



ASYLUM
WELCOME



Annual Report

2012 – 2013

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Asylum Welcome exists for people fleeing persecution and danger in their own countries, who seek refuge in Oxfordshire.

Our members and supporters, of various faiths and politics, have shared values based on a common humanity and social justice.

Our work is to reduce poverty, suffering and social isolation and to enable asylum seekers and refugees to live with the respect and dignity to which they are entitled.

To these ends, we:

- provide advice, information and support to asylum seekers and refugees
- befriend, visit and support the rights and welfare of detainees and
- work with other service providers and the public to meet the needs of asylum seekers and refugees.

We make every effort to inform and influence public debate and to dispel myths and misinformation about asylum seekers and refugees. We aim for the highest standards of integrity, confidentiality and quality of service; to make no judgements of individuals and to meet the needs left unmet by others.

TRUSTEES AND STAFF

Trustees

Richard Taylor, *Chair*
John Prangle, *Deputy Chair*
Olive Gearing, *Company Secretary*
Robert Howard-Jones, *Treasurer*
(resigned December 2012)
Ray Horne, *Treasurer*
(from February 2013)
Melanie Griffiths
Stephanie Kitchen
Abdul Qadeer Khan
Tamsin Smith
James Souter

Heather Steele
Marcus Thompson
Nikki van der Gaag
Lucy Vickers
Roger Zetter

Staff Members

Saeeda Imaan, *Director until October 2012*
Fiona Tracey, *Volunteer Coordinator*
Maeve Henry, *Detention Coordinator*
Joanna Crowther, *Youth Worker*
Grainne Archer, *Fundraising Officer*
Enaty Readman, *Finance officer*

Asylum Welcome: working with
refugees, asylum seekers and detainees
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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This is my final message for Asylum Welcome's Annual Report: in March of this year after some eight years in the chair, I decided to stand down. I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity of leading such a dynamic and interesting organisation. Thank you for having me.

Looking back over the last few annual reports of Asylum Welcome I see that it has been customary for me to record that the year under review has been a momentous one. Never has this been more true than in the last year. Our work in all its facets has continued and developed, and the reports that appear in the following pages will attest to that fact. This work has been carried out against a background of continuing governmental pusillanimity, disbelief and obstruction towards asylum seekers. How refreshing it would be to be able to state that a politician had stood up to say that the UN's 1951 Convention on Refugees was an admirable piece of human rights legislation; that the granting of asylum and refugee status was a noble act; and that they cared not one jot for being considered a soft touch for saying so. But of course it has not happened. We lack leadership in this area more sorely, I suggest, than in any other.

This must not disguise, nor divert attention from, the fact that in October Asylum Welcome became the victim of a serious case of alleged fraud which for some weeks threw our work into confusion. As I write, the conclusions of the police investigation into the case are still awaited. From the outset we adopted a policy of transparency about this serious affair and even now I invite anyone who wishes to know more about it to contact me for any further information

that you may want to know. We have done our best to ensure that our work with refugees and asylum seekers would be affected as minimally as possible. I believe that that aim has largely been achieved, thanks in substantial part to the steadfastness of a number of committed individuals.

It only remains for me to thank all our supporters – donors, volunteers, staff and my colleague trustees in the warmest terms. A momentous year – yes indeed, and now, largely under new management, we address ourselves to the challenges of 2013/14. I very much welcome our new Director, Kate Smart and wish her all the best.

Richard

Richard Taylor
Chair of Trustees

Our work in all its facets has continued and developed, and the reports that appear in the following pages will attest to that fact.

MESSAGE FROM THE NEW DIRECTOR

Tamsin Smith



This report covers the year April 2012 to March 2013 so it describes the activities up until just before I joined Asylum Welcome in mid April. It is an impressive record of achievements and conveys well the strengths of Asylum Welcome.

Asylum Welcome is a dynamic, collaborative movement of highly motivated volunteers, who, supported by a small team of staff, are working empathetically to support asylum seekers, refugees and detainees.

