their claim and to report the change of circumstances on HMRC website on 14 December 2015. Client S was sent an over payment of £3,360.82. HMRC rejected my mandatory reconsideration, my explanation about the online reporting and they insisted on recovery of the “overpayment”.

Client S received a letter on the 29 September 2016 from HMRC changing their decision about the overpayment. Scott McBride said in the letter;

**“we have looked at the reason why we paid you too much tax credit. I have found that we have not met our responsibilities as set out in our code of practice 26. This is because we failed to act on information you provided to HMRC on 14 December 2015. I am sorry for this mistake”.**

**Jasim Ghafur- Welfare Rights and Debt Adviser**

## SYRIAN VULNERABLE PERSONS RESSETLEMENT PROGRAMME (SVPRP).



The team was set up in December 2015 to support to families brought to the UK to be accommodated in this area under the Government's Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement programme (SVPRP).

Initially, with relatively short notice, **18 families** arrived in December; most were accommodated in Nottingham, 1 in Broxtowe, 4 families in Mansfield. Subsequently 6 families arrived in June, 3 in September and 4 in November, **a total of 135**. We also have 2 families arriving Nov 29<sup>th</sup> to Newark.

As the numbers increased the team has been supplemented by two new recruits and currently comprises myself as Acting Team Leader, and 5 support workers, Sonia, Karolina, Zanele, Hannah and Adel, himself a Syrian refugee. I take this opportunity to thank them all for the hard work done to support their families, often working late or on occasions very early in the morning meeting families on their arrivals at the airport.

The Nottingham City Council has a major role in helping co-ordinate SVPR across the City and County and we work closely with officers who have been extremely supportive.

On arrival, all families, who are neither classified as asylum seekers or refugees but are granted humanitarian protection for 5 years, were quickly registered with GP surgeries, DWP, banks and schools. Regular English as a Second Language courses have been running since very early in the programme and are well attended. Many are now attending college.



Throughout the year we have liaised with and had support from, amongst others, the local Syrian Society, Hope Church and the Karimia Institute, all of which/whom has greatly helped the families to settle in their new environment. Other organisations and businesses have helped, for instance Andy's Bikes of Mansfield has provided Mansfield family members with bikes and Bikeworks of Nottingham has provided free training in bike maintenance for under 18s all of whom received bicycles at the end, other cycling courses are scheduled for next year through Adel. Hannah and Adel gave a talk to Mellors Primary school in Radford to give them understanding around Asylum Seekers and Refugees.

During the year the families enjoyed arranged outings/picnics to Nottingham Castle, Wollaton Park and several arranged group meals all of which enabled the families to maintain contact which they greatly value and need.

Finally, I have to express my appreciation of the major contribution made by Rebecca Wilson to the success of this project prior to her leaving the Forum for pastures new.

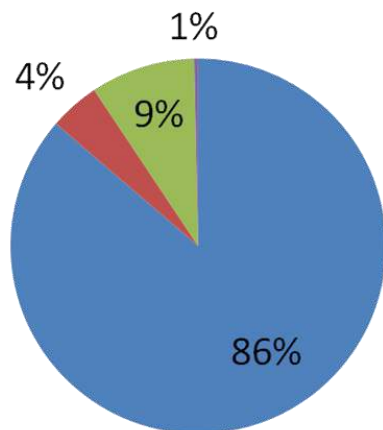
**Julie Whitehead – SRP Team Lead**

## INTO THE MAINSTREAM HEALTH PROJECT

Into the Mainstream Health Project (ItM) had a busy 12 months in terms of referrals, training activities, partnership work and advocacy. Here are a few of the highlights from the last 12 months:

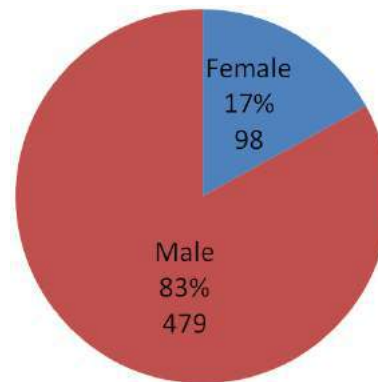
**Clients** – the team carried out **1414** pieces of advice work including **803** follow up phone calls and **515** face to face consultations. ItM received **577** referrals, comprising **856** individuals, around 90% of whom were assisted with one aspect or another; see charts below for breakdowns.

### Immigration status



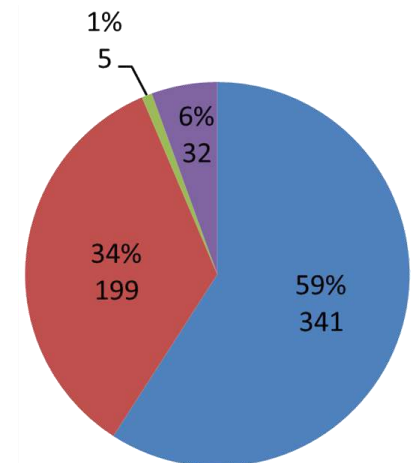
- Asylum seeker
- Refused AS
- Refugee
- Unknown

### Gender of main applicant



- Female
- Male

### Referral source



- UKVI/G4S
- NNRF
- Self
- Other

## Advocacy

After long and sustained collaborative work with the CCG and other partners, the Local Enhance Service for asylum seekers (LES) was finally put into operation in May this year. One of the key aspects of the launch was to introduce a Generic New Patient Health Questionnaire for all partner GP practices to replace individual practice HQs. In addition, and with lot of effort, we obtained confirmation from NHS England that NHS dentists are funded to provide interpreters for dental consultations as necessary. Furthermore, information was shared with city GPs to clarify issues around documents required for registration in light of the latest NHS England Guidance for primary care services.

## Training

We had the highest number of training requests this year with the delivery of **11** separate sessions for a wide range of organisations including Universities, various NHS bodies and voluntary sector agencies. These sessions were attended by more than **350** individuals in total with several more bookings scheduled in the New Year. We continue to work closely with Nottingham City Healthwatch and with the CCG to improve access to healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers, and our training plays an important part in that. The addition of the Volunteer Driving Scheme to the ItM has been another positive outcome for our clients which enabled us to accompany certain groups of vulnerable clients to healthcare appointments including GP registration.

