

THE RENEWAL TRUST
helping communities grow

SYCAMORE CENTRE



ANNUAL REPORT

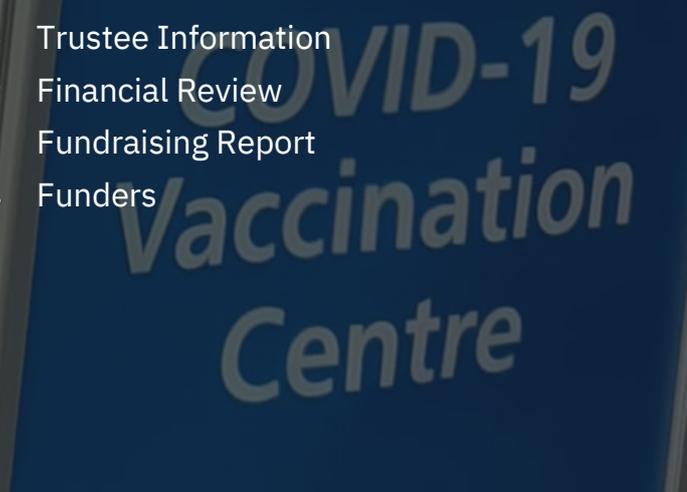
2020/21

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum



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Unless they have expressed a preference otherwise, throughout this report clients' names have been changed to preserve confidentiality and all photos appear with permission.

CHAIR'S REPORT

What a year it has been for everyone! Covid-19 has changed our lives and our world almost beyond recognition. It has affected our lives in so many ways, and whilst it has affected us all, we have also all experienced it differently.

After such a difficult year, I must express our gratitude to the staff and volunteers at NNRF who have worked so hard and provided the much-needed support for asylum seekers and refugees in our city. Throughout this year they have developed, delivered and refined our services to work remotely and offer the highest level of advice and support possible to our clients, with unfailing commitment.

Covid has made the lives of the asylum seekers and refugees we work with even more difficult than before. It has resulted in, amongst other things, homelessness or overcrowded and inadequate accommodation, increased uncertainty due to delays in life changing decisions, lack of social contact and increased isolation and for some it has exacerbated mental health issues.

Working remotely and not having that face-to-face interaction with colleagues and service users has been really demanding and exhausting for staff and volunteers. Everything takes more time. The considerable growth in numbers seeking advice and support since January, particularly together with the increased complexity of the issues they are facing, has stretched and challenged everyone, but time and again they have risen to meet the challenges.

Despite all the difficulties, as you read this report, I hope you will be in awe of just how much has been achieved in this tough year. In addition to continuing to provide all the existing services, due to the tireless efforts of the Grants Team (made up of Trustees, staff and volunteers), we have managed to secure additional funding to respond to the issues raised by the pandemic. These include funds to refurbish the café, make our building more Covid-safe, and develop an outdoor covered space. We have received funding to create temporary additional posts: two Specialist Advice Team caseworkers, two Initial Accommodation Liaison Officers for clients in hotels, a Food Project worker to support the anti-destitution work and a Safety Officer. We have also had funding to provide extra food supplies/cash for destitute clients, and distributed donated smart phones and laptops.

We were really pleased to host the Vaccine Bus, enabling people to get their first and second vaccination. It has been a time where we have valued our partners and joint working with other agencies in Nottingham to increase what can be offered to asylum seekers and refugees. In January we lost our dedicated fundraiser as that restricted funding has come to an end. Whilst many fundraising events have not been able to happen, we have been the recipients of many people's generosity with both one-off and regular donations increasing – and for that we are sincerely grateful. Regular donations are crucial to strengthening the independence of NNRF.

Our volunteers continue to be an invaluable asset to NNRF. Throughout the year our volunteer numbers have increased and adapted to the role of remote volunteering. We have also developed new/adapted volunteer roles: delivery drivers, telephone advisors/befrienders, fundraisers, interpreters. Without them we could not achieve a fraction of what we do.

For all of us, one of the biggest losses has been that of face-to-face social contact and this is especially true for many of the asylum seekers and refugees we work with. The hubbub of the café, groups of people chatting outside, the Women's Group meetings have all been silent. Uncertain of what Covid will throw at us over the coming months, we are developing outdoor space and the garden at the rear of the building, in the hope of finding new ways for these social contacts and interactions to take place once again.

Looking to the future, we will have to contend with the continuing unpredictable presence of the Covid virus. Another major challenge we will face in the coming year is the Government's proposed Nationality and Borders Bill which will not only fail to protect those in need of safety, but also treat them as criminals. The proposals are cruel and completely lacking in humanity and based on a very flawed understanding of the reality of having to leave your home and seek asylum in another country.

I am thankful for the support and passion of my fellow Trustees. Each has unique skills and experience, and we all share in the conviction that NNRF is very much needed and valued, and it is our great responsibility but also our honour to ensure that we go from strength to strength. Thank you to all of you who support NNRF in whatever way you can.



Jennie Fleming
Chair of the Board

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

What a year this has been!

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of the Refugee Forum. Changes to client support needs, service delivery, funding availability, staff and volunteer wellbeing and future uncertainty have all had to be considered and worked through.

As the prospect of a national lockdown was becoming a reality, NNRF staff, volunteers and trustees came together to plan how we would continue to support the clients. Within one week, each service had its own strategy that balanced the desire to meet client needs alongside ensuring staff, volunteers and clients were kept as safe as reasonably possible. This collaborative approach has continued throughout the pandemic, with regular meetings taking place to allow for reflection, review, new ideas and modifications to existing plans. It's been a privilege to be part of this and everybody involved should be proud of their part in this client-focused, inclusive piece of work.

Well done and thanks to all of you!

Most NNRF services are now able to offer a hybrid model of support: clients contact the forum via a telephone triage/advice line, supported by our interpreting service, four days a week. Depending on the issue, clients may be invited to a face-to-face appointment. The Advice Hall, Café space and outdoor waiting area have all been modified to allow for safe Covid-compliant meetings with clients. All staff can book space in the building for face-to-face meetings. Currently clients who attend the building in person without an appointment are guided to the telephone helpline. Some services organise to see clients in person by visiting them in their homes, gardens or community venues.

A delivery system was put in place to continue supporting destitute clients with food and toiletries. There was an amazing response from the local community, dropping off donations of essential items every Friday for the service. NNRF has also been able to increase cash support from £10 a month to £40 per month to destitute clients to substitute for reduced provision of community meals, as our Community Cafe had to cease operations. Most destitute clients are now able to collect food and cash in person from the Refugee Forum although several still have volunteers/staff who deliver directly to them.

NNRF successfully accessed specific Covid funding to help respond to the increased demands caused by the pandemic. General Advice, the Specialist Advice Team and the Anti-Destitution Service all received monies for additional staffing and resources. The Refugee Forum also created 2 dedicated posts to work with newly-arrived clients being housed in the Initial Accommodation Hotels. The 2 posts provided direct casework to clients and strengthened the support available in the hotels by helping to coordinate key partners to deliver services within their specialist areas. These innovative roles have been lauded by national and regional partners as examples of best practice.

Unfortunately, these temporary funding streams have recently come to an end, resulting in the loss of staff in both General Advice and Specialist Advice Team. This, alongside the impact of Covid, the difficulties of supporting people remotely and the rising numbers of clients in Nottingham has resulted in a significant increase in waiting lists for some services. New funding is being sought and new ways of running projects are being piloted to try to maintain efficient and responsive services.



The people we support have been impacted greatly by Covid. Many of the services that provided direct support were forced to close due to lockdown restrictions. The pandemic exacerbated the issue of "tech-poverty" amongst our clients. Many did not have access to the internet or lacked computer/smart phone devices that would allow them to interact with remote online services or children to access online learning. A lack of services to deal with existing trauma, family separation, isolation, together with delays in Home Office decision making, have all had a detrimental impact on the mental health of clients. Ensuring clients are kept safe has been difficult to ensure via a phone call. Physical indicators of concern, such as domestic abuse, cannot be seen, and clients are not able to attend a safe space to openly share their concerns.

The Refugee Forum has attempted to tackle these difficulties and to make remote services available to all clients. NNRF has helped source laptops and smart phones for families. Staff and volunteers have made continuous wellbeing checks for those we were concerned about, and a safe space was made available at the Forum for those who needed to be seen urgently.

NNRF's finances have been impacted by Covid with fundraising activities such as "Come and Sing" being cancelled. Services such as the Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme, that bring in a large portion of NNRF's income, have been financially reduced because new participants have not been allowed into the country. The Grants Team was forced to pause the work it had begun on several multiyear bids when funders paused their traditional grants in favour of short-term Covid-response support. These funding streams have since reopened but the competition for grants has substantially increased leaving no guarantees of future success.

The lockdowns/isolation significantly impacted staff, volunteers and trustees. Wellbeing is an ongoing concern and many conversations and options for support have been put in place to ensure a healthy workforce. This has included flexible working hours, regular wellbeing checks, fun online activities, 'open hour' chats where staff could talk to any manager about any issues, as well as regular lockdown/group discussions. We all had to learn how to use Zoom! Working from home is fully established now, although staff have been able to attend the building by choice for some time and plans are being drawn up for a 'hybrid' model of working to become the new norm for all staff. Significant numbers of volunteers continue to isolate and shield, which impacts the number of clients that can be seen face-to-face in General Advice. New volunteers are being trained to deliver in person, while those shielding have been offered opportunities to work remotely.

Effective partnership work has been one of the keys to meeting the challenges posed by Covid. The Anti-Destitution Service's food/cash support for residents in Nottingham Arimathea Trust Accommodation and the coalition of partners who came together to provide holistic support for clients in the Initial Accommodation Hotels are just two of the many examples of great collaborative practice.

With all the focus on the pandemic we cannot forget that 2020 was the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Refugee Forum. NNRF had big plans to celebrate this milestone with multiple events and opportunities to bring all stakeholders together, both old and new. Alas, the majority of these were not possible under lockdown restrictions. However, this shouldn't take anything away from the fact that tens of thousands of people have been provided with empathy, comfort and support over the past 20 years and that so many people have had improved life outcomes thanks to the Refugee Forum and the support of all of you.