The range of services offered by Asylum Welcome shows a profound understanding of the priorities of asylum seekers, refugees and detainees. This understanding has been built up through years of experience.

Asylum Welcome continues to be sustained by substantial local support among the various communities of Oxford. It is committed to improving understanding of asylum among those communities, in particular the university, and it has a distinctive and well-respected voice in local and national fora.

I am delighted to have joined such an extraordinary organisation and I look forward to contributing to its future.

Kate

Kate Smart, Director

Photos: Rory Carnegie



Venda Club has thrived over the past year, reliably hosting 20 to 25 young people every Tuesday evening.

VOLUNTEERING

Despite this being a difficult year for Asylum Welcome, volunteer morale has remained high with staff and volunteers taking part in a fundraising bike ride in May and Refugee Week in June 2012. Volunteers are to be congratulated for their professionalism in delivering the office based services without which Asylum Welcome would not be able to run efficiently and effectively.

The support provided to our clients simply would not be possible without the energy and expertise of our committed body of volunteers. This year we have had 111 volunteers:

- 45 office-based volunteers
- 5 lunch club volunteers
- 9 youth volunteers
- 9 advocacy and campaigns volunteers
- 13 trustees
- 30 visitors to Campsfield.

FOOD CUPBOARD

We estimate that around 85 people received fresh food and food from our food cupboard over the course of the year. An average of around 15 clients collect food each week. In addition, the Oxford Food Bank continues to deliver a variety of fresh foods which are greatly welcomed by clients who have no money to buy their own.

Please continue to give to our food cupboard. Your donations are very welcome.



Tamsin Smith

'My name is Samayha and I'm from Iran I came to Asylum Welcome three years ago as a refugee needing help with benefits. I am now working as a reception volunteer and as I speak Farsi I can translate for people who come in.'

LUNCH CLUB



Tamsin Smith

The Lunch club opens its doors every Wednesday at around noon for clients of all ages and ethnicities. They are predominantly

male, but there are occasional women as well as families with small children. A team of regular volunteers are in charge of shopping, which is done locally. They will also cook the meal if necessary and have done so under the able guidance of Daniela, the longest serving volunteer. However, clients are encouraged to participate, undertaking to cook just one dish. The choice of the menu depends on the country of origin of the "chef" of the day - cuisines to date have been Kurdish, Syrian, Indian and Algerian.

The Lunch club was originally part of the Youth project but has now begun to fulfil the needs of the Destitution project. It is a cheerful, friendly venue, serving delicious food and fulfilling the need for stability and recognition, both of paramount importance to an ever increasing number of clients.

'I come here to get fresh food every week; this helps me a lot. I do not have money to buy food. I want to work but the UKBA will not give me permission. If I worked I could have enough money for food and somewhere to live'

L., asylum seeker

YOUTH WORK

During the last 12 months, youth work at Asylum Welcome was undertaken by one part-time member of staff who offered advocacy and advice services, ran Venda Club and organised an extensive programme of outings during the school summer holidays. Previously we had two staff members to do this work and the need continues to increase, putting pressure on the service.

What has been going on for young people still seeking secure Leave to Remain?

It has been another very challenging year for young people without secure Leave to Remain in the UK. In July 2012 lawyers for seven young Afghans took the Secretary of State for the Home Department to the Court of Appeal, challenging the practice of removing a young person from the UK without having 'meaningfully' attempted to trace family members.

Although Asylum Welcome, and many other charitable organisations, were glad to see this issue raised in the High Court, the case caused severe disturbance. Pending judgement, the UK Border Agency suspended all open claims. And more radically, recently refused asylum decisions were annulled, effectively returning already distressed youngsters back to square one. Asylum Welcome worked in partnership with the immigration department of Turpin and Miller LLP and the Children's Society to try to explain the situation to confused young people, many of whom were alarmed on receipt of letters from the Home Office at the prospect of further interviews with UKBA in Croydon. Others, heartbreakingly, were under the impression that the Home Office had 'changed their minds' about refusing them and finally given them permission to stay in the UK.