## Partnership

ItM contributed to various partnership projects this year including the **U21 Health Sciences Group European Workshop: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)** hosted by the University of Nottingham where the ItM presented on the *'reality of being a refugee or an asylum seeker in the UK'* <http://u21health.org/sdg-student-workshops/>. We also led a workshop at the Migrant Health Conference led by NHS England East Midlands Public Health in September this year. Only last week we were in Parliament highlighting the gaps in



services in terms of mental healthcare and legal protection for refugee and asylum seeking women; especially those who have undergone FGM or have children who may be at risk of FGM here or if returned, in an event organised and led by Mojatu Foundation. The debate took place in packed Commons' room with delegates all over the country, including many Nottingham city councillors, and two MPs.

**I would like to thank the ItM team, especially our volunteers, including our volunteer drivers, for their hard work and dedication without which we would not have been able to sustain the project. We would also like to thank all our partners and colleagues for their support and positive collaboration.**

**Kinsi Clarke – ITM & Youth Project Manager**

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT



The young people's project works with asylum seeking and refugee young people between the ages of 13-18, and up to 21 if the young person is a care leaver. We are currently working with young people in the following categories: Asylum seeking YP (dependents), Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASCs- City and county and other LAs), Family Reunion, Refugees, 18 year olds in NASS (included age dispute cases).

This year has been the first full year of the youth project since being granted comic relief funding. We have worked with 136 young people from refugee and asylum seeking backgrounds, which is significantly higher than our initial target figure. The work with young people aims to empower them to understand their rights within the immigration and care/welfare system, reduce social isolation through a programme of activities and events, and facilitate their orientation to the local area and access to youth specific services in the city.

Work has included short term advice to intense and ongoing case work to include advocacy, mentoring, sign posting, accompaniment, and ongoing support with vulnerable young people. Our case work and advice for young people is a vital part of the work. We have supported young people to access essential services, such as health, education and legal representation. Work has also including bringing young unaccompanied young people to the attention of the local authority after their arrival in the UK so they are suitably accommodated and supported, to having successfully had young people removed from adult asylum accommodation who have been incorrectly identified as adults by the Home Office. We have found ourselves dealing with many young people who have presented with safeguarding concerns and have been able to successfully enable appropriate access into relevant CAMHS, mental health or social care facilities. We have also provided support, consultation and advice to foster carers, social workers and support workers to support them in their roles with the young people.

We have organised a number of activities and programmes in collaboration with other agencies such as arts workshops, allotment and city farm trips, and through expanding our orientation programme to new arrivals we have enabled many newly arrived young people to explore the city and learn more about life in the UK. The newly expanded programme now involves a session a week for 4 weeks and includes teaching on life in the UK, geography, local information about Nottingham, sexual health and healthy relationships, understanding the law, education and an orientation trip around the city.

We have delivered training to a number of different agencies in the city on understanding the asylum process and understanding the needs and rights of young asylum seekers and refugees, as well as providing internal training for our own general advisors and volunteers.

We are working in collaboration with a number of different agencies and services within Nottingham City, including: Nottingham Trent University Outreach Team, NGY MyPlace, Nottingham Contemporary, Lakeside Arts, Sustrans, RideWise, Nottingham Bikeworks. With thanks to the team of dedicated volunteers and partner agencies who have supported the young people and the project this year.

**Naomi Jemmett- Young People's Project Worker**



## ANTI-DESTITUTION PROJECT

The Anti-destitution project works with people who are at the end of the asylum process and have received a negative decision on their case. There are currently 100 open cases to the Anti-Destitution project.

### Why do we support refused asylum seekers?

The asylum system is radically flawed and infused with hostility towards the claimant. Our politicians and media have focused a great deal on “immigration” and the elusive objective of “control” on immigration. Consequently, there is little surprise that so many cases are refused initially, as this type of immigration is, and always has been less about the principles of asylum and more about contracts and the commodification of human life. There has never been a more important time to support people whose cases have been refused. Our clients face homelessness and an almost total rejection from society at large.

### What do we do?

Saturday Food Bank: Our volunteers make lunch for around 25 people every week, all out of donations to the Anti-Destitution fund. We can give out shopping for a week including fresh fruit and vegetables and toiletries.

ESOL: Also on a Saturday we are lucky to have a dedicated class for our clients to learn English. We are very happy with the interest in this, particularly as refused asylum seekers struggle to find any college or class which is funded to include them.

Financial support: We don't have the funds or the statutory permission to give our clients realistic financial support. We can give out £10-£20 per four weeks as a gesture of support as well as using these monthly meetings as a way of keeping up to date with case progress, making internal and external referrals when possible.

## Accommodation

As we don't have any housing at NNRF we refer clients to other projects in Nottingham. These projects are themselves, limited in resources and capacity so the majority of our clients will not be able to secure housing. It is unfortunately, for most, that case refusal will lead to imminent street homelessness or sofa-surfing.

**Happily, 13 people were given housing support through Host Nottingham and the Nottingham Arimathea Trust 2015-6:**

**Nottingham Arimathea Trust**  
**7 successful referrals**

**HOST NOTTINGHAM**  
(Local volunteers)  
**6 successful referrals**



## Moving on

People who have left the project have usually made fresh submissions to the Home Office and moved into Section 4 accommodation. This is almost always dispersal accommodation outside of Nottingham. People who have spent months and often years in Nottingham are sent to another town or city in the UK, often with no idea of where until the day of travel.

**LEFT NOTTINGHAM: 9**

**SECTION 4: 24**

**VOLUNTARY RETURN: 2**

**LOCAL AUTHORITY: 3**

### On a brighter note

The land at the side of the building is currently being worked to create an allotment.

We are hoping it will be a fun and productive project utilising some skills and muscle at the Forum to produce food for the Saturday Group and the café during the week. The plans are forming and could include wildlife hides, poly-tunnels and tranquil seating areas.



We would like to thank all the partnership organisations who have worked with us this year:

**Host Nottingham**

**British Red Cross**

**Detention Action**

**Asylum Support Appeals Project**

**Nottingham Arimathea Trust**

**Movement for Justice**

**Himmah**

**BID**

**Right to Remain**

**Gemma Pillay - Anti-Destitution Co-ordinator**

## LEGAL PROJECT

In August I took over the role of Legal Project Manager while Caroline Kioi is on maternity leave. It has been a pleasure to join this committed team of staff and volunteers. The Legal Project is a service much needed to meet the unprecedented demand for free, high quality immigration advice which drastic cuts to legal aid have precipitated.