This year saw the further exploration of BAME issues in the Refugee Forum. Communities Inc helped facilitate honest and reflective meetings with all stakeholders. There is always a risk that, as a refugee-focused charity, we are complacent and believe we have already got it right. However, these meetings highlighted that more work needs to be done to ensure the Refugee Forum is a diverse, equal and inclusive organisation to work for, volunteer with and receive support from. Work has begun to ensure that best practice principles are embedded throughout the Refugee Forum.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The uncertainty caused by the pandemic has made it difficult to create concrete long-term plans.

The work on implementing a new business plan, started towards the end of 2019, was put on hold to allow staff and managers to focus on changes to operational delivery. The challenges of the pandemic, the increase demand on services and the uncertainty around future funding have made it nearly impossible to plan more than a few months ahead. However the picture is starting to become clearer and the Refugee Forum intends to author a realistic, ambitious multi-year business plan that engages all stakeholders

To end this, I want to mention once again the fantastic contributions and work provided by staff, volunteers, trustees and our supporters. Because of you, and despite an incredibly challenging year, the Refugee Forum as been able to provide support and comfort to thousands of people in the most desperate of situations. Thank you!

Future Plans

- Support staff and services to return to NNRF offices with the implementation of a hybrid model
- Redesign service delivery, based on best-practice learned during the pandemic - particular focus on flexibility for and empowerment of clients
- Improve client engagement and ownership of NNRF by embedding real participation at all levels of the organisation
- Champion the cause of asylum seekers and refugees by challenging negative images and informing and educating local communities
- Implement a new multi-year business plan for NNRF with engagement from all stakeholders
- Secure long-term funding for NNRF services
- Establish a new Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group to improve NNRF's approach in these areas
- Create a client-led garden that allows for a safe, social waiting space alongside wellbeing-focused activities such as the growing of food
- Further improve partnership work with joint projects and funding bids
- Evaluate and demonstrate the impact of our services
- Bring Voices in Refuge (our Interpreting Service) in-house and end the previous Community Interest Company arrangement
- Complete the pay and scale review to ensure a transparent and fair pay reward for all staff
- Alongside this, implement a new appraisal system with a focus on staff development and feedback
- Implement a new website that is modern, user friendly and fit for purpose

Matt Atkins

Director



SAFEGUARDING

Keeping People Safe: Our Approach

Safeguarding is at the heart of our work. Our aim is to support asylum seekers and refugees and to do everything we can to help them to feel safe and welcome. Our safeguarding policies and procedures make specific reference to safeguarding children and adults at risk. However, all NNRF clients may be considered to be “vulnerable” in respect of their immigration status and other personal circumstances, so our procedures for keeping people safe apply to everyone.

How we assess safeguarding risks

The Board of Trustees formally reviews risks associated with safeguarding as part of our 6-monthly review of our Risk Register. The trustee with oversight of safeguarding meets with the Safeguarding Team every month and the agenda always includes a review of current challenges and risks on the horizon. The Safeguarding Team maintains a central safeguarding register of all clients for whom safeguarding has ever been a concern.

Learning Lessons

The monthly Safeguarding Team meetings include a standing item on the agenda about recent “near misses”. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Team provide regular and frequent safeguarding updates for staff.

Our policy and procedures

NNRF’s safeguarding policy and procedures have been reviewed and revised this year. All staff, trustees and volunteers have been trained in the new policy. Our policy is underpinned by three fundamental principles: (i) that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility; (ii) that we all need to know how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and (iii) that we all have a duty to report safeguarding concerns.

Complaints, Concerns and Disclosures

Our policy is explicit about how to report any safeguarding concerns, including referral pathways to outside agencies. This includes any concerns about the conduct of staff, trustees and volunteers. The policy makes clear that if anyone feels dissatisfied with how a safeguarding concern has been dealt with, they can and should escalate their concern directly to the relevant agency (e.g. Social Care). We have a separate Whistleblowing Policy which sets out how individuals can – where necessary – speak up.

How trustees ensure the effectiveness of our safeguarding policies and procedures

The trustee with oversight of safeguarding meets with the Safeguarding Team and reports back to the whole Board every month. This includes a review of current safeguarding cases. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the NNRF building has been closed since March 2020. Once the building re-opens, the safeguarding trustee will carry out other monitoring and evaluation activities including discussions with staff, volunteers and clients, and reviews of documentation.

Safeguarding cases handled in 2020-21

At the time of writing there are 42 cases (adults and children) listed in the Safeguarding Register. These include clients suffering from poor mental health including low moods, self-harm and suicide; sexual abuse; domestic abuse, neglect and vulnerability associated with destitution and homelessness.

Covid-19: An Additional Challenge

The pandemic has made it more difficult to keep people safe. It has been harder to detect warning signs through remote-working (i.e., over the telephone). Clients have had less opportunity for face-to-face contact with other agencies where safeguarding issues may have been identified. (e.g. health centres, schools, etc). Nationally, there has been an increase in reports of domestic abuse as well as in the demand for services and domestic abuse support services have struggled to meet the demand.

Pete Strauss,
Safeguarding Trustee

OUR VISION

A society where asylum seekers and refugees are welcomed, receive just and compassionate treatment and support in rebuilding their lives.



OUR MISSION

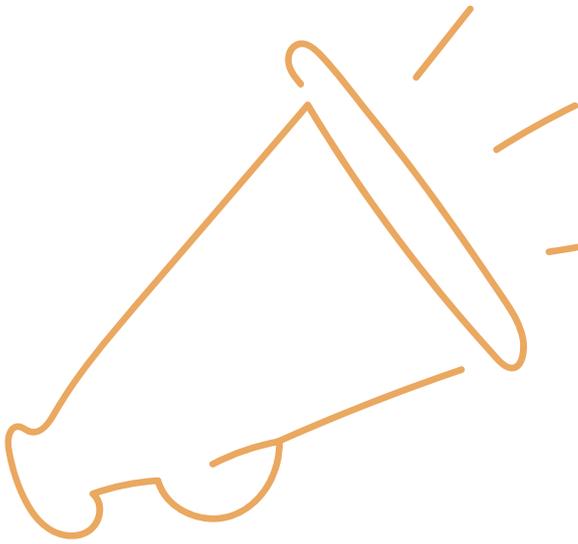
To support asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in gaining just outcomes, rebuilding their lives and integrating into society.

We do this by:

- **Providing a safe and welcoming space where everyone is treated with respect, compassion and dignity**
- **Offering free and impartial specialist advice**
- **Empowering service users to rebuild their own lives**
- **Positively embracing and celebrating differences**
- **Offering practical support to those who have no means to support themselves**
- **Building effective partnerships with community groups and relevant organisations**



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



Across all projects:

1860 Clients served

4785 Cases opened

144 Volunteers,
from **35** Countries,
speaking **37** Languages

90% of Clients used our
Interpreting
Services

1,655 Food parcels
delivered to AD
clients

12,500 Volunteer hours given

250 Christmas gift
boxes
delivered

3618 Referrals to
General Advice

60 Online Maths and English
workshops

ANTI-DESTITUTION

Target group : Refused Asylum Seekers



The Anti-Destitution Project helps refused asylum seekers with their immediate needs such as food and disposable cash, and also provides help and support around their immigration cases via referrals. The project takes a holistic approach as there is very rarely only one area of concern when dealing with this vulnerable group.

SATURDAY FOOD GROUP

- Food bank offering selection of groceries, fresh fruit and vegetables and toiletries – all done by delivery since 21st March 2020
- Clothes bank deliveries
- ESOL materials delivered

CASH GROUP

- £40 per four weeks given to each individual
- Four-weekly update with each client
- On-going casework and referrals

SUPPORT APPLICATIONS

- Applications for Section 95, Section 98, Section 4, Schedule 10
- All follow-up work which includes handling further information requests, preparing appeals, allocation of accommodation and post-dispersal

REFERRALS

- Internal referrals to Into the Mainstream, ESOL, New Refugee Clinic, and Women's Group
- External referrals : Nottingham Arimathea Trust, Host Nottingham, Social Services, British Red Cross, Bhatia Best Solicitors

**Project Team Members**

Gemma Pillay, Ivan Mvuyekure

Number of Volunteers:

24

Number of Clients Served:

88

During this period:

- **6 people** (either current or former AD clients) gained Leave to Remain
- **52 people** accessed housing support
- **1655 food parcels** went to our AD clients. A food parcel usually = 3 bags: groceries, fresh fruit and vegetables and chilled/frozen food



"This week is my one year anniversary of being with you, which has been an honour.

As I've mentioned many times, we don't just deliver food and clothing and..., we also deliver hope. When we added some flowers to the packages, everybody noticed how much impact it had.

Every time we deliver something, we also deliver the message: "YOU AREN'T ALONE" which is more important than anything else to someone who is alone in the country and doesn't know anyone, doesn't know the language and is unfamiliar with the culture here.

Hopefully we will be carrying on as long as they need us.

Thank you"

Mo - Saturday Food Delivery Driver



The Anti-Destitution Project has kept going thanks to the dedication and reliable support of our volunteers and donors. Volunteers have included drivers, bag packers, delivery coordinators, fridge and freezer monitors, well-being callers, shoppers and advisers. Donations have ranged from bags of extra shopping brought in by individuals to entire streets and villages getting together to make collections for the Food Group. Every donation and effort has been crucial to the project.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

This project aims to reduce social isolation and build stronger social networks among refugee children, young people and families. We encourage the involvement of parents and strive to strengthen internal community links, as well as those with the wider society. We also promote better access and integration to mainstream services and provision. Through our work we have successfully helped vulnerable families experiencing serious difficulties into social care and improved their orientation and engagement within Nottingham, providing support regarding children's health, education, and safety. We are committed to developing communication skills and to lessening the burden of adulthood placed on young lives, through holistic and compassionate support, enabling children to thrive in their new home in Nottingham.