Venda Club

But it has not all has been gloom and doom. Venda Club thrived, reliably hosting 20 to 25 young people every Tuesday evening. Lots of fresh food, a big screen X-Box, a pool table, computer access and an enthusiastic group of skilled, sensitive volunteers made it a lively and rewarding experience for everyone involved. And Summer 2012 was the most ambitious programme of trips and activities Asylum Welcome's Youth Team has ever organised. From mid-June to mid-July, Tuesday evenings became 'Venda Outside', where young clients were able to participate in bowling and swimming outings, trips to the cinema and the Kassam Stadium to watch Oxford United play West Ham United. Every Thursday the Youth Team ran 'Big Trips' and offered youngsters the chance to go to the National History Museum in London, watch Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' performed by the Globe Theatre Company, test their physical skills at Go Ape! and Oxford Ice Rink, and visit Blenheim Palace.



Photos: Rory Carnegie

DETENTION

“You can never know the value in that phone call you make to a detainee, but I am assuring you that it makes a great difference in someone’s life. Deeply from the bottom of my heart, I would like to say a big THANK YOU to the great team at Asylum Welcome You are so wonderful, you are unsung heroes to us who have been in detention. Thank you for believing in us, thank you for not judging us. It’s always been a pleasure knowing you all, you will always stay family to me.” A.K

A.K spent 8 long months in detention, and received regular phone calls from the office detention team and was visited by a volunteer who offered generous emotional and practical support.

Visiting detainees in Campsfield House can be difficult and heart-rending. It can sometimes feel as if what we do at Asylum Welcome makes no difference to the outcome for individuals, and that we are fighting a losing battle against legal aid cuts, prejudice and indifference. But the response we get from our clients tells us otherwise. We offered support to over 250 men in Campsfield House in 2012-13. The nature of this support varied from a weekly visit or a regular phone call, to help with phone credit or a bus ticket home from the airport on arrival in a country of origin. Sometimes all we could do was share the burden of waiting for an inevitable outcome. Sometimes – more rarely – by contacting agencies such as Medical Justice, and the National Trafficking Mechanism, BID (Bail for Immigration Detainees) and legal aid solicitors, we helped in stopping removal and effecting release from detention for a lucky few. But as far as the value of what we do is concerned, perhaps this year it would be good to let our clients speak for themselves:

*‘Once again
thanks for your
help and love of
all your staff’*

J.C.

*‘Just to let you know I have been given
temporary release and I will be returning
to Bolton later this evening. I will keep you
updated on the progress of my case and I
would like to take this opportunity to thank you
for all the help and support you have given
me over the past few weeks.’ K. K-K.*

*‘I just want to thank you
for everything’ M.Z.*

*‘I was detained in Campsfield House
in Oxford I am very very grateful for the help
and the support I had from you in all the ways.
God bless you all I’m sending you this e-mail
to say thank you very much.’*

H.K.

*‘Your kindness cannot
go unrewarded. Thank
you very much’ G.E.*

EDUCATION

Our education work continues to fall into two categories: giving advice and one-to-one English teaching.

Two advisers see clients each Tuesday, and during the year had a total of 89 client visits, representing 31 new clients (the rest being follow-up visits). At the same time, our team of volunteer teachers, who numbered eleven during the first quarter and six during the last quarter, taught 212 client sessions. Numbers were partly affected by office closures in the autumn, and more volunteer teachers are still needed, as there is usually a small waiting list for one-to-one tuition. Where possible, we refer clients to mainstream course providers in order to maximize integration and involvement in the wider community, as well as introducing opportunities for progression.