The Legal Project has provided advice and representation to **864 new clients** since November 2015. **48 of these were applications for British citizenship.** Obtaining British citizenship is of growing importance to our clients in the current political climate. We have also made **120 applications for further and indefinite leave to remain, 64 applications for family reunion and 318 applications for travel documents.** Although many of these applications are deemed by the government as 'straightforward' our clients report difficulties in navigating complex law and guidance on the required documents, stipulated forms and fees. Our service prevents clients from paying high solicitor fees on top of already extortionate application fees or making incorrect applications which can have serious consequences.

We have provided a safety net to many asylum seekers who have fallen out of the legal aid system and have nowhere else to turn. For example, Zainab (not her real name), came to the UK from West Africa with her daughter. She and her sister had both experienced female genital mutilation (FGM) resulting in serious physical and mental ill health. Zainab was clear that if returned to Gambia, her daughter would be forced to undergo the dangerous procedure. Zainab's asylum claim was refused by the Home Office and her solicitors who assessed her claim as weak and withdrew representation. The Legal Project challenged the solicitor's decision by application to the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), having first contacted a Gambian country expert who confirmed that Zainab's fears were well-founded. The LAA upheld the challenge and granted legal aid for the appeal. We referred Zainab to another firm of solicitors who have high hopes of a successful appeal.

Applications based on the family and private life which our clients have established here also no longer attract legal aid. **Last month we assisted a client to lodge an appeal against a deportation decision.** The appellant has 2 children (one a British citizen) who have lived here all their lives. The client was unable to afford private solicitor fees and without our help may not have been given the opportunity to have the best interests of her children properly assessed by an independent Judge.

We continue to provide our service in an environment increasingly hostile to migrants. The most notable provisions of the Immigration Act 2016 include the new offence of illegal working, new offences for landlords and employers housing migrants without leave to remain as well as further erosion of asylum support and appeal rights. The Home Office will soon be able to deny in-country appeal rights for human rights claims meaning the only legal remedy is judicial review. Such changes require us to form strong links with local immigration solicitors and I have been meeting with representatives to discuss partnership working.

Next month we will be recruiting law students from both the Nottingham Universities to join our new family reunion project. The initiative seeks to increase our capacity to help refugees applying for their family members to join them from abroad and provide students with experience in immigration and asylum law.

Professional development of the team is an area we continue to focus on. In October we celebrated Jonathan passing the Immigration and Asylum Accreditation Scheme Level 1 exam. This will allow Jonathan to undertake more complex human rights applications. We have begun working with Refugee Action's Front Line Immigration Advice Project who offer free training and support to increase their capacity to deliver regulated immigration advice free of charge. Two staff members as well as the student volunteers will take part in Refugee Action's OISC Level 1 live webinar training in November and December.

**Although the future will be challenging, we look forward to a year of positive developments to our service.**

**Lisa Bradley – Legal Project Manager**

## ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

In February of this year the Forum welcomed the new post of ESOL Coordinator. Having someone in post has meant that ESOL can now be organised within the Forum to best meet the needs of our clients. Time was spent in the first half of the year managing backlogs of referrals and working closely with our Volunteer Coordinator to recruit and train a pool of ESOL Tutors and Classroom Support Assistants. Training for tutors has included an Introduction to ESOL, working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees, Language Errors for Arabic learners and Assessing ESOL Learners. 5 ESOL tutors attended an ESOL Conference which contributed towards our teaching practice. The Forum is excited to now have a structured and timetabled approach towards providing English lessons, especially for those clients in their first 6 months of being in the UK. **By the end of 2016 we will have provided over 1,900 hours of ESOL at NNRF.**

We have a target of supporting 25 learners per quarter to improve or acquire English language skills, which we have exceeded in our first year. Between April and November 2016 we have had **186 referrals** and completed **156 language level assessments**. **140 of our learners have accessed 1 or more ESOL classes** with us, with **83 individuals accessing between 80 to 100% of their course**.

***"I really like seeing students advance in language, and to see their confidence increase as a result of their speaking, reading and writing"***  
**Jean, ESOL Volunteer**



NNRF are fortunate to have a diverse, experienced and committed team of ESOL Tutors. Some of our Support Assistants have spent a number of years volunteering at the Forum in other roles and have now joined the ESOL team. Others have taught English abroad or volunteered in Africa, the Middle East and South America. We have a team of knowledgeable tutors who have a range of teaching qualifications such as CELTA, DELTA, MA TESOL, PGCE. Most of our tutors also teach elsewhere and 3 of our tutors are university lecturers. **Combined, our ESOL team has over 200 years' experience teaching ESOL and supporting Asylum Seekers or Refugees.** We were delighted in our first year to be nominated for Best Volunteering Team at the NNRF Voscar Awards.

With Assessment sessions taking place every fortnight, we have strived to provide a varied and flexible ESOL timetable in our first year. There is a new intake of students approximately every 12 weeks, with class sizes ranging from 4-18 individuals. We have developed a unique assessment system which has adapted material

from the English My Way course, the Scottish ESOL Board and the British Council. This year we have offered 37 different classes from Pre Entry Level, to Level 1 available during office hours, in the evening and at weekends. Classes have included the guided English My Way scheme of work, Basic Literacy, Women's Conversation, mixed level General ESOL, Reading & Writing Supplement classes, Under 18's ESOL, Anti-Destitution sessions, a Nottingham Orientation course and summer short course booster sessions. We also deliver ESOL as part of the Syrian Resettlement Project which follows a course that has been approved by the Home Office.