CHILDREN SUPPORTED BY THIS PROJECT:

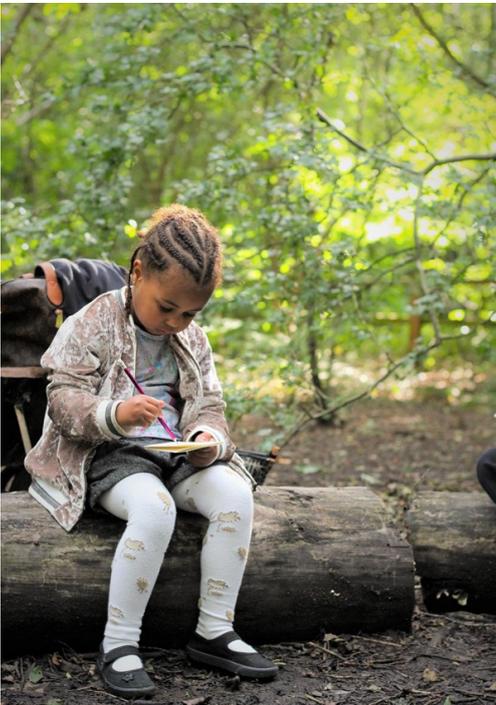
- Age 0-4: 28
- Age 5-9: 22
- Age 10-15: 20





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|--|---------------|
| Project Team Member: | Hannah Ziolek |
| Number of Volunteers: | 0 |
| Female Clients Served: | 36 |
| Male Clients Served: | 23 |
| Total Number of Clients Served: | 59 |
| Number of New Cases: | 61 |

A single mother and her son, who is autistic and also has physical disabilities, were dispersed to Nottingham. The caseworker ensured the family were able to attend events and be part of the Children and Families Project. We supported the family to register for school places and worked closely with the local authority to ensure her son was allocated to an appropriate school where he would be supported in the classroom by way of one to one support through all his lessons by a special needs teaching assistant. The caseworker also approached local and national agencies and the child was enabled to join support groups and take part in residential trips, which he thoroughly enjoyed. Furthermore, the child was able to make friends and to participate in activities as his confidence grew. The mother was able to also attend college and improve her English and make friends. She has advanced her skills and is now pursuing a course in bakery and hopes to open a bakery one day. As a result of our advocacy and support the family are now happy and settled in Nottingham. She said '**thank you for not treating us different and accepting us as human beings**'.



We also collect feedback from children during events on what they enjoyed and what they would like to do in future events/school holidays, to ensure children's voices and opinions are heard.

'I am happy because I now have made friends, I was scared before and felt sad, thank you for this gift' - Ahmed - Age 7

COMMUNITIES OF IDENTITY

The Communities of Identity Project (Col) is a consortium of 13 organisations delivering a range of activities and services that help asylum seekers and refugees access information, advice and guidance. They also provide a range of skills and confidence-building activities including intergenerational work and youth activities, to enable them to become active citizens. Managed by a Partnership Coordinator, it also provides support to smaller groups and organisations through bespoke training/advice and a small grassroots grant scheme.

This project is funded by Nottingham City Council.

This year the Small Grants Scheme supported 10 groups to adapt to working during the pandemic.

Support for asylum seekers and refugees included:

- **Information, Advice and Guidance** - 2852 were supported by 7 organisations
- **Building Skills and Confidence** - 560 were supported by 5 organisations
- **Improving/acquiring English Language skills** - 309 were supported by 3 organisations
- **Support for basic needs** - 631 were supported by 3 organisations
- **Volunteering** - 146 were supported by 7 organisations
- **Support for development of group** - 71 groups were supported by 3 organisations
- **Young people supported** - 79 were supported by 2 organisations
- **Intergenerational work** - 72 people were supported by 2 organisations

Please note that, due to the way numbers who attend are recorded, people may be counted more than once if they attend more than one organisation. Also, each quarter people may be recounted.

PROJECT TEAM MEMBER: DEBBIE ROYLE

Case Study - Mariam was moved into one of Nottingham Arimathea Trust's self-contained flats to accommodate the arrival of his wife and daughter. The family were subsequently supported by Nottingham Arimathea Trust in updating their Universal Credit claim, Housing Benefit claim, registration to school, updating their housing application and registering with a GP. For the first couple of weeks, before benefits were in payment, the family were referred to a number of local organisations who provided warm food, food parcels and winter clothing for the family.



"Support and guidance from the consortium coordinator and regular meetings helped our project head in a good direction." (Belong)

"COI funding helped us to keep our community together... and the organisation to remain in business." (Cameroon Support Group)

"The sharing of information and experience during the regular quarterly consortium meetings prove to be very productive." (East African Education Centre)

"It is really good that we are still having our consortium meetings regularly and continue to learn from other consortium members. The period is very hard and our members can't access 100% of the service as usual as some of the members like face-to-face service." (Senior Support Group)

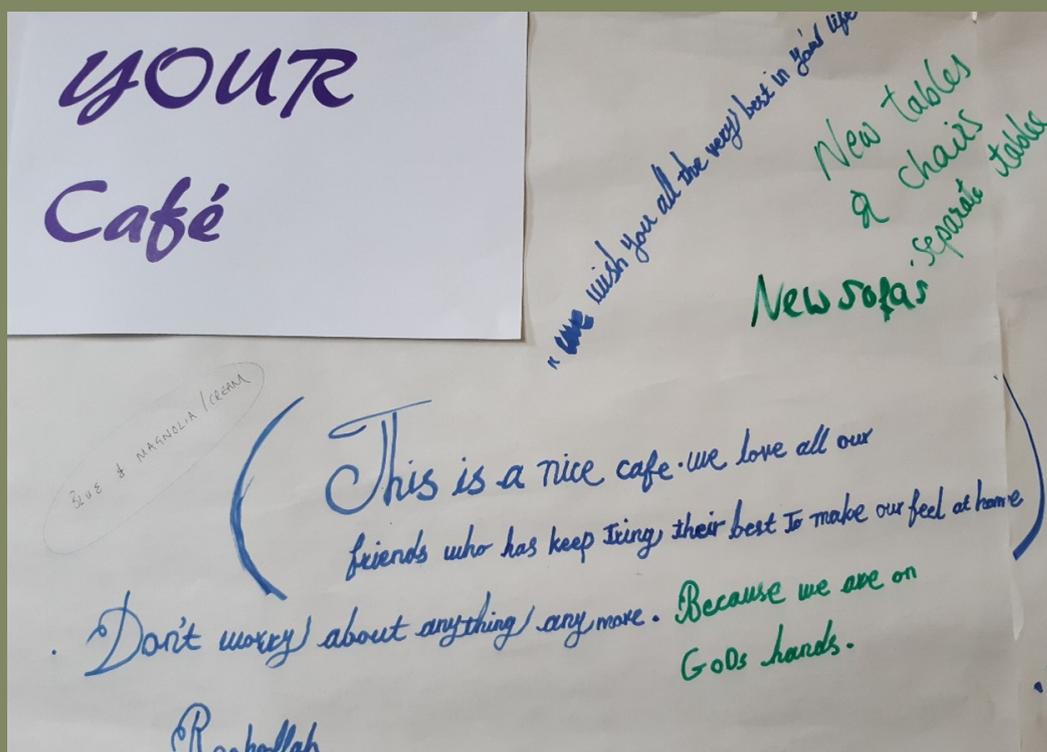
"We have continued to receive emails from the Col Coordinator that bring information from across Nottingham networks. These emails and updates were absolutely vital in COVID-19 times where people remain mainly working from distance or using technologies." (African Institute for Social Development)



COMMUNITY CAFÉ



In times when there is not a global pandemic dictating our social interactions, the NNRF Community Café is a welcoming space for our clients whilst they are waiting for their appointments or classes. Unfortunately, due to Covid, the Café had to close its doors at the end of March 2020 and has not re-opened since. This does not mean that it has been forgotten! Even though we did not have volunteers cooking lunch and serving coffee, our Café Working Group came up with a plan for redesigning everyone's favourite space at NNRF, and thanks to generous funding by the National Lottery Community Fund, the Café has been transformed. It is now patiently waiting for the first visitors after the pandemic is over...



Project Team Member: Barbara Spreiz



Our Café Working Group rolled up their sleeves and began working on transforming our Community Café. Based on our consultations with clients, design student Ellie put together a mood board and a design plan for the Café which included a safe space for mums, a children’s corner, a lounge area and a refreshed Café space with modern lighting features and a custom-made bench. The volunteers used the time the Café was not in use to repaint it in the colours our clients chose, and also secured some furniture for the space. After receiving Covid-relief funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, we hired Dr Mike Siebert to plan and make improvements around the building, including the Café. In addition to refurbishing the toilets and installing new light fixtures, they have built a covered seating area with a bike rack just outside the Café.

We also secured funding for a part-time Café Coordinator and are looking forward to further project developments under their watch later in 2021.

Many thanks to Nicole, Ella, Olivia, Beth, Valeria, Karam, Ros, John, Jane, Josh, Ellie, Stella, as well to Dr Mike and his team for beautifying our Café and making it ready for the post-pandemic reunion at N NRF!



EARLY ACTION

The Early Action Project empowers newly dispersed asylum seekers by providing information and advice. It provides them with the skills, confidence and resilience to navigate the system, with the aim of preventing and de-escalating the crises people face as early as possible in their asylum journey.

At NNRF we do this through the New Arrivals Clinic where newly dispersed asylum seekers are registered for English classes. Here, they are able to access health care services, obtain legal advice and assistance with other immediate needs. Via Refugee Action's Asylum Guides, we provide information, through interpreters, on the asylum system to help them understand the process

| | |
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| PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS: | Sonia Bilkhu, Aiza Javed |
| NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: | 40 |
| NUMBER OF FEMALE CLIENTS: | 20 |
| NUMBER OF MALE CLIENTS: | 41 |
| NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED: | 61 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES: | 252 |

61 clients felt more confident after being provided with information about the asylum system

9 clients were assisted to obtain specialist support from health care professionals, which would have been missed if it wasn't for our input through support and advocacy

7 clients were successfully relocated following hate crime incidents

“

Zainab was a newly dispersed asylum seeker who approached us for support when she was dispersed to Nottingham with her two children. She was a domestic abuse survivor and suffered from PTSD. At General Advice, Zainab was given information about her rights and entitlements as an asylum seeker and was supported by the New Arrivals Clinic. She was given information about NNRF and the services she could be referred to, and she was able to access immediate help to understand letters received from the Home Office which needed urgent attention. An appointment was booked for her with a local solicitor who agreed to look into her case. Zainab was referred to internal projects and received weekly phone calls from a New Arrivals Clinic volunteer, who made further referrals for her to different agencies for additional support such as befrienders, who provided food, clothes and toys packages for her and her children. This client said 'Thank you NNRF for all your hard work, you made me feel human again'.

