

NEWSLETTER

MARCH '24



City of Sanctuary is a national organisation of support groups throughout the UK making their cities, towns, schools and organisations places of welcome and hospitality for people seeking safety from persecution and war. If you would like to volunteer with BCofS please email secretary.bbcos@gmail.com

Welcome to the spring '24 edition of the Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary newsletter!

Here you can find the latest information on services and support available for asylum seekers and refugees across Barnsley – from access to food, health and education to conversation and advice. We also feature what asylum seekers and refugees have been doing.

In this issue we have an upcoming art exhibition in Penistone, a selection of poetry, and stories of educational achievement.

Do you have something you'd like to contribute? Contact the editorial team at:

secretary.bbcos@gmail.com

Thank you!

Your Refugee Council in Barnsley, Here to Help!

Wellington House
36 Wellington Street, Barnsley S70 1WA
01226 320111
The office is open
Mon / Tue / Wed / Thur - 10.00am - 2.00pm

Abdel Mohamed

Project Manager & Community Development Worker
Email: abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk

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Announcing The Great Work!



An art exhibition led by Russian-born artist and playwright Jenya Stashkov, featuring artists from Russia, Kurdistan and the UK who have exhibited internationally.

The title 'The Great Work' is a reference to the practices of alchemists, who attempt to create the ultimate substance. Similarly, artists aim to find the highest point of creativity in their artistic process, both in terms of meaning and technique.

18 – 24 March 2024

Entry is Free!

St John's Church,
Shrewsbury Road, Penistone S36 6DY



Opening Times

Monday 18 March	1.00pm – 3pm
Tuesday 19 March	10.00am – 1pm
Thursday 21 March	10.00am – 1pm Featuring a presentation by the artists
Friday 22 March	10.00am – 1pm
Saturday 23 March	10.00am – 1pm
Sunday 24 March	10.30am – 1pm Open alongside a church service

Artists Exhibiting...

Andrey Novikov, a London-based artist, was born into a family of artists-decorators in Stavropol, Russia, in 1985. He holds a master's degree in graphic design from North Caucasus Federal University. Novikov has exhibited his work extensively in both solo and group exhibitions, receiving various awards and honours.

Christopher Allsopp is a retired nurse living in Sheffield. Since retiring he has enjoyed spending more time indulging his lifelong interest in art. Chris is interested in all styles and schools of art but is particularly drawn to domestic scenes and children's book illustrations. His style seeks to capture the visual tangle which nature often presents.

Elena Stashkova (Ionova), born in 1986, is a UK-based artist and poet. She graduated from the Ural College of Applied Arts in Russia with a degree in design and from the Pedagogical Academy with a degree in teaching fine arts. She is the author of three solo exhibitions.

Farhad Abdalla was born in 1983. He started his artistic career in 1993 and graduated from the College of Art at Sulaimani University, in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, in 2013. He has participated in more than 25 joint art exhibitions inside and outside Kurdistan.

Hellga Io is a mysterious surrealist artist exploring the world of pain, fragility, danger and beauty. She is inspired by the Gothic style but overcomes and deconstructs it in her artistic practice.



Conversation with Jenya Stashkov

Leader of the collective of artists who have come together for The GreatWork exhibition.

Artist and playwright Jenya and his wife Elena came over to the UK from Russia on a Global Talent Visa at the end of October 2023. The scheme is for potential leaders in arts and culture, academia and digital technology. At the time, Jenya was working in a theatre in Siberia. Obtaining the Visa required a lot of evidence to prove artistic reputation and standing.

<https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Both Jenya and Elena were activists against the Russian war with Ukraine. This put them in danger, so once in the UK they applied for asylum. They came with their two small children aged five and three and their third child, a daughter, was born in London.

Now they are awaiting a decision from the Home Office. Initially they were moved by the Home Office from London to Newcastle, then to Chapeltown, near Sheffield, and now they live in Hillsborough.

Jenya has been looking for work: "My English needs improving so I'm studying on ESOL courses and I'm volunteering in a few places. I do art classes for community groups. I'm continuing to do art and write. This summer I will have a piece performed in Sheffield and Norwich. I also do online courses for other Russians who've left the country because of the war. I teach them how to stage drama and how to develop their imaginations."

Jenya's collective of six artists includes several from Russia, a British artist and one artist from Kurdistan. He says, 'I really love to organise a group exhibition and to do it in every place where I live. I think it's my mission. This exhibition will be our third one. We did one in Chapeltown and one in High Green. I want to involve everyone in art.'

Jenya has big ambitions for the future: "I am also a professional playwright. Eventually I want to become a theatre director. I want to find different talented playwrights and work together. In the UK there is a very big number of talented playwrights but most don't have their works staged because theatres have to operate as businesses. I want to set up a theatre for emerging playwrights to stage their plays and learn how to adapt them to succeed commercially."

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Libraries of Sanctuary

Public libraries play an important role in welcoming refugees and people seeking sanctuary in our communities. 'Libraries of Sanctuary' is a network of librarians, library staff, community groups and book lovers who are raising awareness of the issues facing people in the asylum system, offering support and participation opportunities, and contributing to a culture of welcome in the wider community.

The Library of Sanctuary award recognises and celebrates the libraries that go above and beyond to show solidarity and welcome. Any library can apply for the award. Libraries of Sanctuary are supported by the City of Sanctuary movement. Find out more at: <https://libraries.cityofsanctuary.org/>

**BARNSELY
LIBRARIES**

We have 14 libraries across the Borough – each and every one strives to always be a welcoming, inclusive and accessible place for everyone in Barnsley to visit, socialise, read, learn and discover.