The ESOL Coordinator has supported the Youth Project to set up a trial ESOL course for young people arriving in Nottingham whilst they await a school or college place. We were also privileged to provide ESOL sessions for Syrian children over summer alongside Heart Church, Nottingham. Our summer Nottingham Orientation class took a trip to Wollaton Park where they focused their learning on using maps, directions, and nature vocabulary, as well as practising using public transport





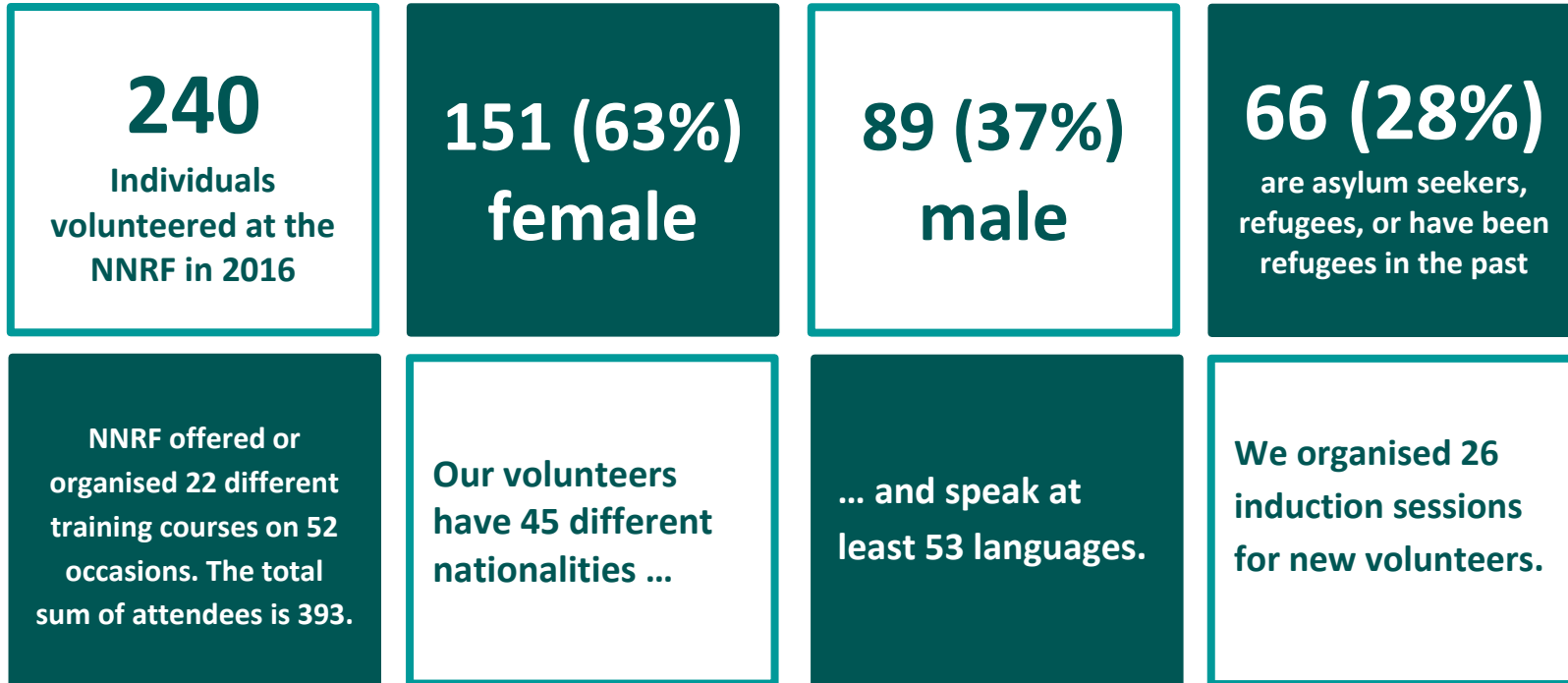
in the UK. We have provided some 1 to 1 and family learning ESOL sessions for learners in their own homes who are unable to attend classes due to poor health, and continue to provide 1 to 1 support in our new ESOL sign up slots in which learners can get 30 minutes of individual language support from an experienced tutor. We are a registered English My Way centre, which means we are able to deliver their course for pre-entry learners.

The hard work of the ESOL Team will continue into 2017. Focus will be on continuing to support the Syrian Resettlement Project, looking at providing additional ESOL classes within local communities, updating the ESOL classroom with resources and new text books and developing an ESOL course specifically for refugees looking for employment. **The ESOL Coordinator would like to thank each individual for their commitment to the clients of NNRF, and the learners themselves for always striving to do their best in the ESOL lessons. Thank you!**

**Teresa O'Hagan- Bull – ESOL Coordinator**

***“The learners are so enthusiastic and committed it makes teaching a real joy. It has also been eye-opening for me to learn about their experiences ... I’ve seen a real push at NNRF over the past year in particular to provide as many classes as possible. It really feels as though we are making a difference” Martin, ESOL Tutor***

## VOLUNTEERING



\* Data for 01/01/2016 – 31/10 2016

### The Voscars

The Volunteers' Week 2016 provided the opportunity to celebrate volunteering at Refugee Forum once again. Lining up on the red carpet and shining in the spotlight were dozens of volunteers who give up their time and energy to support the work we do. With the help of distinguished guests, including The Lord Mayor of Nottingham Mr Mohammed Saghir and Lilian Greenwood, the Labour MP for Nottingham South, we have highlighted the achievements of our star volunteers, handed out 10 VOscar awards, and thanked each and every volunteer who make the Refugee Forum such a lively, friendly and welcoming place.

## Volunteering Strategy 2016 - 2018

2016 saw the beginning of the implementation of the NNRF Volunteering Strategy. Considering the available resources, our first focus was on developing a rolling training programme that offers key sessions for a variety of volunteers, enhances their knowledge in areas relevant to their volunteering roles as well as offering transferrable skills useful across the organisation and the sector as a whole. By the end of October 2016, we have organised and/or delivered 300 hours of free training for NNRF volunteers.

## Thanks

Volunteers are (at) the heart of Refugee Forum: The supporters. The listeners. The messengers. The multilingual communicators. The problem-solvers. The information-providers. The belly-fillers. The all-round superstars. Their positive attitude and determination to help refugees and asylum seekers are inspiring. I am extremely proud of each individual who volunteered with us over the past year. Thank you for the infectious positive energy that turns even the most difficult problems from mountains into mole hills. I am looking forward to continuing our adventures in 2017! ☺

## Volunteer Feedback

*“I would just like to say a big thank you to you all for being so welcoming to me, for being so supportive and for giving me the opportunity to get involved in such an amazing organisation!”*

*“I hope everything is going well at the Forum. I have to admit I already miss helping out refugees- it felt as the most meaningful activity I have done in my life- thank you again for the opportunity!”*

*“I am always very proud to be considered part of the NNRF team and greatly admire the daunting work done by you and all the staff.”*

Barbara Spreiz - Volunteer Co-ordinator



## INTERPRETING PROJECT

The interpreting project was founded in April with the idea that current telephone interpreting services were unreliable and extremely expensive as well as being a far from ideal way for our clients to communicate with us. We also aimed to train and eventually employ volunteers from refugee and asylum seeker communities.