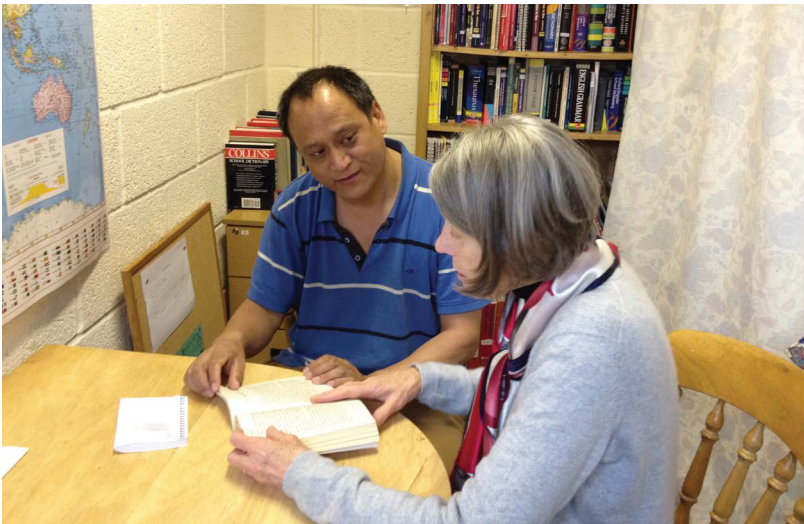
Clients were referred to a range of organisations including: Crisis Skylight, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, Ethnic Minority Business Service, FELLOW (Free English Language lessons for Overseas Workers), Refugee Resource, Oxford Spires Academy, Adult Basic Skills, Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action (OCVA). There was also the opportunity for clients to attend a new English course for beginners run by Oxfordshire Mind Wellbeing Service.

Several clients attending our one-to-one tuition made notable progress, with two moving to Oxfordshire Adult Education courses, one moving into employment, one moving to voluntary work in bicycle maintenance at Crisis Skylight, one taking a range of courses at Crisis Skylight, which led to her work being exhibited in a photography exhibition, and two moving to IELTS courses in Further Education colleges.

Both advisers have been able to attend meetings of the network of ESOL (English as a Second Language) providers set up by the OCVA.

The greatest ongoing expense is for bus passes, with an average of 4 or 5 clients receiving a monthly pass to enable them to attend courses. The Education Service has been fortunate to receive Sister Christine's regular

donation of £400, and also a one-off County Council grant of £2,500 from Councillor Larry Sanders, designed to enable some "pump-priming" expenditure, which so far has included the purchase of two laptop computers to lend to clients to support their learning, and some IELTS course books. With a new fundraiser in post and to honour the spirit of this grant, we anticipate the establishment of a named fund which can be used to attract further donations specifically for educational purposes.



CAMPAIGNS AND ADVOCACY

2012-13 has been a busy and successful year consisting of popular events, media work, the consolidation of our social networking activity, and research to inform future work.

Seasonal Appeal Launch 2012

Our appeal was launched on November 20 with an evening of film, discussion and music at the Ultimate Picture Palace. The evening began with a screening of the award-winning documentary, *Hamedullah: the Road Home*. This was followed by a Q&A with the film maker, Sue Clayton. After an interlude of live Iranian music from our volunteer Zanj on Iranian Daf (drum), the evening continued with the off-beat comedy *Le Havre* (2011), by Aki Kaurismäki: 'a satisfying and distinctively lovable film' (The Guardian).

'Before I thought they were people who come and try and claim money and live, but they are just scared people wanting to feel safe.'

Pupil at St Gregory the Great

Refugee Week 2012

We held two events to celebrate Refugee Week. The first was a screening of the critically acclaimed *Welcome*, by Phillipe Lioret at the Ultimate Picture Palace. The evening was a great success with the cinema filled to capacity and all proceeds going to Asylum Welcome.

The second event aimed to raise awareness in the younger generation. Asylum Welcome hired the Escape to Safety Lorry, an interactive multimedia installation which enables participants to experience something of what it is like to seek asylum in Britain. Throughout Refugee Week, our volunteers led short, interactive workshops with pupils from St Gregory the Great. The aim of these workshops was to encourage young people to empathise with asylum seekers, to understand the difficulties that they face and to challenge racism towards them. The response from the students was overwhelmingly positive.