We offer a wide range of services, from free printing and photocopying, to books, e-books and e-newspapers both in English and in other languages. We also host a wide range of regular groups and activities for adults and for children and families to learn, socialise or develop skills.

For asylum seekers and refugees, we have our Conversation Café on Monday mornings at 10am at Library @ the Lightbox.

We are privileged to work alongside committed and valuable volunteers to offer an informal space for people to come and practise their English. We are also a visible supporter of people seeking sanctuary, promoting books exploring the themes of sanctuary in book displays.

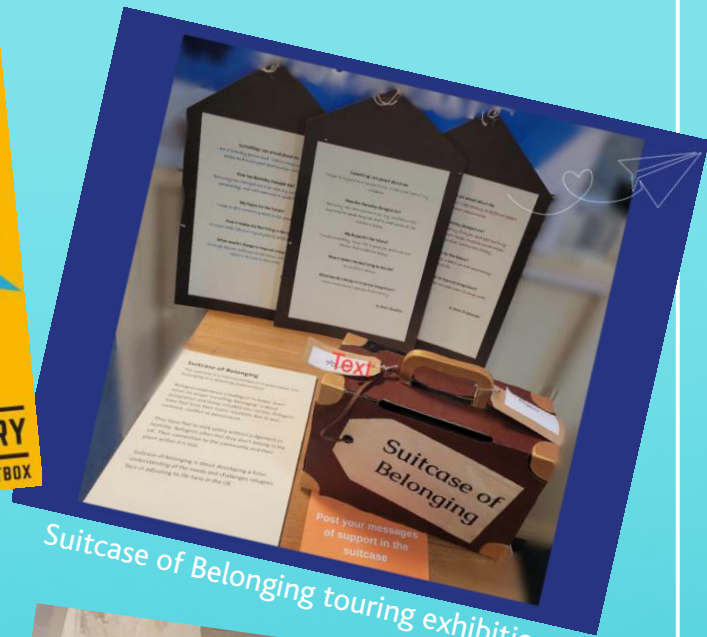
As part of our ongoing work towards the Libraries of Sanctuary Award (see above), we have celebrated the following achievements this past year:

- Introduced new stock in other languages.
- Introduced a translated 'hello' poster to our rolling advert screens in Library @ the Lightbox.
- We are currently touring an exhibition across all our libraries called 'Suitcase of Belonging' which is loaned from our kind partners at the Refugee Council. This is an interactive exhibition about those who have made Barnsley their home and the importance of being accepted and belonging in society. Look out for it in your local library.
- We have had flyers translated into eight different languages outlining services and opportunities in our libraries.

- We continue to look for new opportunities to deliver outreach to support people in Barnsley to access our libraries, including attending the Multi-Agency Drop-in at Hope House on Wednesdays as frequently as we can.
- We have connected with other library services in Yorkshire to share best practice, including Calderdale Libraries who have been successful in gaining the Libraries of Sanctuary Award in the past year, as well as Leeds Libraries, who are just beginning their journey.
- We've got something exciting coming up for Refugee Week, so keep an eye out for it!

We look forward to continuing to improve what we offer and we are proud to be making progress in our Libraries of Sanctuary work. Get in touch if you'd like us to visit your social/community group to offer info about our library services, or if you have ideas or suggestions for us. You can get in touch with Marianne at mariannefraser-hussain@barnsley.gov.uk

You can also keep up to date with Barnsley Libraries by following us on social media:
 Facebook – @BarnsleyLibraries | Instagram - @barnsleylibraries | Twitter - @BarnsleyLibs



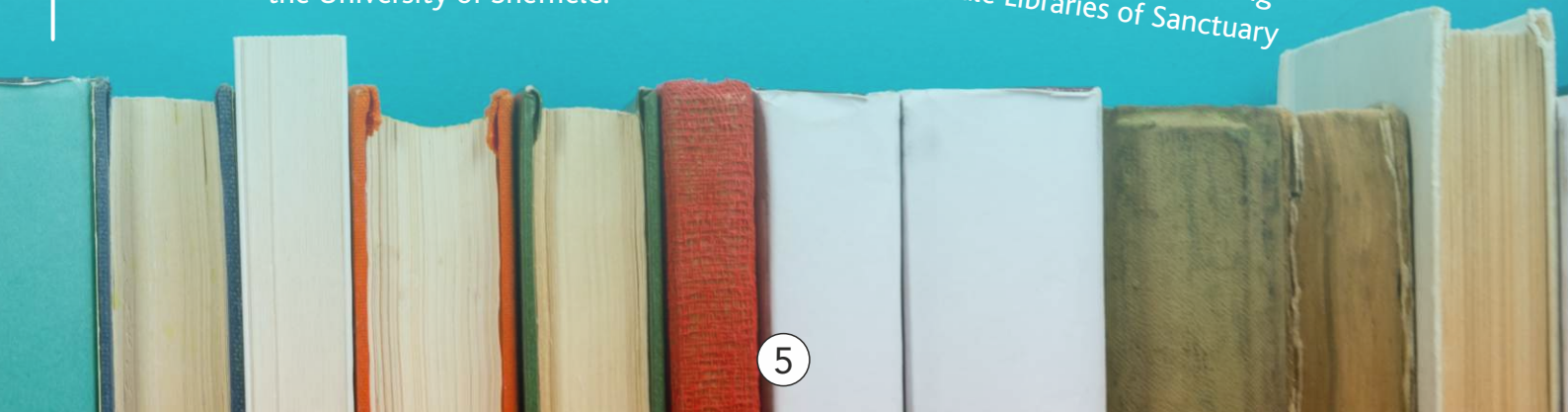
Suitcase of Belonging touring exhibition



More books in other languages added to our stock at Barnsley Libraries - Kindly donated by the University of Sheffield.



