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Charity No: 1160553

ANNUAL REVIEW

for the period 18.5.16 - 17.5.17



City of Sanctuary is a rapidly growing national movement committed to building a culture of welcome, hospitality and inclusion for people seeking sanctuary in the UK. Its goal is to create a network of towns and cities throughout the UK (*88 to date*), which are proud to be places of safety, and which include people seeking sanctuary fully in the life of their communities.

Locally we seek to: encourage practical support from individuals and organisations; create opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees to participate more widely in the life of the city; enable recognition of their gifts, abilities and cultures; challenge the negative stereotypes and sometimes deliberate misrepresentation of the issue of 'asylum' in the public domain.

INTRODUCTION

The past twelve months have been very busy and productive - but we have been impacted by the loss of some key members, most sadly John Launder who died on 15th April after a long fight with illness. John made a huge contribution to the group, most recently in initiating the Crisis Fund (see *below*). We will miss him greatly. Other key members have moved away from the city and are carrying on the good work in other parts of the UK.

SCHOOLS OF SANCTUARY (SoS) PROJECT

One obvious alteration to the schools' project is its change of name. With the agreement of the BCoS trustees and the project's Steering Group, the 'Sanctuary in Schools' title was changed in the autumn to fit with practice elsewhere.

Four schools, Dixons City Academy, Grange Technology College, Oasis Academy Lister Park and St Cuthbert and the First Martyrs' Catholic Primary School were all presented with the **School of Sanctuary award** in Refugee Week. It is very encouraging to report that there are currently a further seven schools which have signed up to work towards the award. These are: Fagley Primary School, Horton Park Primary School, Lapage Primary School & Nursery, Our Lady of Victories Catholic Primary School (Keighley), St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, St Bede's and St Joseph's Catholic College and St Matthew's Catholic Primary School. We look forward to making the presentation of the SoS award to some of these schools in 2017.

It was decided last autumn to revitalise the project's **Steering Group**. Two well-attended meetings were held in the autumn and spring terms and another is planned for the summer term. At the last meeting we had speakers from CBMDC's Education Service for New Communities and Travellers and the British Red Cross. Much of the discussion following the input from Stuart Brooke of the New Communities team was around the length of time it can take to place newly arrived children from asylum seeker or refugee families in schools. This was followed up by a letter from the Steering Group to Ian Day, the senior CBMDC officer responsible for asylum seekers and refugees.

Schools were heavily involved in **Refugee Week** events in 2016. The Launch, which was in the Margaret McMillan Tower, featured music and drama by Carlton Bolling

College and Grange Technology College. The choir from St Cuthbert and the First Martyrs' brought tears to all eyes. The Refugee Week **Art Exhibition** with the theme 'Welcome' was held in a pop-up gallery in an empty shop on the outside of the Oastler Market. This very accessible venue attracted some passing trade. There was intriguing and moving work from professional artists, art students, schools and a diverse range of groups. Altogether there were twenty two exhibitors, of which five were schools. Schools exhibiting for the first time were Lapage Primary School and One in a Million Free School. There was some wonderful work by new-to-English students at Grange Technology College.



Collage created by new-to-English students at Grange Technology College

We have attempted to link the project closely with the proposed Crisis Fund (see *below*), the simple concept of which appeals to schools. Assemblies on the subject of the Fund were delivered to the sixth form at Immanuel College and, working with Julia Leech from the Zephaniah Trust, to all students at Dixons Trinity Academy in the spring term. When the Fund is established, this should prove a solid partnership, providing an important flow of income to the Fund.

During the year, in addition to talking to school assemblies, Mary Blacka, the project

worker, gave a talk about the future of the Schools of Sanctuary stream at a regional City of Sanctuary conference in York, which resulted in some lively debate. She also delivered an account of Schools of Sanctuary at a Community Cohesion Day at Skipton College. Mary attended a number of conferences and training sessions, including Safer Recruitment (Kirklees MDC), Hate Crime Awareness and Safeguarding.

With regret, it was decided to discontinue the Global Sanctuary Education Network (GSEN) Homework Club Plus partnership project with Global Community Outreach. Whilst the project attracted a large number of good volunteers - sixth-formers from Carlton Bolling College and adult volunteers recruited via the Dolt web-site - it never recruited enough participants to make it viable.

In late 2016 discussions were started with Judy Rogers from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and Fiona Protheroe from Skipton Development Education Centre, about the possibility of **extending Schools of Sanctuary across North Yorkshire**. It was felt that this new partnership would also have clear benefits to the project in Bradford. A bid to fund this project for three years was made to the Tudor Trust, but proved unsuccessful. However, we will endeavour to continue collaboration at low or no cost.

Despite the successes of the past year, there are some points of concern. The most immediate of these is the lack of funding for the project beyond August 2017. We are awaiting news on two bids submitted since the Tudor Trust refusal and others are currently being prepared. We are concerned that it is becoming increasingly difficult to access schools, thus frustrating our plans to extend the project. There remains a core of very committed schools and considerable interest in the project from within the city and further afield. There is widespread agreement that need for a project of this kind is increasing and so we are keen to ally with larger, better resourced and better known agencies with similar aims. We have been working closely with the British Red Cross West Yorkshire Youth Education Co-ordinator, exchanging information about the schools where we are working, whilst West Yorkshire police have recently contacted us about working together to extend the School of Sanctuary award across the county.