Other Clients' Feedback:

'I feel prepared of what lies ahead now that I know more about the asylum system, thank you for the information and taking the time to call me every week, I feel like someone genuinely cares for my wellbeing'

'I was not able to access the internet due to the pandemic as I relied on using the Wi-Fi in shops. You took the time to print and send me information packs in my language. That effort will never be forgotten, thank you'.

”



GENERAL ADVICE

The General Advice service provides advice, information and assistance on a wide range of issues including destitution, housing, debt, welfare benefits, health, legal and asylum support. It is a volunteer-led service offered four times a week. The objective is to provide basic support and assistance to clients, resolve queries, signpost to external services, and refer to specialist in-house projects and partner agencies where appropriate. It is the main point of contact for new and existing clients and is currently operating as a remote phone-based service.

CASE STUDY:

Sami contacted General Advice in November 2020 as his wife and family were due to arrive in a few weeks under Family Reunion. Some initial housing advice was given to Sami by a General Adviser and a referral made to our Specialist Advice Team (SAT) so that he could be allocated a caseworker. Once Sami's family had arrived, a General Adviser called the family to register them on our system, and to make internal referrals to ITM for help with GP registration, and to the Children and Families project for help with accessing a nursery place; external referrals were also made to food and clothes banks to support Sami's family during this initial period. The SAT caseworker then continued to provide the ongoing support needed by the family.

"You are all amazing and doing a great job." Ahmed, GA client

"The Refugee Forum has been very helpful during the Covid pandemic." Khalid, GA client

"Thank you so much for your amazing support, I really appreciate the kindness you show us volunteers. I have learnt so much and will always be advocating for our clients, whatever role that I am in." Beth, GA volunteer

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS: | HERMIONE BERTHELS, SARAH WILSON |
| NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: | 40 |
| NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED: | 1120 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES: | 3398 |

● Between **1st April 2020** and **31st March 2021** there have been **3,618** referrals to General Advice; this includes both calls from clients to our Reception line and referrals from other sources, such as our website, our interpreting team and other NNRF projects

● The number of referrals to our new phone-based service has steadily picked up during the course of the year, with an average of **28 referrals per day** being received in **March 2021** - a similar number of daily referrals to that received prior to the pandemic

● Our New Arrivals Clinic for newly dispersed asylum seekers has helped **61 clients** during the last year

● In **January 2021** we also restarted our New Refugee Clinic for those recently granted refugee status, through which we have helped **27 clients**

GRASSROOTS

PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS: Grants Committee/Debbie Royle

An exciting new project! The closure of our community café due to Covid restrictions has denied our clients the opportunity to meet safely. NNRF has the rights to a large allotment garden that adjoins our building where the 'Grassroots' project is creating a green open space. Here, our clients will be able to meet, work together, share knowledge and skills, and feel valued as they create a green space for themselves and many others to enjoy.

Many of our clients have been deeply affected by the isolation experienced during lockdown; this project will provide the potential to enhance their mental health and address the need for socially distanced safe spaces. Work started at the beginning of 2021 with volunteers clearing the overgrown area.



An eco-friendly project! Existing paving stones will be recycled to provide walkways around raised beds and an existing pond will be reclaimed. Recycled and eco-friendly materials will be used wherever possible to create a paved area with outdoor seating and picnic tables, a wet weather shelter, bike storage, storage for garden tools, compost bins and waste bins.



Client participation: The Grassroots Community Garden will involve clients in planning the space and working on the various tasks that will be needed. Our clients have come to this country with a great deal of knowledge and skills which they will be able to use and share in developing this area.

Together we will gradually reclaim this overgrown and unusable area to develop a Community Garden where clients can grow vegetables and fruit, initially for the Community Café and in the future for themselves. There will also be a small nature reserve and a space with seating and shelter where our clients can meet in a socially distanced environment, as well as a safe outdoor space for children to play.

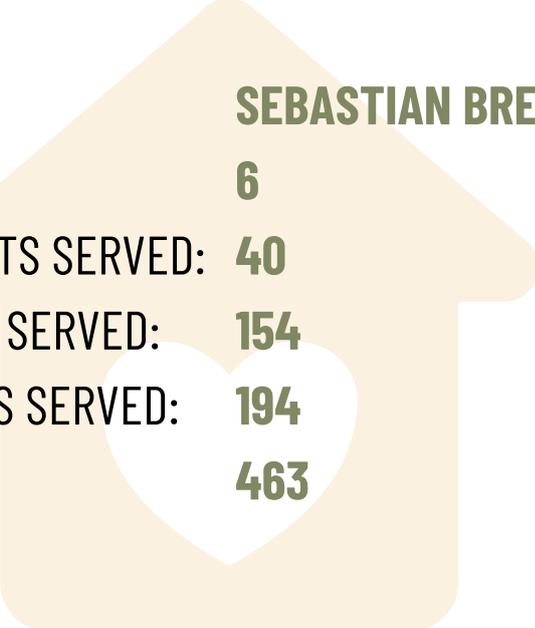
Funding: Successful applications to and donations from charitable trusts have raised over £8000, which will be used to fund the cost of tools and materials, hire of a digger and meet the on-going costs of developing the area in accordance with clients' wishes. We will be looking for additional funds as necessary.





INITIAL ACCOMMODATION

The purpose of the Initial Accommodation (IA) project is to support, advise and advocate on behalf of those asylum seekers currently housed in initial accommodation sites in the city. This is primarily delivered by way of a casework and advice service. We facilitate access to services, support and community networks for our clients, as well as ensuring that their basic needs are being met. In addition, we aim to coordinate the City's response to the IA hotels, through regular meetings with all partner organisations involved with supporting the residents.



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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS: | SEBASTIAN BRETNALL, SARAH WILSON |
| NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: | 6 |
| NUMBER OF FEMALE CLIENTS SERVED: | 40 |
| NUMBER OF MALE CLIENTS SERVED: | 154 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED: | 194 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES: | 463 |

110 referrals to the Host clothes bank, to arrange for a clothes parcel to be delivered to residents

Facilitated delivery of **250** Christmas Gift Boxes (one for each resident)

43 clients referred for ESOL courses at college

113 families referred for school/nursery registration

Maryam was one of the first people to arrive at an IA site in Nottingham, early in 2020. At that time it was not known how permanent the hotels would become, so she had prepared herself to leave 2-3 weeks later. When we started working with her in November 2020, she had heard nothing further about dispersal and she had also fallen pregnant. The effects of her extended time in the hotel began to show. She was struggling mentally and regularly drinking heavily. Over time we built and maintained a strong support network around her. She got involved in several organisations offering support, including a church group, as well as engaging with both the specialist midwifery team and alcohol support services. Due to this support network, she wanted to remain in Nottingham, but was desperate to leave the hotel before the baby was born. As a collective of her supporters, we advocated for her to be moved to accommodation suitable for a new-born child within Nottingham. Following several attempts to disperse her elsewhere (and some 'eleventh hour' phone calls to prevent these attempts), she was eventually provided with her own flat just minutes from the Refugee Forum. Three weeks later, Baby Isaac was born! Both Mother and Baby are now healthy, happy and grateful that they have the opportunity to remain a part of the community of Nottingham. Maryam - "Thank you for always being there to help and support, I appreciate it."



“
Sasha (client) - “I would like to thank you and everyone at the Forum for what you have done for my family.”
”

INTO THE MAINSTREAM HEALTH PROJECT

ITM aims to provide the necessary support and advocacy to ensure access to health services for all of NNRF's clients. The project's main activity is to ensure GP registration of new arrivals and we also ensure clients are linked to dentists, opticians, mental health services, maternity care and any other health services needed. In addition to ensuring that clients are able to exercise their rights to NHS services, we document the health needs of asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants, identify and address barriers to health services and use data collected to improve the health of the community.



| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| PROJECT TEAM MEMBER: | Daniel Robertson |
| NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: | 2 |
| NUMBER OF MALE CLIENTS: | 139 |
| NUMBER OF FEMALE CLIENTS: | 43 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED: | 182 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES: | 234 |



“Lidiya” is a young, asylum seeking woman from Eritrea. She was referred to the project in April 2020, at the start of the first national lockdown, when she was 6 months pregnant. We completed forms for her to register herself with a local GP practice and referred her to the Specialist Midwifery team. When she arrived at the GP practice, the door was locked. She was told, “We’re not registering asylum seekers at the moment” and asked to go to another GP further away from where she lived. The second practice also refused to register her saying that only online registrations would be accepted.

An ITM worker called the first practice and reminded them of their duties to register all patients. After discussion with a manager and sending forms and documentation by email, the client was registered at the practice.

Following this incident and other similar ones, the project coordinator liaised with partners in public health and the NHS to ensure that the practice’s registration policy was compliant with NHS policy.

Lidiya gave birth to a healthy baby in June 2020.

“Thank you so much for helping us. God bless you.” - **Female Iranian Asylum Seeker**

“The session was definitely worth attending and made us more aware of difficulties faced. It will make us look at how our own appointment system works and if there are any improvements that can be made.” - **Feedback from GP Practice Manager who attended ITM training.**

“We shed light on many points, especially those related to people who need help, and we also discussed the great role played by the health team at NNRF, as well as GPs.” - **Volunteer, Hakim Achour, reflecting on training he helped deliver to trainee GPs.**

“We ... wanted to acknowledge the work Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum does through the ‘Into the Mainstream’ project to support asylum seekers and refugees to access healthcare services.” - **Amanda Sullivan, Accountable Officer, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group**



- **189** individuals were registered with a GP
- **186** other outcomes were obtained for clients, including dental registration, obtaining HC2 certificates, making health appointments, making referrals to psychological services, signposting to health promotion services, making optician appointments and negotiating health charges and eligibility for secondary care
- **100%** of referred clients had appointments made within target timeframes
- Our report *Exploring the Health Experiences of Asylum Seekers and Refugees* has been viewed **262 times**, was cited as the first resource in a Clinical Commissioning Group review of interpreting services and received an official response from Nottingham University Hospitals



LANGUAGE JUSTICE

The Language Justice programme comes from the idea that the use of trained, professional and salaried interpreters and learning English serve the same purpose - giving clients the means to make decisions for themselves rather than having them made for them. We also strive to help refugees and vulnerable migrants into work they may struggle to obtain due to an unfamiliarity with UK employment practices.