Barnsley Libraries team visiting Calderdale Libraries of Sanctuary



Foodbank Seeks Volunteers

Barnsley Foodbank Partnership are looking for volunteers to join them in their upcoming food drives. The Tesco Food Drives are back this Spring, which take place at local stores in Hoyland, Stairfoot and Penistone. Rotating between the stores, once a month there will be a pop-up collection stand in store, with volunteers on hand to welcome customers and encourage donations.

This comes at a much-needed time, as the Foodbank recently revealed they are having to purchase stock that they are rapidly running out of. Georgina Arnold, Communications Officer at Barnsley Foodbank Partnership, said; **"We need donations now more than we ever have. We are handing out more food parcels than we did during the Covid-19 pandemic and the demand is only getting higher. It's so sad to see that more and more individuals are resorting to this emergency help, but that's why we are here. Every single donation makes such a huge difference, we're so grateful for all the support."**

**If you would like to volunteer at the Tesco Food Drives,
get in touch by calling 01226 593782 or via email: volunteer@barnsley.foodbank.org.uk
If you'd like to support Barnsley Foodbank Partnership, visit www.barnsley.foodbank.org.uk**

Good Food Barnsley

The goal of the Good Food Barnsley Partnership is to make sure that everyone has access to nutritious and affordable food through a variety of routes including:

Good Food Pantries | Community Shop on the Go | Community Shops | Barnsley Food Banks

There are two GoodFood Pantries – one at the Education, Learning Support Hub or ELSH, which is focused on asylum seekers and refugees, and one at Royston for local residents. There are also community pantries, for example the one at Worsbrough.

Find out more about the different offers and the Barnsley Food Plan at:

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/healthy-living/good-food-barnsley-partnership/>

GoodFood Pantry Royston

Provided by: Royston Friends Association

Where: Manor Court Community Centre, West End Avenue, Royston, S71 4LN

Opening times: Monday 11am – 1pm | Charge: £3 per shop | Members must live in Royston.

Worsbrough Community Pantry

Provided by: Worsbrough Community Church in conjunction with the Ward Alliance

Where: Worsbrough Community Church, High St, Worsbrough Dale, S70 4S

Opening times: Wednesdays 11.30am – 1.30pm

Charge: £3 per shop and receive food items up to the value of £15

Members must live in Worsbrough.

Frank Parnham, Secretary of Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary Group, is a resident of Worsbrough and supports the Community Pantry. He comments: *"The first pantry in the Borough has served a wide range of folks in need, including transient, new and long-term residents. A small but dedicated team meet on Wednesdays offering warmth, a chat, occasionally advice, as well as good fresh, frozen and tinned food for a small amount of money. You might want to visit to see how a successful pantry works before starting one in your neighbourhood."* To volunteer or visit, contact: Tracey Hamby at wccpantry@gmail.com



Educating Learning Support Hub (ELSH)

Tel: 01226 249494 | www.elshub.org.uk

8-10 Market Street, Barnsley S70 1SL

Where is the Pantry?

The Pantry will be held on the first floor.

ELSH Address
8-10 Market Street
Barnsley S70 1SL

We are opposite
Card Factory, next to Subway



What are the Opening Times?

Monday	11am - 3pm
Tuesday	11am - 3pm
Wednesday	11am - 3pm
Thursday	11am - 3pm
Friday	11am - 3pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed



How to access the Pantry?

The **ELSH Pantry** will cost **£5.00**, upon paying the fee you will receive a **Membership Card** that states you are eligible for food from the Pantry. Please bring your card with every visit.

You can buy 7 items for £5.00 or just choose anything you would like from £1.00 onwards.

For more information, please contact us on 01226 249494
or you can email reception@elshub.org.uk

Poems for the Soul

Asylum seekers and refugees are much more than people seeking sanctuary. They come from a rich cultural heritage, with diverse, creative and powerful stories to tell and thoughts to share. Here we feature poetry from our local community in Barnsley, alongside the inspiring voices of Benjamin Zephaniah and Michael Rosen, both from immigrant families.

She Speaks: Poetry Workshops

A collection of poems and thoughts from the women of South Yorkshire Produced as part of the TUC Skills Project in partnership with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority 'She Speaks' is an anthology of poems celebrating the voices of women from South Yorkshire coming from a wide variety of backgrounds, including asylum seekers and refugees. The poems emerged from a two-hour poetry workshop called 'She Speaks' led by the published poet Sharina Lee Satti (www.sharenalesatti.com) and supported by the TUC Skills Project. For many of the women, English was not their first language. The original aim of the workshops was to help participants to develop their communication skills in the hope that they would go on to develop their English in more formal learning. However, the workshops exceeded expectations and evolved into a place for women to find their creative expression and share their stories.

This poem is by, Abreen, a member of the Women's Refugee Support Group in Barnsley:

Smiles - by Ambreen

*I love to smile
I love to smile on every face around me
I want to see smiling eyes, smiling lips.
I want to snatch the cries of the people
I want to wipe out the tears of the people
I want to fill the hearts of the people with joy.*

Change the Word

A poetry anthology produced by the Good Chance Ensemble (www.goodchance.org.uk), which works with artists from around the world, many newly arrived in the UK. To quote Landry Affton, Change the Word poet, "Through poetry, storytelling and performance, each Change the Word project brings people together to share ideas, share stories and share spaces." This volume published in 2021 emerged from a project that ran on Zoom during lockdown with people in Barnsley, Coventry, Sheffield, London and beyond. It includes this poem by Mohamed Bin Tahir then based in Barnsley.