'People aren't safe in their country and are in danger constantly and when they come here they get a bad time because of racist people.'

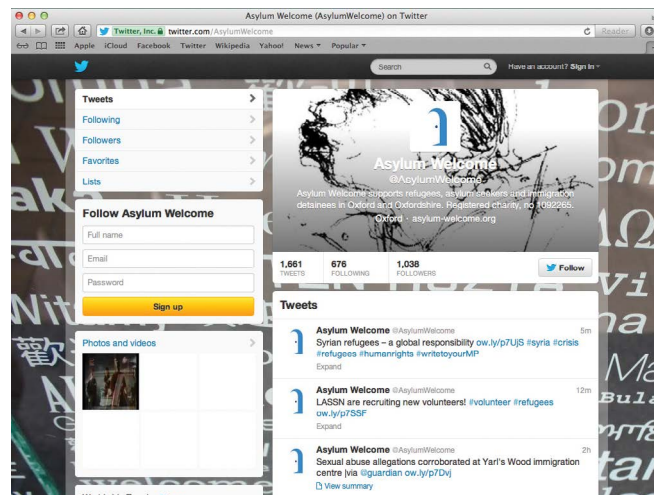
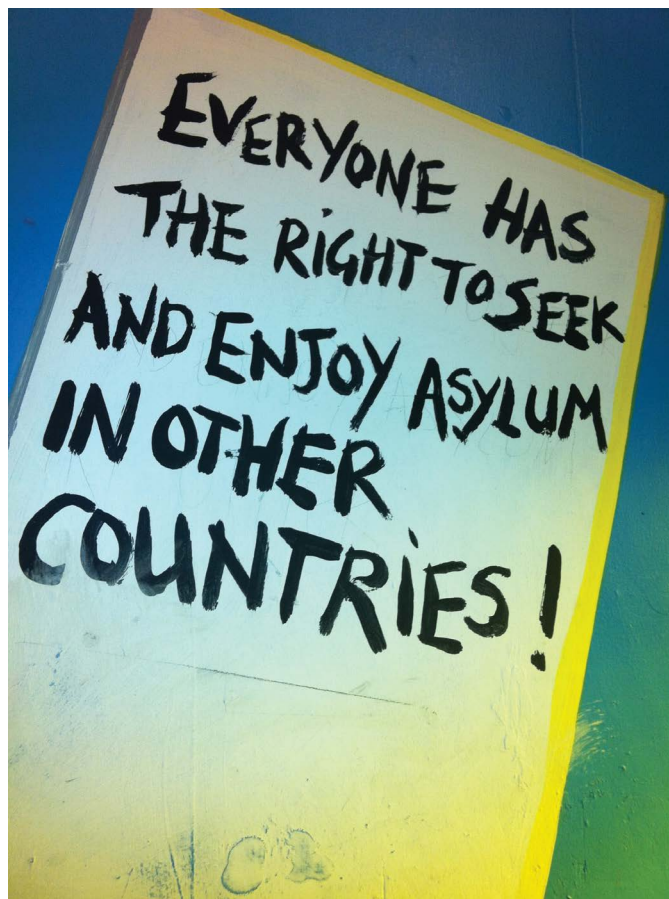
Pupil at St Gregory the Great



Media and Campaigns

In June 2012, we issued a joint statement on government cuts with our colleagues at Refugee Resource. The press release was picked up by the Oxford Mail and resulted in the publication of an article highlighting the plight of asylum seekers and refugees in Oxfordshire and advertising our Refugee Week events.

In November 2012, Nikki van der Gaag, a trustee, did an interview about Syrian asylum-seekers on Radio Oxford (at 7am!) that was aired throughout the day. We also issued a press release on the increasing number of foreign students being detained at Campsfield house and have been speaking to BBC Oxford to arrange an interview. We have increased our activity on Facebook and Twitter where we are in touch regularly with partner organisations and supporters. Do visit if you would like to receive up-to-the-minute news on asylum and refugee issues. You can also connect with us on LinkedIn. Our campaigns work this year ended on a high when our when our collaboration with the City Council and Still Human Still Here resulted in a motion being passed to end destitution in Oxford.