Our initial group of trainee interpreters included people who have helped us informally in the past as well as new volunteers. The Cairo Community Interpreter Project training teaches a rights based approach to interpreting which suggests that everyone has the right to be heard as if in their own language. Our first group of interpreters were our first step in moving the forum towards this.



Initially the programme concentrated on the ITM and Legal projects as they booked appointments in advance. It then expanded to include individual adviser appointments. Advisers gave feedback on all interpreting appointments with all of them doing consistently well.

After showing that we had significantly cut the telephone interpreting bill for the 4 month period after the training, we employed our first interpreters on part time contracts. They have now started to cover general advice sessions and we hope therefore to see a further decrease in telephone Interpreting costs over the coming months.



We have now trained...

## 44 interpreters speaking around 20 languages

...who are used across the Forum as well as on outside appointments accompanying the advisers.

The employed Interpreters now work in general advice for their usual hours where they are also shadowed by less experienced volunteer interpreters who can learn from them as they train.

In the future we hope to expand the programme to include hiring out our employed Interpreters to other organisations that deal with refugees and asylum seekers. As many service providers currently use costly and unethical interpreting services we feel there is an opening for the programme to fund itself while offering the client, the Interpreter and adviser a better all-round option.

**Matt Bedford – Interpreter Coordinator**

### THE CAFÉ

The café focuses on providing lunch and tea and coffee to service users, volunteers and staff members. We do this Mondays to Thursdays every week. We manage this thanks to our hardworking volunteers. We have given out so far 6480 meals this year. We manage it entirely from food donations that we get from the public, staff donations. The food we cook is prepared by cooks from around the world. We cook a variety vegetarian and meat dish during the week.

**This year cooks and café volunteers: Rose Wambui, Khazhal Mahmood, Bethlehem Tekleab, Georgina Ngozi, Ali Izzaldin, Joan, Philomena, Kabirou Darboe.**

**I would like to thank each and every one of them for time and dedication from whom this work we do would not be possible without them.**

**Ivan Myuyekure- Café Coordinator**



## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

There has been little change in the number and make-up of our membership since the last report. It was hoped that a concerted effort to contact over 200 various sympathetic organisations throughout the city and county offering them a speaker at a meeting of their choosing for us to talk about what the Forum does would yield, if not some extra unrestricted income, at least some interest and perhaps even the odd new volunteer or two. We had a speaker's panel ready and waiting to venture forth into the darkest areas of the suburbs, all suitably briefed and ready with the zeal and eagerness of a fresh-off-the-press Jehovahs Witness, and next to no requests came in. Despite the valiant efforts of the scheme organiser Mike Scott to rouse the masses, it appears they weren't that interested.

However, the members we have prove to be as loyal and committed as it's possible to be. Some have been with us since day 1; I think that is remarkable and speaks volumes, both about them and the work we do.

We thank you all very much for sticking with us, particularly through these financially hard times, and as a reminder about where your money goes and how vital it is, see Gemma's Anti-Destitution report.

### Currently we have:



\*As ever each of the categories above are not exclusive, some people are in two.

Dave Hewitt – Membership

## TREASURER'S REPORT

As I write this the annual accounts for the year ended 31 March 2016 have been completed by CA Plus and are about to be signed off. We are not required to have the accounts audited this year as our income is below the Charity Commissioner's limit of £1,000,000.

The financial position, which I summarise below, shows an improvement on last year with increases in income, reserves and cash at bank. As always, however, funding streams flow only temporarily and so considerable effort has been and must continue to be taken to maintain the Forum's income. Thanks are therefore due to Fiona and the Funding Committee for their work in securing new grants from Lloyds Bank (£25,000 per annum for three years) and Tudor Trust (£40,000 per annum for three years). In fact, Tudor Trust were so impressed with our bid that they agreed £10,000 more than was asked for). The Forum also successfully bid for the work supporting Syrian families brought to the area under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme. This funding is unpredictable as it is granted on a per individual basis and is therefore dependent on the numbers of people who are resettled in the area.

**Income.** This totalled £920,807, an increase of 36%, and included £856,283 of grant income. Donations increased by 55% from £40,074 to £62,123 and we would like to thank all donors as this is an important source of funds that contributes to the Forum's ongoing work.

**Expenditure.** We spent £885,578 in the year which represents an increase of 26% on 2015.

**Reserves.** As a result of the above our reserves have increased to £164,004 of which £135,117 are unrestricted funds.

### Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2016

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2016 £	Total 2015 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	62123	-	62123	40074
Charitable activities	3	89214	767069	856283	632778
Investments		219	-	219	207
Other	5	2182	-	2182	2328
<b>Total</b>		<b>153738</b>	<b>767069</b>	<b>920807</b>	<b>675387</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Charitable activities	6	71380	814198	885578	703745
<b>Total</b>		<b>71380</b>	<b>814198</b>	<b>885578</b>	<b>703745</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>82358</b>	<b>(47129)</b>	<b>35229</b>	<b>(28358)</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>82358</b>	<b>(47129)</b>	<b>35229</b>	<b>(28358)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		52759	76016	128775	157133
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>135117</b>	<b>28887</b>	<b>164004</b>	<b>128775</b>

Barry Clarke, the previous Treasurer, stood down at the 2015 meeting and I would like to thank him for his two years' service in the role and for leaving the financial position in a healthy state. Thanks also to Leo who added interim Treasurer to his 'day job' as Chair. I am grateful to him for his patient help while

I find my feet in the role. Thanks must also be extended to Fiona for her overall leadership and for the proper management of the Forum's funds.