The Magic of a Word - by Mohamed Bin Tahir

The lady at Tesco says to me Hello darling.
The lady at Asda says to me Hello sweetheart, how can I help?
The sister at One Soup says Hello love.
The lady at the hotel says to me Hello sweetie pie.
The man at the store says to me Hello young man.

Saying simple words isn't hard,
But it might make someone's day.

You never know,
Just say nice words
And keep watching.

I promise you'll receive them always.

**Extract from
We are Refugees
by Benjamin Zephaniah**

I come from a musical place
Where they shoot me for my song
And my brother has been tortured
By my brother in my land.

I come from a beautiful place
Where they hate my shade of skin
They don't like the way I pray
And they ban free poetry.

I come from a beautiful place
Where girls cannot go to school
There you are told what to believe
And even young boys must grow beards.

We can all be refugees
Nobody is safe,
All it takes is a mad leader
Or no rain to bring forth food,
We can all be refugees
We can all be told to go,
We can be hated by someone
For being someone.

We can all be refugees
Sometimes it only takes a day,
Sometimes it only takes a handshake
Or a paper that is signed.
We all came from refugees
Nobody simply just appeared,
Nobody's here without a struggle,
And why should we live in fear
Of the weather or the troubles?
We all came here from somewhere.

**Extract from
Everyone Comes from Somewhere
published in
'On the Move: Poems About Migration'
by Michael Rosen**

Everyone comes from somewhere.
Everyone has a past.
Everyone is somewhere first.
Everyone is somewhere last.

Deep in the heart of buildings
Scattered about online
Packed away in boxes
Hiding in cupboards
Are fragments and hints
About your life and mine.

These are the stones on a path:
A story
Of how people travel.
These are the stones on a path
That I found,
The story that I unravelled.

Everyone comes from somewhere.
Everyone has a past.
Everyone is somewhere first.
Everyone is somewhere last.

Poems for the Soul



Health Integration Team Barnsley

Support for new asylum seekers and refugees and those not yet registered for health services.

The Health Integration Team facilitates the integration of overseas arrivals into mainstream health services and addresses inequalities in health and wellbeing. The team has responsibility for newly arrived asylum seekers residing in Barnsley, asylum seekers under the age of 18 without family, refugees, migrant workers and immigrants within the local community. The team provides:

- Guidance on accessing health services appropriately
- Advice on interpreting services
- Welfare visits to gypsy/traveller roadside encampments
- Weekly new entrants' screening with direct referral pathways
- Promotional education events on a local, regional and national level
- Health checks for GP registrations
- Daily drop-in sessions for advice and information
- Extensive partnership working and community engagement in appropriate groups
- In-service mental health nursing support service

Why contact the Health Integration Team service?

- As a team, we have extensive knowledge of how to use interpreting services appropriately for our service users to break down communication barriers
- We are the main source for other services to contact if you require interpreting services for your service users and we offer advice on a daily basis
- Our person satisfaction survey outcomes always receive 98%
- Our specialist nurses have extensive knowledge in different areas to ensure the right care and input is being initiated for the service user
- Our team offers advice and information on different health services to integrate vulnerable adults and children into the community

Referrals are accepted from carers/family, GP staff, GPs, other NHS services, patients (self-referral), schools, voluntary services and from the Home Office.

Please refer people to us who are new to the UK – migrant workers, asylum seekers and immigrants who:

- Need advice or support with accessing health services
- Need support with registering with a GP

Address: Health integration Team, 170a Sheffield Road, Barnsley, S70 4NW

Telephone: 01226 731686

Email: healthintegrationteam@swyt.nhs.uk

Our hours are : Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm



0-19 Public Nursing Service Barnsley

Support for children, young people and families
of asylum seekers and refugees.

We are very much available to support children, families and young people with both physical and emotional health and wellbeing:

- Antenatal contact
- Birth contact (after 10 days)
- 6 - 8 week review
- 8 -12 month review
- 2 - 2 1/2 years review

Further support for children, young people, parents and carers continues to be available for example:

- breastfeeding
- weaning
- bed wetting
- child development
- emotional difficulties

For all questions and enquiries you can contact us in one of the following ways:

Telephone: 01226 774411 during open hours (see below)

Send a private message via our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BarnsleyPHNS>
or email 0-19HealthTeam@barnsley.gov.uk

We also have a Specialist Health Visitor, Andrew White, who works within this team and specifically works with and supports asylum seekers and refugees and gypsy/travellers.

Opening Times

Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 4.45pm

Friday 8.45am - 4.15pm (except Bank Holidays)



Education Pathways

Data shows that young asylum seekers and refugees often have high levels of aspiration to go to college or university for higher education studies. It may be a long journey – they may lack evidence of their previous qualifications and have to start some aspects of their education again, or they may need to improve their English significantly – but their dream can still be achieved with help and advice.

Importantly, once asylum seekers are granted initial leave to remain for up to five years, they can access funding from the student loan company. Sometimes there are restrictions on certain career paths, such as access to training for the police, but once they are granted indefinite leave to remain, they can access any course or career route as a home student would (see Aland's story). When refugees can access further and higher education courses, it allows them to prepare for roles that will contribute to the UK's society and economy.

In the video below, published by the Higher Education Progression Partnership (Hepp), you can find details of the support available to help young asylum seekers and refugees to progress towards higher education. Hepp works across South Yorkshire to encourage more children, young people and adults to consider higher education opportunities. This work is funded by Sheffield Hallam University and University of Sheffield.

The video includes details of where to go for advice on existing qualifications, what opportunities and resources are available, what funding refugees can access including scholarships, and what help is there for those with learning disabilities.