Over the last year most of our services have switched to online. We've trained 40 new interpreters in 3 Zoom courses and have continued to interpret either online or over the phone and, when it's been permitted, have done so in person.

We've recruited 12 new teachers/teaching assistants and temporarily converted all of our English classes to online versions.

Project Team Members: Matt Bedford, Iqra Mehdi, Mai Ahmed, Kadria Fahmy, Thomas Tilahun, Nawzad Mouloud, Gita Salimi, Fawad Mousawi, Fairouz Shermado

Number of Volunteers: 35



This Year:

- 3 of our trained interpreters have gone on to employed caseworker roles either at NNRF or other organisations
- 4 newly trained interpreters have gone on to paid roles
- 12 small organisations that work with refugees and asylum seekers have benefited from our emergency funding to supply interpreters

90%

of NNRF clients use an
interpreter

32

Clients received
interpreter training

111

Clients referred to
ESOL



"I've learned a lot in the lockdown in the Zoom classes. With a child at home even if I had a college place I wouldn't be able to benefit like this. Thank you so much to the Refugee Forum. Please continue with these online classes".

- Khadija (ESOL student)

"I am improving my English so much with this class. The teacher helps me so much."

- Fatema (ESOL student)

"It was wonderful to take part in and pass the Interpreting online course with Voices in Refuge [now renamed Language Justice] and the Refugee Forum. It gave me new step to improve my communication skills and English Language with perfect, friendly and simple tutors. To encourage me to be a volunteer as an interpreter that I really enjoy to be a part in helping people to communicate. Thank you great team"

- Lubna (trained volunteer interpreter).

"Before lockdown, I was teaching one Pre-entry level class per week in the ESOL room at the Forum. After what must have been a very difficult lockdown for many of our clients, it has been good to be able to provide some ESOL lessons again, albeit online."

- ESOL Tutor

MONEY SORTED

Money Sorted is part of the Building Better Opportunities programme and is funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund.



Yordanos is a refugee from Eritrea. She was long-term unemployed, looking for work and with limited funds for a family reunion immigration application for her 3 daughters. She wanted help in budgeting for and saving for family reunion associated costs, as well as understanding income changes and changes in budget when her daughters arrived. She had only been engaging with the Job Centre staff via the Universal Credit journal and her solicitor. I was able to work with her on applying for grants for Family Reunion-associated costs to cover the cost of her 3 daughters' flights to the UK. We also worked on several budgets and savings plans during the course of the Family Reunion application to bring her daughters over from Ethiopia. I assisted her with various utilities, phone bill and rent queries as well as with looking for work. The client's financial capability goals have increased, mainly due to the fact that within the UK context they were very limited; even though she had lived here for a substantial period, she had not received any support in improving her financial capability. This assistance included learning about debt, credit, savings and budgeting. When her daughters arrived in the UK she was able to use this knowledge to understand how the changes in circumstances vis-à-vis benefits would take place and how to mitigate any potential financial issues arising from that. She is now looking for work as a cleaner, as she feels she can move on with her life, since her family have been here.

"My caseworker help me reunite me with my daughters after being separated for 3 years [due to being persecuted by the Eritrean Government]. He help me organise idea for money saving, money budget for family reunion application and help for grant for flight. Otherwise no money, no family reunion"

PROJECT TEAM MEMBER: Josh Aspden
NUMBER OF CLIENTS: 39
NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS: 17

To help unemployed or economically inactive people experiencing financial difficulties and worries living in D2N2. Money Sorted provides support and personally tailored interventions to build confidence and skills to improve financial well-being and support return to work, education, or training.

- **99%** of participants exit the project feeling more confident about their financial future
- On average, participants who exit the project increased their monthly disposable income from **£19.61 to £98.45**
- **97%** of participants who exit the project report improvements in their financial management skills



OPPORTUNITY AND CHANGE

Opportunity and Change is part of the Building Better Opportunities programme and is funded by the European Social Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund

Opportunity and Change is a support programme for people with multiple and complex needs. Participants on this programme engage with an individually tailored and holistic package of support, training and therapeutic interventions. By increasing their self-confidence and teaching them new skills, the ultimate aim is to help these clients become socially and economically included, through access to education, training and employment.

One of our Opportunity and Change participants received his refugee status in August 2020.

At the time of his referral to Opportunity and Change, he had been living in temporary accommodation based in a hotel for several months. He was feeling very lost and confused about what he was supposed to do next. He hadn't started claiming any benefits as he didn't know what he was entitled to. He was malnourished as he didn't have any money to buy food and didn't have access to any cooking facilities in the hotel. His mental and physical health were deteriorating, and his hair was falling out. He had no friends, family or support network. He then received a discontinuation letter which asked him to leave the hotel by mid-February, which would have resulted in him being street homeless.

His Opportunity and Change Navigator started making urgent housing referrals and on the day he was due to leave the hotel, was able to find him a temporary placement with HOST Nottingham. After two weeks, she found him a room in private accommodation, sharing with two other people. It is a quiet and secure house, where he is finally able to relax and start thinking of his next steps.

His Navigator made sure the participant was receiving all the benefits he was entitled to, and successfully applied to Sustrans to provide him with a bike so he can get round town easily. He is now able to cook in his own kitchen and has started to enjoy looking after his new garden. He is slowly starting to build up social connections and is waiting to start ESOL classes at college to improve his English.

"I was so lost, but now I can think of the future again"



PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS:

Valeria Aquino, Sarah Norris

NUMBER OF CLIENTS: 9

NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS: 8





PAMOJA WOMEN'S GROUP

Pamoja means 'Together' in Swahili. We empower women through weekly sessions which encourage creativity, English language practice, confidence-building and friendship. Pamoja women's group meets every Friday to make friends, practise English, skill-share and raise aspirations and esteem through activities, for example Zumba, dance, music, art, pottery, yoga, confidence-boosting and stress-reduction, trips to the coast and London, guided walks around Nottingham - all chosen by the women themselves.

Since the Covid restrictions, all our services are currently remote. To stay connected, a WhatsApp Chat Group meets weekly, and we partnered with artist Meera Osbourne at Nottingham Contemporary to run virtual creative activities and relaxation techniques. These were sent in pre-made videos and voice clips, translated into Farsi and Arabic and weekly pamphlets in English, Arabic and Farsi with creative activities, which were sent to the women's homes. Women who had previously not been engaging with the group due to living far away or having childcare commitments could actually access the group's activities again.

PROJECT TEAM MEMBER: Hannah Ziolek

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: 4

NUMBER OF CLIENTS: 98

NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS: 10

Case Study:

One member of our group was facing homelessness, complicated by an irregular immigration status, and with lockdown measures and services closing, she felt hopeless and alone. Her mental health spiralled downwards and she said she did not know where to turn. Not only did our staff member assist this woman with the practicalities to ensure she was safe, but the group itself also provided friendship and support through fun online activities to relieve stress.

- **98** registered members
- Pre-Covid **20-25** women attending weekly
- **24** women registered for Sewing classes, First Aid Training, Food Hygiene as requested by the women themselves (these had to be cancelled due to lockdown)

"Today's session was impressive and educative. I can now cut down sugar in my cereals. Thanks so much Ginny and Hannah for the session. We want more sessions in the nearest future." Sedia

"Thank you, you made my day such a lovely day - it's my new favourite place" Oretha

"Thanks a lot for everything, we all really enjoyed today" Salma

"I am full of confidence since joining this group." Rabia



SPECIALIST ADVICE TEAM

The Specialist Advice Team provides support, advice and advocacy through intensive and complex casework support on issues such as:

- social care support issues for families
 - advocating and challenging on behalf of clients (regardless of their status) who are physically disabled to access social care support
 - racial harassment support and reporting hate crime
 - domestic abuse support
 - asylum support and accommodation issues
 - further submission requests and appeals appealing penalty charge notice
 - new refugee resettlement support
 - supporting clients through the family reunion processes
 - supporting families with no recourse to public funds
 - advice and challenging welfare rights and benefits issues
 - tenancy evictions
 - signposting trafficked survivors
 - LGBTQI+
 - supporting clients who wish to pursue higher education/retrain in their chosen careers
-
- After receiving positive leave to remain, **20** clients resettled back in Nottingham following dispersal to different cities, to be closer to their local community and friends
 - Following family reunion, **16** clients were survivors of domestic abuse and were assisted in obtaining the right support and help
 - **58** clients were able to maximise their income though applying for the correct benefits following positive leave to remain decisions



A client was referred to NNRF by the British Red Cross at a very difficult time in his life. He was diagnosed with terminal cancer and given limited leave to remain on human rights grounds so that he could get treatment for his illness. He also spoke no English whatsoever. Having terminal cancer, and undergoing chemotherapy during the Covid pandemic meant he was clinically extremely vulnerable and had to shield. This was whilst living in shared NASS accommodation. His specialist advice caseworker helped him book all his transport to his hospital appointments. Through contacting the Home Office, we managed to get him a mobile biometrics appointment to get his biometric residence permit as he had been previously asked to travel to Sheffield for this during lockdown. Once he had his permit, we helped him open a bank account, as well as apply for benefits. There were long delays with his benefit payments due to the Job Centre refusing to accept he was terminally ill. This resulted in us consulting Bhatia Best solicitors, who helped to challenge the Job Centre successfully. Once he received his discontinuation letter, he was then referred to Broxtowe Housing Solutions who, due to advocacy from the specialist advice team, accommodated him in an independent living complex. Due to the tight time scale for moving, the National Emergencies Trust (NET) Covid fund helped the client buy all the furniture he needed to set up a home. He is now living there comfortably whilst managing his illness.

'I have learnt so much about the client group in general, about the whole immigration process. I can transfer this new knowledge to any future role I undertake within social work. The clients were also great to work with, I loved being able to empower people to take steps towards reaching their outcomes.' Louise - Social work student

'The various cases I had during my time on placement helped me to pay attention to detail and develop my skills of working well under pressure. I was pleased I had the opportunity to work with people from all sorts of backgrounds and cultures and share their stories. It has been a memorable experience that will stay with me throughout life.'
Tobi - Social work student.



| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS: | Sonia Bilkhu, Fiona Broome, Nicole Shametiova, Aiza Javed, Charlie Stubbings |
| NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: | 3 |
| NUMBER OF CLIENTS: | 514 |
| NUMBER OF NEW CASES: | 696 |



VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering at the Refugee Forum is an opportunity to make a positive impact for asylum seekers and refugees in Nottingham. That is true for both volunteers from the host community, showing their welcome and support to those seeking safety in our city, as well as for asylum seekers and refugees themselves, who volunteer to gain skills and experience, increase their social networks, and improve their confidence.