@AsylumWelcome

ASYLUM WELCOME RESEARCH: SEEKING ASYLUM IN A TIME OF AUSTERITY

A group of volunteers* produced a short briefing on the impact of the cuts to public services on our clients and on asylum seekers in the UK more generally- see below 'Seeking Asylum in a time of Austerity'. Drawing on desk research and interviews with clients and partner organisations, the briefing highlights concerns that the cuts are worsening the lives of those seeking sanctuary in this time of austerity. The aim of the briefing is to provide information for future awareness-raising, media work and fundraising.

The current context

Asylum seekers and refugees in the UK have long since experienced poverty and destitution at all stages of the asylum process, and have often relied on the assistance of both national and local voluntary organisations across the country, including Asylum Welcome. Given the current economic climate of cuts to public funding and services in a time of austerity, this trend is set to continue.

Nationally, refugee organisations such as those forming the Asylum Support Partnership have been heavily affected by the cuts, including a 62% cut to its One Stop Service that provided advice to asylum seekers on how to apply for asylum support, and a 100% cut to the Refugee Integration and Employment Service. At the same time, funding from local authorities for refugee organisations across the country has also dried up. In Oxford, for instance, the Bridging Project, an educational advice and support centre for refugees and vulnerable migrants, was forced to close down in 2011 when pockets of funding from bodies such as social services and Connexions was withdrawn. Whilst government rhetoric espouses the notion of the 'Big Society' to meet local needs, refugee organisations, such as Asylum Welcome and Refugee Resource, have been left to fill increasing gaps in provision created by cuts to refugee services, whilst operating in a harsh financial climate in which securing funds has become ever more challenging.

'For many people, the horrifying situations that caused them to flee their countries in the first place very much remain a reality. It is no wonder many people fear returning and make the difficult decision to stay here, far from family and with few rights'

Lisa Doyle, Refugee Council
Advocacy Manager

Declining Legal Aid restricts access to justice

As organisations operating in Oxford, including Bail for Immigration Detainees (BID) have recognised, proposed cuts to legal aid for asylum seekers significantly limit individuals' ability to access high-quality legal representation and achieve a just decision on their asylum claims.

At the national level, the picture is already bleak with the two largest legal aid firms for asylum seekers – Refugee and Migrant Justice and the Immigration Advisory Service – forced to close down between 2010 and 2012 given the funding structure of the legal aid system. It is consequently predicted that more asylum seekers will have their claims refused, given the recognised importance of high quality legal representation in achieving a positive decision.

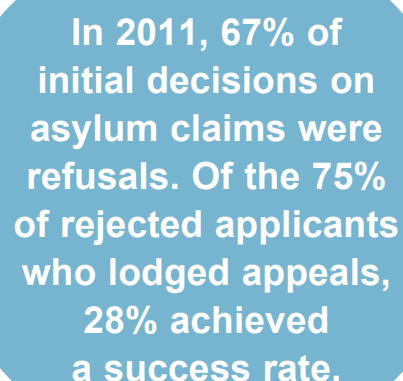
'The quality of legal representation is... of paramount importance to asylum seekers whose cases routinely raise issues of life and liberty'

* James Souter, Anna Melland, Zani Norozi, George Dickinson and Elizabeth Jackson

Refused asylum seekers who find themselves without entitlement to support, or resources to appeal against unjust decisions, are, moreover, increasingly forced to live in destitution, too afraid to return home.

Immigration detention

Whilst legal aid funding to provide access to justice for asylum seekers is in decline, immigration detention is the only area of spending on immigration and asylum that has been left relatively unscathed by the recent cuts, despite the strong potential for savings to be made by shortening the amount of time individuals are detained. As vulnerable migrants and asylum seekers serve as convenient and politically motivated scapegoats for economic woes, public attitudes towards those who may be in desperate need of support have hardened, and immigration detention is perceived as a justified measure. Given the obstacles that exist to the deportation of refused asylum seekers – such as lack of documentation and viable travel routes – many are effectively imprisoned at significant public expense, without due regard for their well-being.