Please scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/3Uox7AC>



Here are website details for organisations that support asylum seekers and refugees to access higher education:

Displaced Student Opportunities UK

<https://www.displacedstudent.org.uk/>

Refugee Education UK

<https://www.reuk.org/>

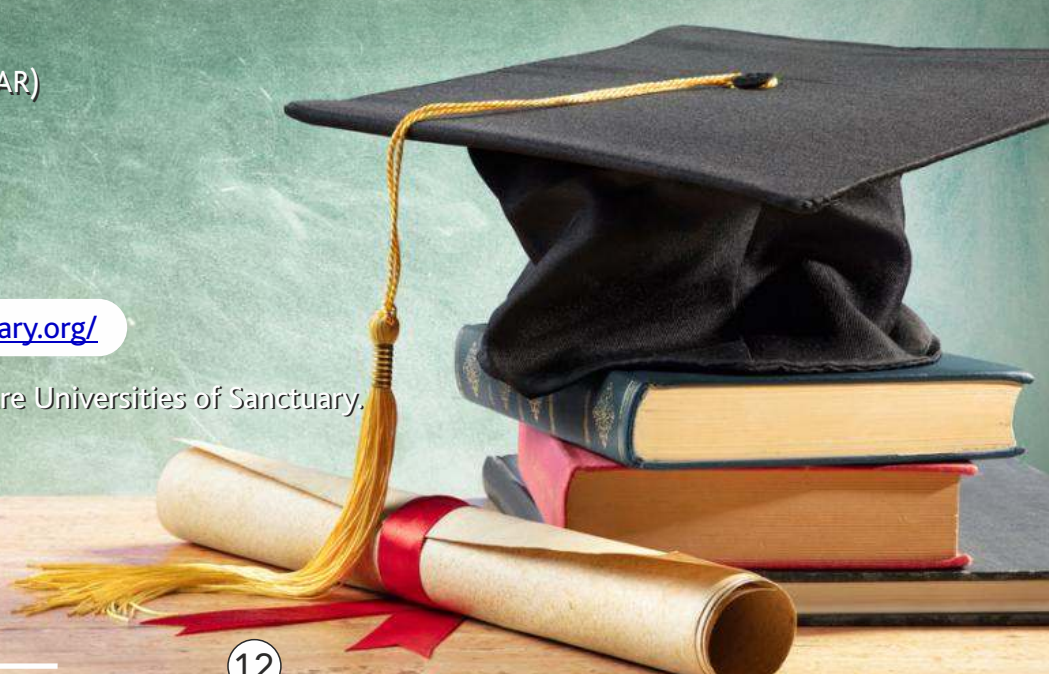
Student Action for Refugees (STAR)

<https://star-network.org.uk/>

Universities of Sanctuary

<https://universities.cityofsanctuary.org/>

Both of Sheffield's universities are Universities of Sanctuary.



Journeys in Education - Aland's Story

In 2019, Aland, then aged 19, and his brother Evar, aged 15, fled from their home in war-torn Iraq to escape from the threat of ISIS. Initially they were accompanied by their parents but were separated from them on the perilous journey. Eventually the two brothers were thrown into the back of a lorry heading for the UK. Three days later they were taken into custody by the police and sent to an immigration centre. They claimed asylum and were sent by the Home Office to Barnsley.

When they first arrived in Barnsley, Aland and Evar were too frightened to go out in case they couldn't find their way back. They heard about the Refugee Council drop-in and there they found help. They got to know volunteers and staff at the Refugee Council men's and family groups and began to volunteer and help others. This was the start of building a new life.

Evar was supported to register with a school. He joined Barnsley Academy in Kendray and the Refugee Council helped with transport to the school. Evar made friends and improved his English, eventually progressing on to Barnsley College where he is now studying a Level 3 Business Management course. He hopes to continue his business studies at university, considering Sheffield Hallam, Huddersfield and Leeds Beckett.

Aland already had good English so, with the help of the Refugee Council, he applied for a Level 2 course in Information Technology and Computing at Rotherham College. After two years he gained his Level 2 qualification, successfully progressing onto a Level 3 course. He completed the first year of his Level 3 but then he and Evar were given leave to remain in the UK. This meant that their asylum support ceased, and they had to find a new home and income within 28 days. Aland needed a job to support them both and found one in a warehouse. At the same time, he continued to volunteer for the Red Cross. A full-time paid role came up at the Red Cross for a Senior Support Officer in Refugee Services which Aland successfully applied for. When it turned into a part-time role, he found another full-time job in Barnsley Council's Housing department.

Yet Aland really wanted to get back into education and go to university. As a boy, he had dreamed of joining the police force. He heard about the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship where you start work as a trainee police officer and do a university course at the same time. This was ideal but sadly he did not have enough qualifications to apply. Undeterred, Aland researched courses that would help him get onto a degree course and found a one-year Access to HE course in Criminal Justice and Policing at Barnsley College – perfect! He was accepted onto the course and took a part-time job in a café. He finished with very high grades which enabled him to progress onto a three-year Criminology, Communities and Criminal Justice degree course at the College. In recognition of his hard work and determination, Aland received the Johnston Award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Services award at Barnsley College's Excellence Awards 2023 and was also nominated for the Student of the Year Award.

He has almost completed the first year of his degree and once he gains this degree, he will be able to apply to the police on their graduate entry scheme, fulfilling his boyhood dream. Aland says, "You have to be determined and understand how the qualifications work. I will get there in the end!"



Aland at the Barnsley College Excellence Awards 2023

Journeys in Education

Betül's Story

Inspired by a love of maths and science, 18-year-old Betül is passionate about the idea of doing dentistry as a career. But when Betül arrived in the UK from Turkey as a teenager, dentistry was the last thing on her mind.

The family had to leave Turkey as they were in danger. They arrived in London during the Covid pandemic. To start with, Betül joined an ESOL school in London which focused on helping newcomers to the UK to learn English. Most of the classes were online due to Covid.