**Last but not least I would like to thank Erica and Zanele for their work throughout the year. There were many demands on their time in the face of which they managed to maintain good humour while juggling balls and keeping plates spinning.**

**Clive lamb – Treasurer**

#### Expenditure on Charitable Activities for the year ended 31 March 2016

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	2015
	funds	fund	funds	
Note	£	£	£	£
Activities	1321	7340	<b>8661</b>	7089
Advertising	1248	316	<b>1564</b>	1935
Bank charges	84	14	<b>98</b>	-
Cleaning	9703	4	<b>9707</b>	10722
Consultancy	5730	13736	<b>19466</b>	13090
Depreciation	7 1892	-	<b>1892</b>	12175
Donations & grants awarded	16663	166729	<b>183392</b>	162927
Food & refreshments	15604	3622	<b>19226</b>	15160
Hospitality & gifts	167	28	<b>195</b>	469
Insurances	5811	-	<b>5811</b>	3274
IT software & maintenance	18272	6621	<b>24893</b>	12857
Legal & professional fees	38478	2117	<b>40595</b>	28425
Materials & equipment	1236	5240	<b>6476</b>	3916
Other expenses	80	-	<b>80</b>	808
Overhead recharges	(306819)	306819	-	-
Photocopying & printing	9962	-	<b>9962</b>	9664
Premises repairs & maintenance	486	401	<b>887</b>	5665
Publications & subscriptions	30	673	<b>703</b>	895
Rent & services	34661	8832	<b>43493</b>	19829
Stationery & office supplies	4402	2378	<b>6780</b>	6310
Telephone, post & internet	15179	2650	<b>17829</b>	20540
Training	4243	2807	<b>7050</b>	6858
Travel	1565	4460	<b>6025</b>	6114
Uniforms & prescriptions	-	180	<b>180</b>	-
Utilities	911	1072	<b>1983</b>	3409
Volunteer expenses	9175	952	<b>10127</b>	10097
Wages & NIC	181296	277207	<b>458503</b>	341517
	<b>71380</b>	<b>814198</b>	<b>885578</b>	703745

## PARTNERSHIPS

### NEW COMMUNITIES ALLIANCE (NCA)

NCA was established in April 2014 as part of Nottingham City Council 'Communities of Identity' funding, and comprised of a partnership of 18 community organisations representing, and working with, 'new & emerging and refugee & asylum seeking communities' with NNRF as the lead organisation.

Funding from the two year contract enabled NCA partners to **deliver a range of activities and services that helped people get the right support & advice, provide appropriate skills and confidence building activities, and enable them to become active citizens. Managed by a Partnership Coordinator, NCA also provided support to smaller groups and organisations through bespoke training/advice and a small grassroots grant scheme.**

NCA Key Outcomes & Targets 2015/16 (Year 2)	Targets	Annual
Providing information, advice and guidance	NCC Targets <b>Actual</b>	3,500 <b>6,380</b>
% Accessing other services	NCC Targets <b>Actual</b>	50% <b>71%</b>
Providing training & skills building opportunities	NCC Targets <b>Actual</b>	1,200 <b>1,884</b>
Local opportunities accessed	NCC Targets <b>Actual</b>	150 <b>463</b>
Community groups supported	NCC Targets <b>Actual</b>	10 <b>13</b>
Numbers attending classes, events, etc	<b>No Targets</b>	<b>6,394</b>

Over the two years that NCA was operating, we consistently exceeded our targets across all service areas and awarded 17 small grants to local grassroots refugee and new & emerging community groups.

In January 2016 Nottingham City Council announced a new tender process which split 'refugees & asylum seekers' from 'new & emerging communities'. In March 2016 NNRF successfully applied to lead a new consortium under the 'refugees & asylum seeker' strand.

### Refugees and Asylum Seekers Consortium (April 1 2016)

The Service Level Agreement for the new consortium will last for 3 years with a possible further 2 year extension. For NNRF the funding provided through the consortium goes towards our Advice, ESOL and Volunteer services. The consortium is made up of 14 groups and organisations: NNRF, African Institute for Social

Development, BEGIN, Belong, Cameroon Support Group, East African Education Centre, Emmanuel House, HOST Nottingham, Mojatu Foundation, NCVS, Nottingham Arimathea Trust, Rainbow Project, Senior Support Group, Women's Culture Exchange.

The services the consortium have been delivering over the past 6 months cover 7 areas: Information, advice and guidance; Building skills and confidence; ESOL & conversational classes; Faith integration; Support for basic needs; Support and advice to smaller community groups; and Volunteering projects. **We also administer a grants scheme for small grassroots groups outside of the consortium.**

In addition we are committed to undertaking three research projects which are currently underway:

- 1) *ESOL & conversation classes*: Provision in the city is inadequate for the numbers wishing to access existing services. The research, undertaken by BEGIN, will consult and produce a strategy that we hope will lead to increased provision in years to come.
- 2) *Faith integration*: Research undertaken by Nottingham Arimathea Trust and East African Education Centre will assess the level of need and produce a strategy and recommendations.
- 3) *Volunteering projects*: Belong will conduct research into the best ways of developing volunteer pathways for refugees and asylum seekers wanting to expand their experience of volunteering beyond the 'refugee and asylum seeker' sector, and thereby providing them with more varied work experience.

The consortium is also supporting the development of two pilot projects being undertaken by two current partners:

- Mojatu Foundation: A Refugee & Asylum Seeker Media Training Project
- Senior Support Group: A programme to support elderly refugees which will include research into the scale of the need and whether it warrants a specialised service.

To date we have exceeded nearly all of our targets and nine small grants have been awarded to local grassroots community groups.

**Debbie Royle - Communities of Identity Partnership Coordinator**



## REFUGEE WEEK 2016 - NOTTINGHAM BEYOND BORDERS

Refugee Week in Nottingham is organised by Beyond Borders, a group whose membership comprises of representatives from participating venues, organisations and non-aligned individuals.

As in previous years the range and number of activities put on during Refugee Week continues to grow and grow. They ranged from the highly popular film festival to celebrations of other countries foods; from public meetings to music events; from RefuTea to an art exhibition.

The launch event at the Contemporary set the week in motion and whilst numbers were a little down on last year the atmosphere was as lovely as ever with good music, lots of children having fun, lovely food from the Women's Cultural Exchange and a variety of information stalls from some of the many organisations working with and for asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham.

Overall attendances at events were good to better than last year with some being 'sell-outs'.

We had a bit of a coup when the Royal Concert Hall approached us about putting on an event, which they subsequently did. Not only that they arranged a bucket collection at the end of the event which raised over £1,000 to be used for the benefit of asylum seekers and refugees.

Planning for next year has already begun with an application to the Lottery for a paid worker to coordinate the whole affair in conjunction with the Beyond Borders committee.