In 2011, 67% of initial decisions on asylum claims were refusals. Of the 75% of rejected applicants who lodged appeals, 28% achieved a success rate.

Increasing poverty and destitution

For those refused asylum seekers who are not in detention, high levels of destitution throughout the UK have become well-documented in recent years. Local organisations such as Asylum Welcome have provided subsistence to refused asylum seekers who would otherwise go hungry, providing food to ten to fifteen asylum seekers per week between 2011 and 2012.

However, even the minority of asylum seekers who are granted refugee status still experience significant poverty, despite being eligible for mainstream benefits. Considerable delays in the payment of benefits can leave newly recognised refugees with no means of support in the interim, which was highlighted by the shocking case of a mother and child who, despite having just been granted status, starved to death in London due to such delays.

A 100% cut to the Refugee Integration and Support Service (RIES), which sought to ease the transition for newly recognised refugees, will do nothing to prevent repeats of such scenarios.

Like many Britons, those refugees who do receive mainstream benefits often find it challenging to find work in the current economic climate. The case of one of Asylum Welcome's clients, a recognised refugee from Iraq, highlighted on the back page, shows the difficulties which persist even if asylum seekers are granted status.

Refugee integration support withdrawn

Given the current climate, refugees who do eventually make the transition to full-time employment in the UK recognise that they made this transition in part because of the assistance of organisations such as Asylum Welcome. For instance, one former client from Zimbabwe, told us that:

"Asylum Welcome...helped me access mainstream services (college to do a course other than English as a second language and social services to access mainstream housing for example) all of which managed to not make me feel like an 'other' and enabled my successful integration. A lack of funding will mean efforts to integrate [people such as myself] ... will be undermined or lost altogether."

While economic hardship has been a sad feature of the lives of asylum seekers and refugees in Oxford and the UK for many years, the cuts threaten to deepen the poverty and destitution experienced by many of those who arrive in the UK with hopes of finding safety. In order for refugees to live with hope and dignity within communities such as Oxford, the funding of both statutory bodies and voluntary organisations must be urgently secured.

Statement of financial activities for the year ended March 31 2013

	Unrestricted Funds £	2013 Restricted Funds £	Total £	2012 £
INCOMING RESOURCES				
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds				
Voluntary Income	133,894	56,070	189,964	226,067
Activities for Generating Funds	2,606		2,606	6,820
Investment Income	154		154	12
Other Incoming Resources			-	-
Total Incoming Resources	<u>136,654</u>	<u>56,070</u>	<u>192,724</u>	<u>232,899</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Costs of Generating Funds				
Costs of Generating Voluntary Income	1,447		1,447	982
Charitable Activities	167,221	46,980	214,201	224,513
Governance Costs	2,637		2,637	3,789
Total Resources Expended	<u>171,305</u>	<u>46,980</u>	<u>218,285</u>	<u>229,284</u>
Net Incoming/ (Outgoing) Resources	(34,651)	9,090	(25,561)	3,615
Transfer between Funds			-	-
Funds Brought Forward April 1 2012	75,378		75,378	71,763
Total Funds Carried Forward 31 March 2013	<u>£40,727</u>	<u>£9,090</u>	<u>£49,817</u>	<u>£75,378</u>

Balance sheet as at March 31 2013

	£	2013 £	£	2012 £
Fixed Assets				
Office Equipment		6,053		6,571
Current Assets				
Debtors	7,999		2,625	
Cash on Deposit	91,605		66,451	
Cash in Hand	410		81	
		100,014		69,157
Current Liabilities				
Creditors: Falling due within one year	25,000		350	
		(25,000)		(350)
Net Current Assets		75,014		68,807
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year		(31,250)		-
Total Assets		<u>£49,817</u>		<u>£75,378</u>
Represented by:				
Unrestricted Income Funds		40,727		75,378
Restricted Income Funds		9,090		-
		<u>£49,817</u>		<u>£75,378</u>

FUNDRAISING REPORT

This was a year that really tested the loyalty of local supporters and the understanding of existing funders. In both cases, we have been deeply heartened by the strength of response Asylum Welcome has received at such a difficult time.