Betül says, "During this time, my father and I were staying in a small hostel room. I couldn't study effectively because of both Covid and the conditions at the hostel. Therefore, unfortunately it wasn't a productive year for me."

Then the family moved to Barnsley in May 2021 and Betül was able to start school in September at Barnsley Academy. The education system was completely different from the one in Turkey and she had to get ready for GCSEs. It was tough, but inspired by her dream of doing dentistry she persevered and is now doing A Levels in Chemistry, Biology and Maths at Penistone Grammar School. Her aim is to study at a Russell Group university.

Her English has improved rapidly: "I started to talk to people a lot to improve my English and I read books, starting with simple ones then getting progressively harder."

Betül adds, "It wasn't my decision to come to the UK, we had to. It was a really big change. It took time to get used to a new place, a new language, and a different education system. Also, leaving behind my friends and where I grew up was truly difficult for me. But I didn't want to give up on my own goals, so I'm striving towards them.

"I've learnt what to do to get the grades I need. I'm in a good school where everyone is very helpful, and I have kind friends. Everything is going well now, and I really hope I can get into university in the field I desire."





School Art Competition

Refugee Week Celebration

June 2024

The theme is **Welcome!**
Give a warm welcome to anyone
new to Barnsley.

We are calling on all young artists to help us create
an online gallery in Barnsley.

Submissions can be visual art or poetry.

Deadline for collection of artworks is Friday 12th April 2024.

A celebration event will be held at the Town Hall
during refugee week in June.

Winners will be chosen
and work displayed publicly
Prizes will be given at the event!

Register your School's interest
to Sally Philburn
sallyphilburn@yahoo.co.uk



Do you have a bike that you or your children no longer use? Why not donate it to a good cause?

Transport is a key issue for asylum seekers and refugees so the gift of a bike can make a huge difference, helping to open up new opportunities and make life that little bit brighter.

Donate your spare bike to our Barnsley Bike Repair Scheme and our award-winning volunteer, Alex, will assess and fix it so that it can be passed on and used. Over 190 bikes have been distributed so far, making a huge difference to the lives of asylum seekers and refugees.

Contact : Penistonebikedonations@outlook.com

Volunteer of the Year

Alex Simon (pictured here) has won the Volunteer of the Year award from Sustrans, the charity dedicated to making it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle, and guardian of the National Cycle Network. Alex is the bike enthusiast behind our wonderful Barnsley Bike Recycling Scheme. Alex not only refurbishes old bikes for asylum seekers and refugees, but also helps to organise bike trips with Sustrans, which asylum seekers and refugees have enjoyed participating in (see the latest opportunity coming up in March on the next page).



And Alex is not the only award winner!
Frank Parnham, Secretary of the Barnsley Corough City of Sanctuary Group, also won a Sustrans award recently for his volunteer work on his bike rides.

 Here he is enjoying one of the Sustrans bike rides!

STOP PRESS!

Barnsley Bike Recycling Scheme Set to Expand

We're delighted to announce that our popular and much-admired bike repair scheme has just won a National Lottery Grant. The aim is to find new premises where the scheme can expand to refurbish even more bikes and provide workshop facilities where asylum seekers who are not allowed to work the opportunity to learn new skills.

Watch this space – more details in our summer edition.





WHAT'S YOUR
MOVE



Trans Pennine Trail*



Welcome Ways

Join guided, traffic-free bike rides in Barnsley

9.30am - 12.30pm at a steady pace with refreshments breaks.

- Saturday 16 March (16.03.2024), starting at Barnsley Football Club, S71 1ET

Bikes, helmets, gloves and neck warmers are available to borrow.

You must book in advance. To book your place or find out more:

- ✉ emma.andrews@sustrans.org.uk
- ☎ 07779 567291
- 🌐 www.tinyurl.com/barnsley-welcome-ways

We work for and with communities, helping them come to life by walking, wheeling and cycling.

We campaign to create healthier places and happier lives for everyone. Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

📘 Sustrans North 🐦 @sustransnorth

Registered Charity No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland).

Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Women's Group

Come along to our women's group to meet new people, get help & advice, take part in activities. Children welcome too.

Every Wednesday 10:00am - 12:00pm
Hope House Café, 2 Blucher Street, Barnsley S70 1AP

To join, please contact Abdel Mohamed from the Refugee Council
Mobile: 07917 135843
or email abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk



Women's Refugee Group Christmas Party

Over 43 women enjoyed a celebration of the Women's Group for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers on 20th December. There was musical entertainment including traditional songs like 'A Partridge in a Pear Tree' accompanied by accordion music. Tables were laden with party food, but the star contribution came from one of the group members who brought big cooking pots heaped to the brim with delicious bean stew and chicken with rice. Everyone left with a bag of goodies and each family was given a £50 Aldi voucher. There were smiles all round, and all members greatly appreciated the support provided and a chance to come together for a happy occasion.



Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Men's Group

A group that is restarting for men to meet, socialise, get help & advice

Every Tuesday 12:30pm - 1:30pm
The Quakers Building, 2a Western Street, Barnsley S70 2BP

To join, please contact Abdel Mohamed from the Refugee Council
Mobile: 07917 135843
or email abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk





Barnsley Refugee Integration Service

FREE SUPPORT FOR YOU AS A NEW REFUGEE

Have you received a positive asylum decision within the past two years? It could be through: refugee status; humanitarian protection; family reunion; discretionary leave to remain with 30 or more months to remain granted; as an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child with leave to remain.

If yes, we can help you for up to 6 months.

We meet you to make a plan together. You will have a support worker who can help with things like: housing, benefits, bank accounts, English classes, training, finding out about work, access to healthcare, getting to know your local community, school places and childcare.