We must record our thanks to all the venues, who not only didn't charge us for their use, but were instrumental in the weeks' success; our funders, who always manage to find enough down the back of the settee to ensure the week happens; and the organising committee itself.

Special mention must be made of Roger Bromley who has chaired Nottingham Beyond Borders for the last two years and coordinated the organising of the week's events with an energy and enthusiasm befitting someone far younger than he is. It is also with sadness that we say goodbye to Roger and his wife who are 'emigrating' to Scotland.

Thank you Roger for all you have done for the Nottingham Refugee Forum and the asylum seekers and refugees who live here.

**Dave Hewitt - Nottingham Beyond Borders**



## WOMEN'S CULTURE EXCHANGE

We have been engaging women in various workshops, training, recreational and sport activities. These include...

### Sport:

Tennis, netball and cycling.

### Trainings/workshops outside of Friday:

Writing East midlands, postcard workshop (to be displayed at the launch event at the Bromley house library), digital workshop with new art exchange, Business and administration, English conversation.

### Community event:

Hyson green cultural festival, Nottingham in parliament (OCT), Seaside trip to Ingoldmells, BBC Radio Nottingham interview for Our Recipe book, Awards Ceremony for course completion with 11tech18

For Friday's we have continued our regular sessions including the NHS nutrition session for new members as induction into the group. We have 75 members that have joined the group, and we have introduced baby shower service for new mums. We visit new mums with presents for the new baby and offer day to support from the pool of women within the group. We've continued to signpost women to foodbanks, clothes banks and Women's centre.

## RIDEWISE

**A large number of Forum clients have taken part in cycle training offered by Nottingham-based organisation RideWise over the year.**

Two hours of training are provided on Monday afternoons. The first hour is for those who are learning to ride for the first time and those working on their basic cycling skills, while the second hour covers key skills for riding on quiet roads.

Over the year **72 clients** have received training. Of these 10 have learnt to ride for the first time, 38 have learnt off-road cycling skills (passing national 'Bikeability Level 1' standard), and 17 have learnt key skills for cycling on quiet roads (passed national 'Bikeability Level 2' standard).

A number of those who have completed their on-road training have borrowed a bike from RideWise for three months, providing them with a very valuable, free form of transport around the city. They have also received a free bike map for the city and advice on local routes.

Clients have been referred to cycle training particularly through the Young People's project, the Women's Cultural Exchange and General Advice.

Particular successes have included providing training for a large number of Syrian young people during the Spring, and providing a special cycling session during the recent October half-term holiday for family groups, during which several children got riding for the first time.



## BRITISH RED CROSS

Since the start of 2016 the British Red Cross have had a new agreement in place with NNRF, providing better support to service users by working in partnership. NNRF now distributes small grants from the British Red Cross destitution fund which has given service users better access to support and has provided a foundation for our joint efforts to advocate for change on some of the main issues faced by clients during their progress through the asylum system. In addition, British Red Cross now provided monthly training session to NNRF staff and volunteers on a number of subjects including; everyday first aid, international family tracing, family reunion travel assistance and identifying potential victims of trafficking.

The Nottingham Refugee Support team at British Red Cross have also been taking part in a national pilot project, developing our response human trafficking and modern slavery. At our outreach sessions at NNRF, we can offer casework support to clients who have been trafficked including information on the NRM and alternative options and practical and emotional support. We are currently developing this work and hope to be able to offer awareness sessions to communities at risk of trafficking next year.

The British Red Cross's family reunion travel assistance programme helps family members of refugees, who have been granted a visa to join their family in the UK but are unable to afford the cost of travel because they are on a low income. Advice and support with this process are also available from our outreach sessions at NNRF.

The International Family Tracing service works to restore contact between family members separated by war, conflict and natural disaster.

To find out more contact 0115 850 5940.

## NOTTINGHAM ARIMATHEA TRUST

We have continued to work closely with the anti-destitution worker at NNRF who refers those in need of accommodation to our organisation. In 2015/16 all of the destitute asylum seekers we housed came through referrals from NNRF. We are currently housing 14 asylum seekers in our accommodation, 10 men and 4 women. Many of our residents visit the Saturday group at NNRF to collect their weekly food parcel and also receive a cash bursary once a month from NNRF. This year we have increased our coordination of resident support with NNRF by meeting regularly with the anti-destitution worker and Director to monitor caseloads and discuss options for move on.

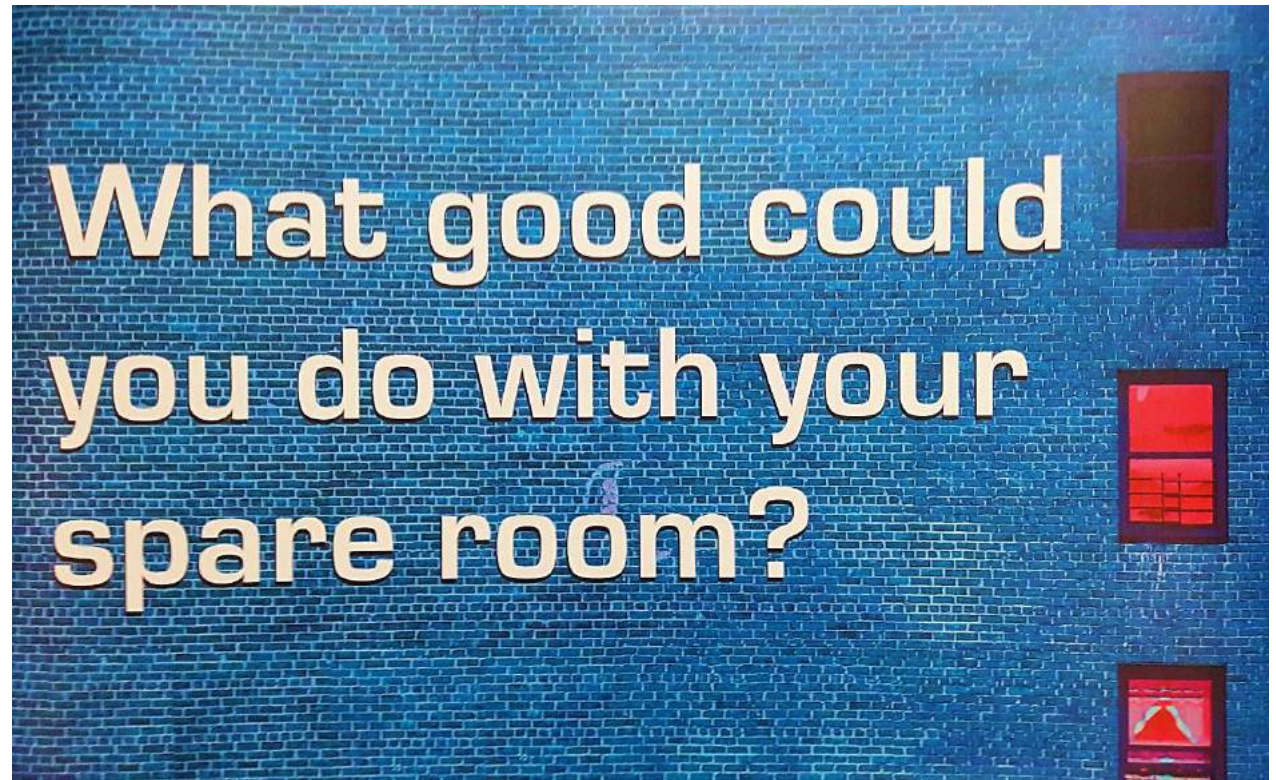
We also take referrals from the One Stop Shop at NNRF for our refugee housing. We are currently housing 24 refugees in our accommodation including two families. All of our residents access a range of different projects at NNRF such as 'Into the Mainstream' who assist us if there are any problems with residents accessing health care and provided training for our staff and volunteers. The Legal Project also supports our residents in preparing further submissions, making applications for travel documents and applying for family reunion visas. Finally, our volunteers and social work students have benefitted from several training sessions organised by the volunteer coordinator at NNRF including 'Introduction to the asylum process', 'Human Trafficking' and 'Working with Interpreters'. These have helped to build capacity within our organisation and enabled us to provide a better support service to our residents.