Mary Blacka, Schools Development Worker

SOME KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

As a small group of volunteers (in addition to Mary, our part-time paid Schools Worker), we see one of our key roles as inspiring and supporting others to develop new initiatives to support asylum seekers and refugees across the District. We are particularly proud to have been involved in the following over the past twelve months:

Bradford Refugee Forum (<http://bradfordrefugees.org.uk/>)

In last year's report we mentioned that, following two open meetings arranged by us, we had secured some professional support and a promise of funding to get the Forum re-established. Over the past twelve months it has been wonderful to see this funding secured, a strong board of trustees established, charitable status achieved and a Coordinator appointed. In addition to the vital role of providing a voice and support for local refugee communities, the Forum is now providing a 1:1 orientation service via local volunteers to asylum seekers newly arrived in the city.

Bradford District Crisis Fund

Whilst there are many excellent practical support services in Bradford, unlike many dispersal towns and cities, asylum seekers and refugees in Bradford have never had access to a fund able to provide one-off grants in crisis situations. Such a fund was initially proposed by John Launder at last year's AGM and we then arranged two open meetings in the autumn, with presentations from those operating similar funds in Wakefield and Huddersfield. A planning group was established and the wonderful news is that, with the invaluable support of Bevan Healthcare and generous offers of donations from various quarters, the Fund should shortly be ready to be launched. We are very sad that John did not live to see his vision come to fruition.

Bradford 'University of Sanctuary' (UoS)

<http://www.bradford.ac.uk/about/university-of-sanctuary/>

The UoS Working Group is making great strides to ensure that, in as many ways as possible, the university is able to 'welcome and include' asylum seekers and refugees. The most striking example of this is that in September seven students, who otherwise would not have been able to access funding, began undergraduate or postgraduate studies, having received Sanctuary Scholarships; further scholarships are being offered for the coming year. In addition to this the Group are focusing on the following short-medium plans:

- Building into faculties – ensuring all students receive some teaching around asylum and refugee issues
- Developing a more inclusive curriculum vision for the future
- Broadening our offering through the language centre to help prepare potential scholarship grantees to apply for university
- Sharing good practice and encouraging other universities to offer scholarships
- Presenting about UoS at the annual ‘Making Diversity Interventions Count’ conference
- Building a community of scholarship graduates to share their experiences
- Promoting the University of Sanctuary award once we achieve it, to encourage other universities to do the same
- Developing a partnership with scholarship students

Skipton and Craven Refugee Support Network (*visit their Facebook page*)

Through the energy and dedication of John Launder, our good friend Judy Rogers (*see above*) and others, the group was launched last year and has been doing some very wonderful work: generating awareness around asylum and refugee issues, raising funds (including for the Crisis Fund), collecting clothing and other essential items and hosting two weekends for asylum seekers who attend the BIASAN project in Bradford. These weekends were a huge success, as local people opened up their homes and a programme of outings and entertainment was arranged.

ENGAGEMENT

Faith Communities

For the past two years we have been meeting regularly with Bradford Council of Mosques, and latterly also with leaders of the city’s other larger faith communities, to find ways of raising awareness of asylum issues among their members and generating practical expressions of support. Last June this led to the launch in Centenary Square of a joint statement on the refugee crisis, signed by the leaders. Both this and a follow up event in September were well covered by the Telegraph and Argus newspaper.



A showcase event is now planned for 15th July to promote the varied work already being carried out within the faith communities in support of asylum seekers and refugees, and to inspire new initiatives.

Other Engagement

- We continue to attend and contribute to the quarterly multi-agency **Asylum Seekers and Recent Refugees Operations Group** facilitated by the Council.
- We recently attended the first meeting of the Council- coordinated **Anti Poverty Co-ordination group** and with our colleagues from the Refugee Forum intend to represent the particular needs of asylum seeker and refugee communities.

TALKS AND DISPLAYS

As always, we gave a number of talks during the year and provided displays at a various events, including:

- The **International Refugee Week Festival** in June at Bradford University
- The **Refugee Week Launch**
- **Bradford College Freshers Fair** in September
- **Regional City of Sanctuary meeting** in York in October

- Bradford's annual and always wonderful **Peace Fair** in November
- **Bradford University Volunteering Event** in February

MISCELLANEOUS

News circulation and signposting: Although this is largely invisible to most, it comprises probably the biggest part of our work as we daily respond to requests for information, offers from people wishing to get involved in volunteering (who we then put in touch with local frontline agencies), requests to promote events and new services, requests from national and local media and requests for academic research participants. We have a circulation list of 275 supporters and 46 local agencies to whom we forward much of the above - as well as keeping them informed of our own work.