Tel: 01226 787602

Mobile: 07775 033443, 07795 389596

Email: adviceservices@barnsley.gov.uk

Address: PO Box 634, Barnsley S70 9GG

This service is part of Refugee Integration Yorkshire and Humber. The project is managed by Migration Yorkshire and co-funded by the European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Barnsley Council is part of this project.



Multi-Agency Drop-in for Barnsley's Migrant Communities

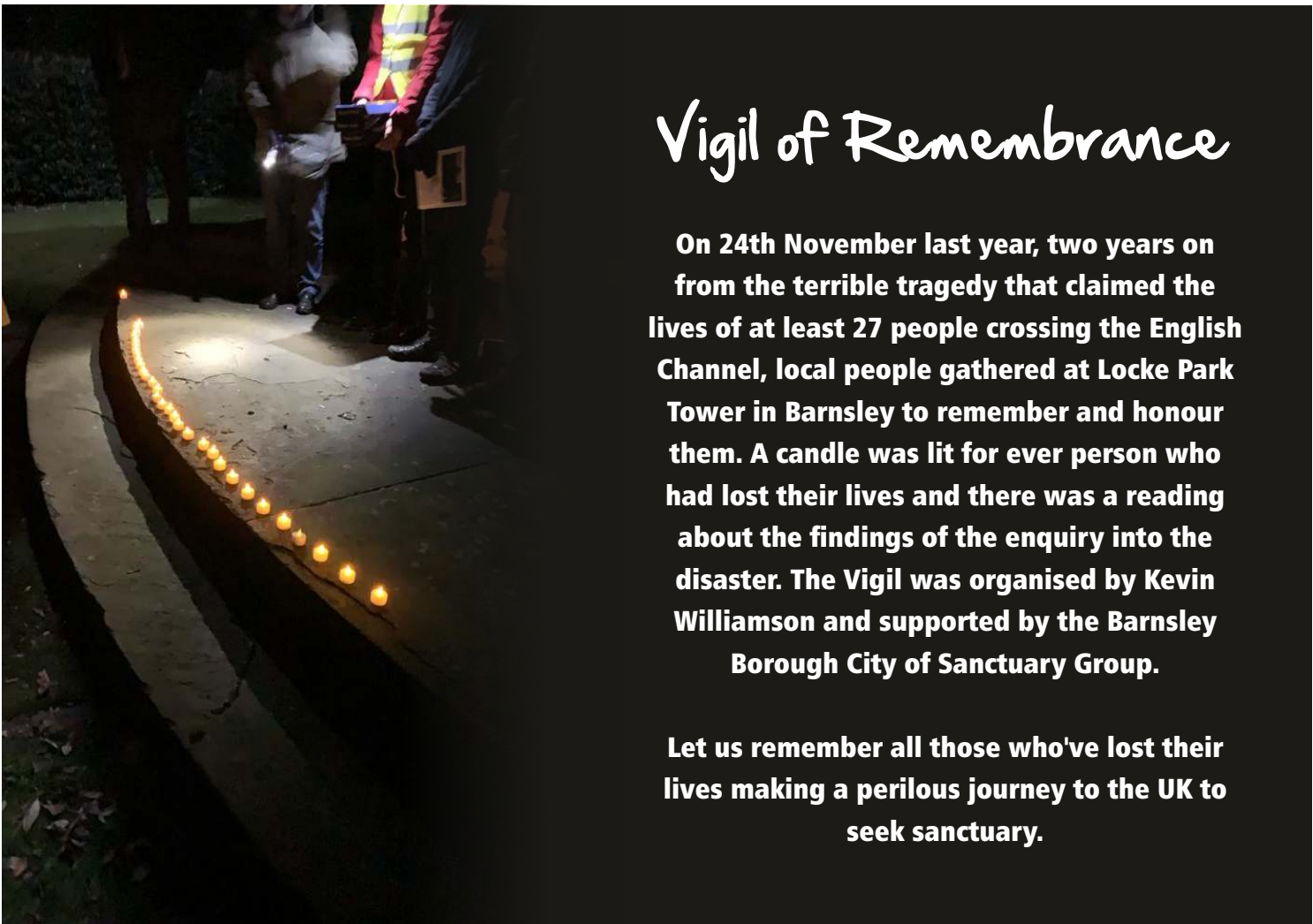
Every Wednesday 12.30pm – 2.30pm

Hope House, Blucher Street, Barnsley S70 1AP

Information, support and advice on: migration, housing, work and benefits, health and wellbeing, education, volunteering, social activities, community groups, safety, children and youth services, Barnsley information, council services and more.

Free Hairdressing, Drinks & Snacks, Foodbank Referrals, Children's Activities

Everyone welcome!



Vigil of Remembrance

On 24th November last year, two years on from the terrible tragedy that claimed the lives of at least 27 people crossing the English Channel, local people gathered at Locke Park Tower in Barnsley to remember and honour them. A candle was lit for every person who had lost their lives and there was a reading about the findings of the enquiry into the disaster. The Vigil was organised by Kevin Williamson and supported by the Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary Group.

Let us remember all those who've lost their lives making a perilous journey to the UK to seek sanctuary.



South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice



We give one-off immigration legal advice monthly at the City of Sanctuary drop-in at Victoria Hall, Norfolk Street, Sheffield S1 2JB.

Sessions are the last Wednesday of the month from 1:30pm - 4:00pm.

Please note:
doors close at 3:30pm

South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice is a small charity based in the Sanctuary in Sheffield but providing free legal advice for people across South Yorkshire. We work with people who have been through the asylum system once and need help making further submissions to the Home Office. Our focus is on those who are destitute and need this help both to access Home Office accommodation and, hopefully, to help them obtain immigration status.