Especially during the Covid crisis, our brave volunteers have overcome the challenges of remote volunteering and really helped us redefine the methods and goals of volunteering. Even though Covid kept us physically apart, we have become more connected, and everyone really gave their all to keep the Refugee Forum up and running during the pandemic.



“

“Initially, I couldn’t volunteer with NNRF when they moved online due to other reasons. When I could return, the technology was a put off and it was intimidating as I couldn’t figure out how the volunteering would work remotely and I’d lost my confidence. But they couldn’t have set up a better system. I am very well supported. And now when I have to sit and wait I can knit.”

“The staff have done a wonderful job of setting up a remote advice service and I am very proud to have been part of it. Great to learn new skills e.g. taking part in three way telephone conversations with a client and an interpreter. Doing things I wouldn’t have imagined I’d ever do this time last year.”

“Despite the inevitable differences, and sometimes difficulties of working remotely I have massively appreciated the chance to volunteer during lockdown. It would have been easy, I feel, for the organisation to think it couldn’t even attempt to replicate what it would ‘normally’ do without face to face contact. However, I have been very impressed by the ‘can do’ attitude of everyone I’ve had contact with.”

”

Some of the changes implemented due to Covid would not have been possible without the creativity and resilience of our amazing volunteers:

- Reception became fully remote: 15 volunteers in teams of 3 receive calls to our advice line, gather/record information about clients and their issues, then refer cases to the General Advice team
- A new role of General Advice Case Administrator was designed to ensure consistent recording of referrals on our case management system and assist supervising staff with planning, problem solving and case allocation. This helped the General Advice team respond to clients faster and offered step-by-step directions to advice volunteers
- In order to continue providing ESOL classes remotely, volunteers designed new telephone and online English level assessments, offered “ZOOM tutorials” for clients and have been delivering English classes online, utilising special features on ZOOM

PROJECT TEAM MEMBER: **BARBARA SPREIZ**





VULNERABLE PERSONS RESETTLEMENT SCHEME

The Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) was launched by the UK government in 2014 to resettle several hundred Syrians most at risk from the conflict. In 2015, the VPRS expanded to resettle 20,000 of the most vulnerable individuals and families affected by the Syrian conflict in five years, not only those with Syrian nationality. These individuals and families have been identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), based on criteria including serious medical conditions, survivors of torture and violence, and women and children at risk. The VPRS was due to end in 2020, however the Covid pandemic meant that the VPRS ended in March 2021 due to the ban on international travel last year.

The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF) has worked in partnership with Nottingham City and County Councils since the expansion of the VPRS in 2015, to provide specialist support to newly arrived refugee families. The VPRS team at the NNRF work with families from their arrival in the UK for a period of five years. When they first arrive, families receive intensive support from caseworkers, ensuring that they have access to benefits, healthcare, housing and education. As they continue to settle into the community, we support their integration through learning English, developing their skills to support employability and nurturing their individual goals and passions. The overall aim is to empower families to become independent and integrate into the UK.

Our VPRS clients are predominantly Syrian, but we also support clients from Iraq, Kurdistan, Somalia and Sudan.

One family that the team intensively supports consists of an elderly mother with mobility and health issues, and her three adult children who are all blind, with one having extreme learning difficulties. The family's caseworker has worked closely, with both social services and the family, for the son to move into a care home to have specialist help for his needs. The mother was worried about this decision at first and it was difficult to find somewhere suitable for the son that was not too far from the family home. A place was found and the son has adapted well and has started to understand some English. This has allowed the mother to better support her other two blind adult children. With the caseworker's support, the family communicate with their son in the care home, and also their son in Lebanon, over video calls while Covid restrictions are in place.

The daughter sees a volunteer befriender twice a week. Her English is improving and we hope she will be ready soon to learn how to use a white stick to help with her independence. The other son is more reserved and we have provided a bus pass to another VPRS client who is helping him with his confidence and we have started to see some improvements. When restrictions are lifted, the caseworker will also liaise with other organisations to support the family in other ways. We have also provided a special braille typewriter for the family with the aim to help with their English, to support them to become more self-sufficient despite the difficulties they face.

PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS: Siobhan Gosrani, Caitlin Sorrell, Julie Whitehead, Adel Hamad, Richard Martin, Sherene Bingham, Jane Oakley, Sophie Scott

NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: 2

NUMBER OF CLIENTS: 04/20 – 12/20: 344 people, 79 families. 01/21 – 03/21: 272 people, 64 families
The drop in client numbers is due to 15 families leaving the VPRS after five years.

NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS: 10 people (2 families), transfers to Nottingham between July - November 2020



- We are currently providing intensive casework to 44 families. The remaining 25 families receive drop-in support from the VPRS Advice Worker, with 5 transitioning from casework to drop-in support since January 2021
- In December 2020, Cohort 1 (15 families, 73 individuals) completed their five years on the VPRS and all families have successfully received their Indefinite Leave to Remain status
- Despite the difficult year we have had, 16 clients have secured paid employment. This number has trebled since last year
- 16 clients attended a bespoke information session the VPRS team organised with the NHS to encourage the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine
- We welcomed 2 families (10 individuals) who transferred to the Nottingham VPRS from elsewhere in the UK, to access better healthcare and social connections

YOUTH PROJECT

The Youth Project supports young asylum seekers aged 13-21. Our aim, by running a weekly youth club and other activities, is to help young people grow friendships and support networks, gain confidence with English and develop a fulfilled life in the U.K. This helps young people navigate a complicated asylum system, which often has a negative impact on their emotional well-being.

Lockdown has been tremendously difficult for young asylum seekers and refugees. For new arrivals, not being able to meet young people their age and being stuck indoors has added to the trauma many have experienced on their journey to the UK. Offering online support, friendship and community through virtual youth club and homework support has been a huge help. Often with months between arriving and starting college, online zoom sessions were the only way for newly-arrived young people to meet friends and were a lifeline and a significant help to their mental health and general well-being.

Young people who have been here a few years are often desperate to “get on” and lockdowns have been a huge frustration. Weekly drop-in homework sessions provided one-to-one time with young people, offering the kind of parental academic support many unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees lack. The maths classes, in particular, became really popular, with the help of a retired maths teacher attending each week to lead workshops and offer support.

These groups also help us to keep in touch with young people and, importantly, ensure they understand changes in regulations.



PROJECT TEAM MEMBER: Alex Rainbow
NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS: 9
NUMBER OF CLIENTS: 60
NUMBER OF NEW CLIENTS: 20



10
 Young people supported
 with 1 to 1 academic
 support

30
 Young people had
 resources delivered

60
 Online Maths and English
 workshops

Hakim came to the UK in December 2020 and was put into foster care. His foster carer appealed to the youth club for support as Hakim was struggling on his own and, as he arrived during lockdown, he was unable to leave the house and meet friends. He was also waiting for a college placement. Hakim did not begin college until March 2021 and during those three months, the online youth clubs, and homework support were the only contact he had with any other young people. It was amazing to see the huge relief he experienced when speaking to a young person in his native language for the first time in months, and great to facilitate this young man meeting his first friends in the UK. Over the last few months, his English has improved and, where he would be very shy and rarely ask questions, he now speaks frequently in sessions, even laughing and smiling, where before he would often appear downcast.

"I can't imagine how lonely it has been for Hakim and I am so grateful we have been able to see him a few times a week and give him something to look forward to, he has started at college now but continues to attend the zoom classes and it will be great to meet him in person when restrictions allow". Alex Rainbow – Youth Worker

'Thanks so much for the books you delivered in lockdown...it's amazing for me' Samuel

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

2020/21 Membership Report

Our members comprise our volunteers, staff and donors who make regular contributions to NNRF either through our website or by setting up a monthly standing order with our bank. Membership entitles someone to attend the AGM, vote for trustees and to receive a monthly newsletter. In addition donors and volunteers are eligible to stand for Board positions. Without all 3 of these groups NNRF would not be able to function.

During the year there were 144 volunteers, with 130 active at 31st March. The contribution of the volunteers through the pandemic is summarised in the volunteering section of this report.

At 31 March 2021 we employed 44 staff. Around a quarter of these have joined in the last 12 months, some on short-term contracts to match the funding stream that supports their role. Unfortunately our Children and Families Project Manager and our Fundraising Manager left us in February to pursue opportunities elsewhere. Both made a massive contribution in ensuring we could fund and continue to perform our core services during the pandemic. We will be replacing our Children and Families Project Manager and will keep the Fundraising position under review. It was clearly a huge challenge to continue to perform our services during the last year and nothing would have been achieved without everyone pulling together to find solutions to unique problems.

In previous years NNRF raised around £30k of revenue from fundraising events, most notably the Come and Sing Event with John Rutter which accounted for two thirds of this revenue. Because of Covid restrictions it was not possible to organise fundraising events so we were more reliant than ever on donations from individuals. We raised just under £100k of donations in 2020/21 which was only £5k less than we achieved from fundraising and donations in 2019/20. A number of our regular funders also made one-off contributions in addition to their normal monthly donation. 41 people signed up for a new monthly donation in 2020/21 on our website which takes our regular funding donor membership up to 142 people.

We are currently reviewing both the membership criteria and the benefits offered to see if the existing criteria are still appropriate. We'd like to thank everyone who contributed financially to NNRF last year as without these funds we would not be able to offer the services we do and in an increasingly tough funding market we hope everyone continues to support us in 2021/22 and beyond.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

African Institute for Social Development

Begin

Belong

Bhatia Best Solicitors

Bikeworks

British Red Cross

Cameroon Support Group

East African Education Centre

Emmanuel House

Enable

FareShare Nottingham

Framework

Hallam

Hope into Action

HOST Nottingham

Mojatu Foundation

Newark and Sherwood District Council

Nottingham Arimathea Trust

Nottingham City Council

Nottingham City of Sanctuary

Nottingham Community and Voluntary Services

Nottingham Department for Work and Pensions

Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team (NEST)

Nottingham Night Stop

Nottingham Refugee Week

Nottingham Trent University

Nottingham YMCA

Nottinghamshire County Council

OISC

Refugee Roots

School of Artisan Food

Senior Support Group

St. Ann's Advice Centre

The Arches

The Furniture Project

TTK Confectionery



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



**Nottingham
Nightstop**



Hallam



NEST (Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team)

NEST is Nottingham City's bespoke full-time educational provision for asylum-seeking and refugee young people aged 15-19 years; in particular, we support unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people who are known to be especially vulnerable to becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Since opening in September 2018, we have liaised closely with Alex Rainbow in NNRF's Youth Project; we are often working with the same cohort of young people and several NEST students have benefitted from attendance at the Tuesday Youth Club. Alex keeps us informed of planned activities and opportunities and has visited NEST to raise the profile of this work with our students.