We continue to work in collaboration with NNRF to raise awareness about destitution amongst asylum seekers, challenge negative stereotypes of refugees and campaign for a just and humane asylum process.

## HOST

NNRF was one of the original organisations which provided advice and support when Host was set up 5 years ago and it has continued to provide support and guidance over the last five years. All the guests for Host are referred by the Destitution Worker, Gemma Pillay. The Link between Host and NNRF was strengthened when Gemma was appointed as the Host Project Co-ordinator, a post which she held for three years until recently when NNRF obtained the funding for her to undertake the Destitution role full time. Host now has a new Project Co-ordinator, Shingai Mushayabasa, who has been provided with office space within the Forum. We continue to provide short term accommodation in people's homes for destitute asylum seekers, as well as some newly recognised refugees who have had a delay in receiving all their appropriate documentation. Over the last six months, Host has also started a Clothes Bank, which is staffed by Host volunteers, but provides clothes for NNRF clients and has proved to be of great value.

We continue to be very grateful for the practical and professional support which the Forum provides for Host and our guests and which we feel enables us to continue to provide support for both our guests and hosts.



# A BIG THANK YOU

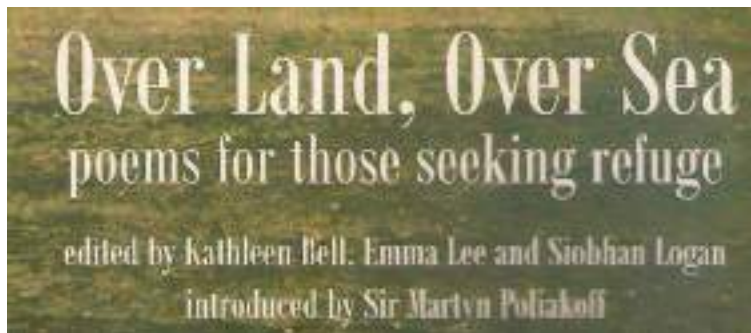
Without your support we couldn't do what we do.

NNRF would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of its supporters: from individuals who have taken on physical challenges for our cause or raised money through events, to the organisations and those of you who have made personal donations.

Would you be interested in supporting our work through an unrestricted gift? This would help us improve the overall impact of our work by enabling us to use your donation where it is most needed.

For example: Enabling us to keep vital but underfunded projects open, ensuring we are able to continue to provide the range of vital services. We will be happy to discuss ways you can support us, please call 0115 9601230.

If you would like to sign up as a member, make regular donations or one off donations please [visit our website to donate](#).



## Staff

**Fiona Cameron** – Director  
**Erica Stirrett** – Senior Admin  
**Zanele Ndlovu** – Finance Officer & Adviser  
**Barbara Spreiz** – Volunteer Coordinator  
**Rebecca Wilson** – Advice Manager  
**Hermione Berthels** – General Advice Coordinator  
**Fiona Broome** – One Stop Shop Team Lead  
**Karolina Pearl** – One Stop Shop Adviser  
**Sonia Bilkhu** – One Stop Shop Adviser  
**Julie Whitehead** – SRP Team Lead  
**Hannah Boyce** – SRP Caseworker  
**Adel Hamad** – SRP Caseworker  
**Jasim Ghafur** – Welfare Benefits Adviser  
**Debbie Royle** – COI Coordinator  
**Teressa O’Hagan-Bull** – ESOL Coordinator  
**Matt Bedford** – Interpreter Coordinator  
**Thomas Tilahun** – Interpreter  
**Mai Ahmed** – Interpreter  
**Gita Salimi** – Interpreter

**Fawad Mousawi** – Interpreter  
**Naomi Jemmett** – Young People’s Worker  
**Liz Pritchett** – Young People’s Worker  
**Gemma Pillay** – Destitution Coordinator  
**Kinsi Clarke** – Into the Mainstream (ITM) & Young People’s Project Manager  
**Daniel Robertson** – ITM Project Worker  
**Sayka Naz** – ITM Project Worker  
**Anne-Marie Egbokhan** – ITM Administrator  
**Lisa Bradley** – Legal Project Manager  
**Jonathan Scott** – Legal Project Caseworker  
**Bahman Mohammad** – Legal Project Caseworker  
**Teresa Pacey-Devlin** – Legal Project Admin  
**Hania Radwanska** – Legal Project Admin  
**Ivan Mvuyekure** – Café Coordinator  
**Sally White** – Cleaner

## Board of Trustees

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