In particular, we are grateful to Oxford City Council, who left us in no doubt that they would continue to fund our Youth Club 'Venda', to Esmée Fairbairn who so quickly grasped our situation and organised our next phase of funding, and to St. Michael's and All Saints Charities who responded to our request for extra help so generously.

Our Seasonal Appeal was very successful this year. Thank you to all those who returned their appeal envelope at a time when we really needed it!

Donations through online giving have grown this year. We have also had success with events promoted through Facebook and Twitter such as film screenings organised by the Campaigns and Advocacy Subcommittee. These have not only been brilliant for awareness-raising but have made us some money too!

At such a difficult moment it was inevitable that approaches to trusts for future funding would be hampered for a few months. Although enough income has been generated to meet the costs of this financial year there will be some catching up to do to get fundraising back on track.

Thanks to our donors including:

- The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- Advice Services Fund
- Beatrice Laing Trust
- Christchurch Cathedral
- Edith Maud Ellis 1985 Charitable Trust
- Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust
- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Helen Tetlow Memorial Fund via Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees (AVID)
- Mark Haddon and Sos Eltis
- Jill Franklin Trust
- John Paul Getty Jnr Charitable Trust
- Lady Margaret Hall
- LankellyChase Foundation
- Sarah Lasenby
- Layton Hill Trust
- Leigh Trust
- Lloyds TSB Foundation
- McTaggart Third Fund
- The Norda Trust
- Odin Charitable Trust
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Councillors Big Society Fund (with thanks to Councillor Larry Sanders)
- Oxford Friends Action on Poverty
- Oxford Quakers
- Ranger Fund
- St Andrew's Church
- St Michaels & All Saints Charities
- Souldern Charitable Trust
- The Tolkien Trust
- Wadham College

In addition, as in past years, we record our sincere thanks for the extraordinary generosity of our Anonymous Donor who provides monthly donations for destitute clients.

Finally, we are very grateful to Councillor Alan Armitage who, as Lord Mayor of Oxford last year, nominated Asylum Welcome as one of his two chosen charities during his period of office.



Just one of many stories...

Ms A arrived from Iraq 5 years ago and was refused asylum. She continued to make her case for asylum, but no longer had help from a lawyer. She has a child born a year ago. She was supported by friends in Oxford but when they could no longer look after her, faced with imminent homelessness and destitution, she approached Asylum Welcome.

Asylum Welcome gave Ms A immediate practical help with food and toiletries. Our volunteers contacted social workers at Oxfordshire social services and explained that Ms A and her child are entitled to their support. Together we found a solution to her housing problem.

Asylum Welcome volunteers made contact with the lawyer who had represented her case, in order to retrieve important documents. We arranged for a new lawyer to review her asylum claim and give her advice.

Ms A and her baby continue to visit us for friendship and advice.

Asylum Welcome is sustained by people in Oxfordshire.

YOU CAN HELP!

- Show that you care by **becoming a member** of Asylum Welcome.
- **Make a donation** or set up a standing order to help support our vital services for asylum seekers, refugees and detainees in Oxfordshire.
- **Contribute supplies or money** to support our Food Cupboard Project, which provides basic groceries for destitute asylum seekers and refugees.
- Share your time and skills as a **volunteer**.
- Have fun and raise money for Asylum Welcome by organising your own **fundraising event**, or help organise one of our **book sales** or the **annual appeal**.
- Support our **campaigns and advocacy** programme by organising an awareness raising event or supporting a local or national campaign.



Asylum Welcome, Unit 7, Newtec Place, Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RE

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www.asylum-welcome.org

Asylum Welcome is a registered charity, number 1092265, and company number 4361627