We provide full representation to anyone who becomes our client, ensuring that people understand all of the processes and are assisted in whatever way they need to make further representations. We accept referrals to our info@syrlj.org.uk email address. We can pay travel expenses for any of our clients in South Yorkshire to attend our office. We also provide professional independent interpreters at our appointments for those who need them.

For more information, visit: www.syrlj.org.uk



LIFT THE BAN!

People seeking asylum in the UK are effectively banned from working. This forced inactivity leaves people living in poverty for months and often years on end; is detrimental to self-esteem and mental health; increases the difficulty of integration for those who are eventually permitted to stay and places an entirely unnecessary cost on the public purse. It also wastes the talents, skills and experience of people who could and wish to contribute, to their communities and to the economy.

Asylum Matters believes that anyone waiting for longer than six months for a decision on their asylum claim should be granted the right to work, unconstrained by the Government's Shortage Occupation List.

This change would provide people with a route out of poverty, would reduce the cost of the asylum support system, and would help integration for those who gain some form of status. There is no evidence to support the claim that such changes would act as a 'pull factor' and increase the number of people claiming asylum in the UK.

Asylum Matters is the co-secretariat, with Refugee Action, of the Lift the Ban coalition <https://lifttheban.co.uk/> The coalition now has almost 300 refugee organisations, think tanks, businesses, trade unions and faith groups, all calling on the Government to Lift the Ban and grant people seeking asylum the right to work.

To join the coalition, get involved or share your experience, contact Asylum Matters at:

<https://asylummatters.org/contact/>

Mary Brandon is the Campaigns Manager for Asylum Matters in Yorkshire & Humberside.

You can contact Mary on email: mary@asylummatters.org

asylum matters



USEFUL CONTACTS

Adult Learning Services

Floor 2, Wellington House, Market St, Barnsley, S70 1WA

Tel: 01226 775270/775271

Email: adultlearning@barnsley.gov.uk

Website: www.barnsley.gov.uk/adultlearning

Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary

Email: secretary.bbcos@gmail.com

Website: <https://barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org>

Barnsley Foodbank Partnership

Unit 14 Aldham Industrial Estate, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 8HA

Tel: 01226 235280

Email: manager@barnsley.foodbank.org.uk

Website: <https://barnsley.foodbank.org.uk>

Barnsley Health Integration Team

170a Sheffield Road, Barnsley S70 4NW

Tel: 01226 731686

Barnsley Refugee Integration Service (BRIS)

Tel: 01226 787602

Mobile: 07775 033443, 07795 389596

Email: adviceservices@barnsley.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Barnsley

Guidance and advice on debt, employment, housing, benefits, tax credits and immigration issues

1 Wellington House, 36 Wellington Street, Barnsley S70 1WA

Call: Freephone 0800 144 88 48

Website: <https://barnsleycab.org.uk/>

Education Learning Support Hub (ELSH)

Providing learning to help adults not in education, employment or training, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

8 - 10 Market Street, Barnsley S70 1SL

Tel: 01226 249494

Website: www.elshub.org.uk

Emergencies – Health

If you think you have a life-threatening illness or injury, phone 999 and ask for an ambulance.

In a non-emergency, phone 111.

Emergencies – Crime

For emergencies, phone 999 and ask for the Police.

In a non-emergency, phone 101.

USEFUL CONTACTS CONTINUED

Feels Like Home

An opportunity to practise English with friends and discover Barnsley and the UK
Barnsley Museums Learning Lab, Town Hall, S70 2TA

Call/text: Joanna: 07873 655035

Email: feelslikehome@barnsley.gov.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Feels-Like-Home-100877908934396

Hate Crime

To report hate crimes, call: 101 or 999 in an emergency

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired you can textphone 18001 101 or SMS 07786 220 022.

Visit: southyorks.police.uk/hatehurts

Lucy Ramsden, Hate Crime Coordinator Barnsley T: 01226 736372 M: 07464 985266

IDAS

For those experiencing or affected by domestic violence or sexual abuse.

Tel: 03000 110 110

Email: info@idas.org.uk Website: www.idas.org.uk

Live Well Barnsley

For information on health care and support services, Visit: www.livewellbarnsley.co.uk

Migrant Help

Help with housing, accommodation, maintenance, ASPEN cards and relocation.

Tel: 08088 010503 - Website: www.migranthelpuk.org

Migrant Information Hub for Covid-19 resources

Website: www.migrantinfohub.org.uk

Migration Partnership Barnsley

A collaboration of Migrant Action, Feels Like Home, The Polish Library and ELSH to support collaborative service delivery and better access to holistic service provision.

Email: migrationpartnershipbarnsley@gmail.com

Website: <https://migrantaction.org.uk/the-migration-partnership-barnsley-mpb/>

Refugee Council

Address: Wellington House, 36 Wellington St. Barnsley S70 1WA (open Monday - Thursday 10am-2pm)
The Advice Workers can be contacted on 01226 320111 or 07917 135843

Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Men's Group

Meets at: The Quaker Building, 2a Western Street, Barnsley S70 2BP

Every Tuesday 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Call Abdel: 07917 135843

Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Women's Group

Meets at: Hope House Community Café, 2 Blucher Street, Barnsley S70 1AP

Every Wednesday 10am – 12pm

Call Abdel: 07917 135843

EVENTS IN BARNSELEY TOWN CENTRE

ALL
FREE!



Flavours Food Festival
Thu 16 to Sun 19 May



Barnsley Live
Saturday 8 June



Barnsley's Big Weekend
Fri 12 to Sun 14 July



for more information contact
secretary.bbcos@gmail.com

www.barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org