Similarly, we worked in partnership with the Children and Families Coordinator to ensure the best support and information sharing for some of the families she knew well with children at NEST.

We are delighted to have recently welcomed both Siobhan and Jane from the VPRS team onto our Advisory Group; this group is made up of key stakeholders and experts in a range of fields (legal, academic research, social care, mental health, accommodation, Looked After Children) and NNRF will now have the opportunity to contribute to the development and shaping of our service as well as championing this local initiative across their networks.

We communicate regularly with other VPRS colleagues who support some of our students' families: some of the issues we have raised are attendance concerns, IT equipment for remote learning, safeguarding, and careers and transition advice.

We receive prospective student referrals directly from staff and volunteers in NNRF's General Advice service and are able to signpost and advise on alternative referral routes for those who do not meet the NEST admissions criteria. NNRF is one of NEST's most important partners.



Nottingham Nightstop



Nottingham Nightstop is run by the charity Open Homes Nottingham. We provide emergency accommodation for homeless 16-25 year olds in the homes of volunteer hosts on a night-by-night basis. We accept referrals from a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies, including NNRF, and respond to the need on the day.

Guests are given their own room for the night, meals, access to washing facilities and a listening ear.

We also have volunteer drivers who collect the young person from the referral agency and take them to their placement.

When an asylum seeker has been given leave to remain there is often insufficient time for them to claim benefits and find housing before they need to leave their NASS accommodation and many of the young people referred to us from NNRF are in this situation.

We have also hosted young people waiting for Voluntary Return.

Whilst a young person is on Nightstop, NNRF looks at longer term housing options, which may be through Arimathea Trust, HOST Nottingham or private rented accommodation. We have thankfully been able to continue operating throughout the pandemic, although with reduced hosts, and were able to offer 24 hour placements over the initial lockdown when many places were closed.

The School of Artisan Food

As an award-winning charity, The School of Artisan Food is dedicated to enthusing and helping people from all walks of life to learn about healthy, sustainable and delicious food.

It works with community groups, social enterprises and voluntary organisations to make artisan food more widely accessible. Since it was founded in 2009, it has offered bursaries and subsidies for its diploma students, providing support to people who would otherwise not be able to afford the training.

By working closely with organisations like NNRF, the School is able to give people the opportunity to learn new skills and launch meaningful careers.

Simon Pittman, Director of Sales and Marketing at the School, said: "Over the years we have seen many of our students go on to great success as they follow their passion to work in the artisan food sector. Our aim is to change lives for the better, encouraging confidence and raising aspirations and it's great to hear when our students do well."

"During the last year, we have had some inspirational students. These include Halima, who this spring completed her diploma and plans to go on to use her skills to help others."



THE SCHOOL OF
ARTISAN FOOD

The School of Artisan Food, Lower Motor Yard, Welbeck, Nottinghamshire S80 3LR

www.schoolofartisanfood.org



From a teacher to a baker

My name is Halima and I have just finished an advanced baking diplomat course at the School of Artisan Food.

Before the diplomat course I worked as a volunteer trilingual interpreter at the Refugee Forum, trying to restart my life after being a French language teacher back in my country Algeria. I had to leave my country and I left all that I had achieved with twelve years work experience.

Last year I won a scholarship at the School of Artisan Food for a six months advanced diplomat. We were eighteen students with different backgrounds and different age groups, sharing our stories and recipes. We were all passionate about artisan food. And we have been taught by the best tutors in such a professional way, an energetic and a positive atmosphere.

I lived in a lodge within the rural Welbeck estate – just two minutes away from the School.

I have enjoyed learning about artisan bread-making and the science behind it, I had a passion for baking but now I have also the skills to start my new career.

Before I was a bit lost, I did not know what I want to do, but now the vision is so clear to me, I visualise myself as a baker enjoying making healthy artisan bread.



STAFF MEMBERS

The Board of Trustees would like to express their gratitude to all staff who worked at NNRF during April 2020 – March 2021 (and those who have joined us since) for their incredible commitment and hard work, without whose contributions and support the Refugee Forum would be unable to provide vital services to those in need of them.

We would like to acknowledge here the essential work of our operational staff, who are not named in the Project Reports but who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the Forum is running smoothly: John Gordon and Zanele Ndhlovu in finance, Zoe Kasujja and Nosheen Ahmed in administration, and Bernie O'Rourke and Sally White in cleaning.

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Adel Hamad | Fawad Mousawi | Kadria Fahmy | Sarah Norris |
| Aiza Javed | Fiona Broome | Louise Shaw | Sarah Wilson |
| Alex Rainbow | Gemma Pillay | Mai Ahmed | Sebastian Bretnall |
| Barbara Spreiz | Gita Salimi | Matt Atkins | Sherene Bingham |
| Bernie O'Rourke | Hannah Ziolek | Matt Bedford | Siobhan Gosrani |
| Caitlin Sorrell | Hermione Berthels | Nawzad Mouloud | Sonia Bilkhu |
| Charlie Stubbings | Iqra Mehdi | Nicole Shametiova | Sophie Scott |
| Dan Robertson | Ivan Mvuyekure | Nosheen Ahmed | Teressa O'Hagan |
| Debbie Royle | Jane Oakley | Olivia Wood | Thomas Tilahun |
| Emily Phillips | John Gordon | Oluwatobi Olopade | Valeria Aquino |
| Fairouz Shermado | Josh Aspden | Richard Martin | Zanele Ndhlovu |
| | Julie Whitehead | Sally White | Zoe Kasujja |



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

| NAMES | ROLES | DATES |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Jane Daffe | Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibility, Chair of Policy Working Group, Trustee representative on DGPR Working Group | Resigned November 2020 |
| Patsy Brand | Grants Committee Member | Resigned November 2020 |
| Richard Chamberlain | Chair of Health and Safety Committee | Resigned November 2020 |
| Jennie Fleming | Chair of Board of Trustees; Finance Committee member; HR Committee member | Elected as joint Vice Chair at AGM 29 November 2018 Elected as Chair at AGM 27 November 2019 |
| Stella Nickolay | Vice Chair of Board of Trustees; Chair of Grants Committee; HR Committee member | Elected at AGM 29 November 2018 |
| David Sadler | Treasurer; Chair of Finance Committee | Elected at AGM 27 November 2019 |
| Dave Hewitt | Chair of Fundraising Committee | Elected at AGM 29 November 2018 |
| Edith Iheama | Chair of Health and Safety Committee | Elected at AGM 26 November 2020 |
| Amdani Juma | | Re-elected at AGM 26 November 2020 |
| Councillor AJ Matsiko | | Co-opted 9 March 2020 |
| Caroline Mombeyarara | Member of Finance Committee | Elected at AGM 26 November 2020 |
| Allan Njanji | | Elected at AGM 27 November 2019 |
| Helen O'Nions | Grants Committee member | Elected at AGM 27 November 2019 |
| Elizabeth Pritchett | Grants Committee member | Elected at AGM 27 November 2019 |
| Peter Strauss | Safeguarding Trustee; Chair of Safeguarding Committee | Elected at AGM 27 November 2019 |
| Roger Tanner | Chair of Human Resources (HR) Committee | Elected at AGM 29 November 2018 |
| Darren York | | Elected at AGM 26 November 2020 |

The work of NNRF is overseen by the **Board of Trustees** whose role is to supervise the running of the organisation, set and review strategic direction, ensure we follow our legal obligations and pursue a sound and stable financial policy. Currently there are 14 members of the Board.

All trustees are volunteers and come from a variety of backgrounds, so each has different areas of knowledge and skills, for example leadership, project management, strategy development, safeguarding, impact evaluation, personnel management, industrial relations, finance, understanding of issues facing asylum seekers and refugees, organisational skills, bid writing and grant applications. The Board undertakes a Skills Audit and Self-Assessment of Performance annually to ensure we are working to the best of our ability and identify any gaps or issues that need addressing.

We are committed to increasing the numbers of clients, or others who have lived experience, and the number of women among the trustees.

The full Board meets every month and alternates between business meetings - discussing the work of our various projects, reviewing reports etc. - and strategic meetings, discussing and deciding issues related to the future work of NNRF, or having training on issues such as safeguarding and financial resilience.

There are 6 sub-committees whose roles are to support the different aspects of NNRF's work. The sub-committees meet monthly and each produces a report to the monthly trustees' meetings for information or discussion. Each sub-committee has a mixture of trustees, volunteers and staff and has clearly defined roles and responsibilities, see below:

- **Health and Safety's** purpose is to ensure that NNRF abides by H&S legislation and good practice and provides a safe environment for staff and all who visit the centre
- **Safeguarding's** remit is to ensure the organisation creates and maintains a safe environment for children and adults and actively promotes their well-being in our service delivery
- **Fundraising** has the responsibility of raising unrestricted funds, which are not tied to a particular project and can, therefore, be spent wherever the organisation desires.
- **Grants'** role is to search for, investigate the suitability of, and apply for funding to allow our existing projects to continue along with any new projects or priorities that may be proposed
- **Human Resources** ensures the organisation operates within employment law and follows best practice for the benefit of all the Forum's employees and the work of the organisation
- **Finance** deals with matters such as income, expenditure, budgeting and budget forecasting to ensure the Board is kept fully informed of our financial position and, in particular, is aware of any potential shortfalls, in order to look at alternatives

Throughout the year there are also working groups set up to consider specific issues and report back to the full Board, e.g. reviewing policies, or governance issues.

NNRF BOARD RISK STATEMENT

The Board recognises its responsibility to identify, assess and manage any risks linked to the achievement of NNRF's objectives. The Board and its sub-committees have developed a register of the risks that could face the work and safe operation of NNRF.