Media engagement: BCB radio have remained faithful to the cause and regularly come to us for interviews, following news stories that we have circulated. The Telegraph and Argus also published excellent articles with photos on both the launch and follow up meeting of the faith communities' migration statement (see *above*).

Resolutions of Support: These now stand at 176 local organisations, groups, places of worship and businesses. We are continually encouraged by many inspiring and creative ways that these groups are turning their pledges into practical actions. Bradford certainly continues to deserve its title of a 'City of Sanctuary'!

Local Resources list: <https://bradford.cityofsanctuary.org/local-resources>. We maintain this comprehensive list on our website of local services for asylum seekers and refugees and are aware that it is well used both within the city and beyond.

Action Ideas: <https://bradford.cityofsanctuary.org/ideas-for-getting-involved>.

Likewise we maintain a list of many ways that people can get practically involved in supporting asylum seekers and refugees in the city. We are aware that this has led many people into volunteering and other local support.

Social Media: We remain very appreciative of the efforts of Kate Ashton who maintains our **Twitter** account – do check it out at *@BradfordCoS*. Likewise our **Facebook** page ('*City of Sanctuary Bradford*'). With no paid staff, other than our Schools Worker, we struggle to keep our **website** as up-to-date as we would like,

but there is plenty there for those who want to find out more:

<http://www.cityofsanctuary.org/bradford>.

Submission to the Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) report on Asylum

Accommodation: Through the hard work of colleagues in local frontline agencies, we submitted a report in September to the HASC, evidencing significant shortcomings in the quality of local asylum accommodation and the support provided. Our submission was included in the final report and its hard-hitting recommendations were very much in line with what we had identified locally. See: <http://data.parliament.uk/WrittenEvidence/CommitteeEvidence.svc/EvidenceDocument/Home%20Affairs/Asylum%20accommodation/written/37950.html>

Promoting employment opportunities: We are painfully aware that, far too often, highly skilled and experienced asylum seekers leave the city as soon as they receive a positive decision on their asylum claim, due to the lack of adequate support at the point of transition. As well as regularly circulating relevant employment opportunities, we have been working with an agency already well established in West Yorkshire, supporting their plans to set up a local service to provide help with education, training and employment.

Policy development and review: This is a less exciting aspect of our work, but still vital. We are very grateful to Mary Blacka who has both revised our existing policies and procedures and drafted a number of new ones.

FUNDING

We have been very grateful to the Tudor Trust for the support they have provided to our schools work over the past three years. On a smaller scale we have greatly appreciated a number of generous donations, including one from Beckfoot School, who also sent us dozens of luggage labels produced by their students, each with a personal message of welcome to a refugee. These were then incorporated by a volunteer into a collage which is now displayed at Refugee Action's local office. Other very welcome donations were from local Quaker groups and, most movingly, from two brothers, aged 8 and 11, who sent us their Christmas money!

We continue to be very grateful to Touchstone Methodist Centre for their invaluable goodwill and support-in-kind.

FUTURE PLANS

Coordinator post: Recognising that the demand for our work and the opportunities available have become considerably more than our small group of volunteers are able to adequately respond to, we have recently succeeded in obtaining from the Allen Lane Foundation almost 70% of the funding needed to employ a part time Coordinator. We are currently working hard to make up the deficit and are confident that we will soon be in a position to advertise the post.

TRUSTEES for the year

Chair: Will Sutcliffe

Secretary: John Launder (*dec. 15.4.2017*)

Treasurer: Ian McIver

Revd Ben Ayesu

Revd Joe Batt

Christy Bischoff

Victoria Elahi

Ala Sirriyeh

A number of others have regularly attended our monthly meetings and make very significant contributions to our work.

Will Sutcliffe, Chair

May 2017

Bradford City of Sanctuary

Annual Accounts Year End 31 March 2017

Incoming Resources

Grants	£23,000.00
Donations	£1,091.15
Sales	£0.00
Interest	£0.00
Total Incoming Resources	£24,091.15

General Fund

Opening Balance	£1,144.28
In	£3,791.15
Out	£3,194.49
BALANCE	£1,740.94

Resources Expended

Travel	£227.65
Wages	£12,949.42
Stationery	£85.57
Postage	£0.00
Misc	£150.00
Phone	£61.38
Charges	£0.00
Publicity	£103.62
Insurance	£302.50
Accommodation	£265.00
Events	£177.39
Total Resources Expended	£14,322.53

Schools Worker

Opening Balance	£7,823.58
In	£15,000.00
Out	£12,828.04
BALANCE	£9,995.54

Coordinator

Opening Balance	£0.00
In	£7,000.00
Out	£0.00
BALANCE	£7,000.00

TOTAL BALANCE	£18,736.48
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CREDITORS	£0.00
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DEBTORS	£0.00
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Assets

Cash Funds	£18,736.48
Grants Due	£0.00
Invoices Due	£0.00
Total Assets	£18,736.48

Liabilities

Staff Wages	£0.00
Staff Expenses	£0.00
Invoices	£0.00
Total Liabilities	£0.00