This register:

- Identifies risks
- Assesses risks in terms of their likelihood and impact
- Sets out actions to be taken to reduce the risk where possible

The **Risk Register** covers the range of risks that the organisation might affect, including financial, governance, operational, external, regulation and reputational risks.

Sub-committees are responsible for some sections of the risk register and consider risk at each sub-committee meeting. The risk register is formally reviewed at the full Board meeting twice a year in June and December. It is updated as necessary with regard to the likelihood of the risk, its possible impact and mitigating actions. However, risk management is on-going and sub-committees can also bring changes to the risk register to any Board meeting if necessary.

The main risks faced by the organisation at present are considered to be staff wellbeing, financial security and the Nationality and Borders Bill.

Conflicts of Interest

New trustees are asked to set out their interests in accordance with Charity Commission guidance (Conflicts of interest: a guide for charity trustees (CC29)) by completing a declaration of interests form. All trustees are required to recomplete this form on an annual basis. Trustees are also asked, at each meeting of the board of trustees, to declare any new interests.

If you are interested in joining the Board, please contact chair@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk



FINANCIAL REVIEW

The year to 31 March 2021 was very challenging from a financial and operational perspective as we coped with the unique challenges of Covid. All our services, which are normally performed face to face, were provided remotely. Fortunately most of our funders continued their financial support and we successfully gained grants of circa £250k to cope with the challenge. This funding was balanced with an equivalent cost so it did not impact on our current year surplus, but it did mean we could provide extra support to our most vulnerable clients and enabled us to refurbish our head office to make it Covid-compliant.

In the year to 31 March 2021 we made a surplus of £48k. Our unrestricted reserves grew by £12k to £222k, which are sufficient to meet NNRF's reserves policy and just below the Charity Commission guideline of three months of operating costs. The biggest impacts on our ability to raise unrestricted income were that we had to cancel a number of fundraising events because of Covid, and the demand from third parties for interpreters dropped by £20k. It is unlikely that these funding streams will return to normal until 2022/23.

Turnover from Charitable Activities increased by £98k in 2020/21 to £935k as a result of the Covid grants. Most of our funders continued to support us through the pandemic, but the 6 year support for our General Advice team from Henry Smith of £40k per annum finished in June. Nottingham City Council did agree for £20k funding to be transferred from the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) to our General Advice project to ensure General Advice staff costs were still covered, but we are still to replace the rest of the funding.

£560k of our charitable activity turnover came from contracts managed on behalf of Nottingham City Council. This turnover dropped by 5%, primarily because no new refugees arrived under the VPRS contract. The contract is weighted so that the amount we receive per refugee peaks in the first year of support, then declines each year until support finishes once the refugee has been in the UK for 5 years. We are forecasting diminishing revenue over the next couple of years because of the Covid travel restrictions, but there is £205k of deferred revenue that can be used to smooth these income variations.

Other income declined by £8k primarily because of Covid factors, although targeted campaigns based around the challenges of Covid raised nearly £30k, offsetting the revenue lost from not being able to organise specific fund raising events.

Staff costs increased by £56k as new staff were taken on to manage the Covid contracts. Most new staff were recruited on short-term contracts, but demands on the Forum continues to grow, so a number of these staff have secured longer term contracts with NNRF. £50k was spent on refurbishing our offices to make them Covid-compliant and to improve the work environment. These costs were fully funded by a grant from The National Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund.

The Forum's bank balance remains healthy at £689k, of which £353k relates to deferred revenue. £205k of the deferred revenue relates to the timing of revenue receipts under the VPRS. The deferred revenue will be released over the next two years to balance the budget.

For the year 2021/22, we are forecasting a balanced budget. This is reliant upon us achieving replacement or funding extensions for a number of our core projects. We have secured new finance from Children In Need for our Children & Family and Youth projects and £45k additional Covid Support for our Anti-Destitution and General Advice projects from the National Lottery Community Fund. We were also delighted to receive new funding from Evan Cornish and Garfield Weston for destitute legal claims work and core costs. We continue to be the preferred supplier of the VPRS project, now renamed United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) and to run COI, Specialist Advice, ESOL and Into The Mainstream services for Nottingham City Council. We have also recently agreed to support a number of families under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2020-21

| | Unrestricted Funds | Restricted Funds | Total 2021 | Total 2020 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Income from: | | | | |
| Donations & Legacies | 64,243 | 5,516 | 69,759 | 72,035 |
| Charitable Activities | 187,152 | 748,378 | 935,530 | 837,649 |
| Other Trading Activities | 43,521 | - | 43,521 | 51,997 |
| Investments | 166 | - | 166 | 486 |
| Total Income: | 295,082 | 753,894 | 1,048,976 | 962,167 |
| Expenditure on : | | | | |
| Charitable Activities | 276,360 | 718,094 | 994,454 | 863,022 |
| Other Trading Activities | 4,088 | - | 4,088 | 9,380 |
| Total Expenditure: | 280,448 | 718,094 | 998,542 | 872,402 |
| Net income/(expenditure) | 14,634 | 35,800 | 50,434 | 89,765 |
| Transfers between funds | (130) | 130 | - | - |
| Tax on activities | (2,015) | - | (2,015) | (1,457) |
| Net Movement in Funds | 12,489 | 35,930 | 48,419 | 88,308 |
| Fund balances at 1 April 2020 | 209,656 | 81,575 | 291,231 | 202,923 |
| Fund balances at 31 March 2021 | 222,145 | 117,505 | 339,650 | 291,231 |

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

| | | 2021 | | 2020 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Fixed Assets | | | | |
| Tangible Assets | | 1,483 | | 3,618 |
| Current Assets | | | | |
| Debtors | 38,911 | | 67,067 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 689,351 | | 506,106 | |
| | <u>728,262</u> | | <u>573,173</u> | |
| Creditors and deferred income | (390,095) | | (285,560) | |
| Net current assets | | 338,167 | | 287,613 |
| Total assets less current liabilities | | 339,650 | | 291,231 |
| Income Funds | | | | |
| Restricted Funds | | 117,505 | | 81,575 |
| Unrestricted Funds | | 222,145 | | 209,656 |
| Total Consolidated Funds | | 339,650 | | 291,231 |

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS 2020-21

| | | 2021 | | 2020 |
|---|---------|----------------|---------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Cash flows from operating activities | | | | |
| Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations | 185,094 | | 179,732 | |
| Income taxes paid | (2,015) | | (1,457) | |
| Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities | | 183,079 | | 178,275 |
| Investing Activities | | | | |
| Purchase of tangible assets | - | | (514) | |
| Interest Received | 166 | | 486 | |
| Net cash generated from/(used) in investing activities | | 166 | | (28) |
| Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents | | 183,245 | | 178,247 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year | | 506,106 | | 327,859 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of year | | 689,351 | | 506,106 |

FUNDRAISING REPORT

Covid severely affected our fundraising activities as it prevented us putting on or attending fundraising events that the public would be invited to and, conversely, prevented the public from putting on their own events. However, thanks to the Internet, it didn't put a stop to all fundraising.

It was the Internet that we turned to in early April with the Covid Recovery Appeal, which made **£20,000** and ending in December with the Christmas BigGive total of **£12,453**.

We had been chosen as Hallam Internet's Charity of the Year for 2020, which has provided not-inconsiderable sums to their chosen charities in previous years, but their fundraising activities were scuppered as much as ours. However, the good news is we are **Hallam's Charity of the Year for 2021**.

Now the nice bit; the "THANK YOUS"

Here are a few examples of what people did to raise money for us:

- Sponsored running
- A virtual yoga session in honour of International Women's Day
- Donated a percentage of jewellery sales
- Sent in cheques or made BACS donations.

To all of those and everyone else who donated money,

Thank you; we love you all.

Also to:

Olivia, who was our Fundraising Manager for just over a year but in that time did a wonderful job. We miss her;

Nicole, Josh, Sonia, Elisa, who put time into the committee during the year but had to leave to concentrate on other things;

And last but not least; thank you to our continuing staff and volunteer members.



FUNDERS

J N Derbyshire Trust

European Social Fund

The National Lottery Community Fund

Southall Trust

Barrow Cadbury Trust

National Lottery Covid Response Fund

G S K Fund

Souter Charitable Trust

St. Ann's Advice Centre

Martin Lewis Corona Fund

Greene Tweed Trust

Mbili Charitable Trust

BBC Children in Need

Gordon Trust

Jones Charitable Trust

Loughborough Town of Sanctuary

Pat Newman Trust

The AB Charitable Trust

Jessie Spencer Trust

Robin Hood Covid Fund

The Postcode Lottery

Neighbourly Community Fund

Lloyds Bank Foundation

Refugee Action Early Action

Evan Cornish Fund

Refugee Action Respond and Adapt

Communities of Identity

Nottingham City Council

Buckland Charitable Trust

Framework

Nottinghamshire Community Foundation

Whitaker Charitable Trust

Lady Hind Trust

Henry Smith

Garfield Weston



VOLUNTEER

NNRF relies heavily on our volunteers in all areas. There are many ways in which you can support the work of NNRF and build your own skill set while you do so. We appreciate any time you have, whether it's a couple of hours to help at an event, or a regular commitment to volunteering with one of our projects. If this is something that interests you, please send an email to:

volunteer@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk



NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE REFUGEE FORUM

The Sycamore Centre,
33a Hungerhill Road,
Nottingham,
NG3 4NB

Tel: 0115 960 1230

E-Mail: Info@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk Website:
<http://www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk>

Registered Charity No: 1121560

Company No: 0535262679



DONATE

Donations are one of our most crucial income sources which allow us to continue delivering the services we offer, specifically our anti-destination work. If you'd like to make a one-off or regular donation, please visit our website (donation page) for details. We also take food donations for our community café and anti-destination projects.

www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk



[/nottsrefugeeforum](https://www.facebook.com/nottsrefugeeforum)



[@NNRF1](https://twitter.com/NNRF1)



[@nnrf_official](https://www.instagram.com/nnrf_official)



STAY IN TOUCH

Thank you for your interest in the work of NNRF. We would love to stay in touch with you by sending you our monthly newsletter. Please visit our website to sign up:

www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk



The annual report has been produced with contributions from our staff, volunteers, trustees and partners.