

Bradford City of Sanctuary Annual Report

for the period for the year ending 31st March 2021

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Bradford City of Sanctuary



Bradford City of Sanctuary

VISION

City of Sanctuary UK holds the vision that our nations will be welcoming places of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. In order to realise this vision, City of Sanctuary UK supports a network of groups (131 to date), which includes villages, towns, cities and regions across the UK, and others engaged in Streams of Sanctuary, Sanctuary Awards and activities intended to welcome people seeking sanctuary.

In Bradford we work to generate an environment of safety and hospitality - a city that is more inclusive and welcoming, where those seeking sanctuary can be recognised and celebrated for their contributions. We work through partnerships with the local authority and other key service providers, as well as numerous voluntary and community groups to create, facilitate and support networks across the city.

From the Chair ...

You won't be surprised to read that, like much of the rest of the planet, our work has been significantly impacted by the pandemic over the past 12 months. That said, I hope that you will agree, as you read through this report, that we have still managed to achieve an amazing amount and enter the new financial year as busy as we have ever been. Zoom was invaluable in enabling much of our work to continue, albeit in a rather clunky way at times!

With the closure or suspension of so many of the agencies with we work most closely, as well as those which we are seeking to develop relationships, we were forced to take advantage of the government's Job Retention (furlough) Scheme for our two wonderful staff for periods during the year. Sarah, our Schools of Sanctuary lead, was away during May to September and again from January to March (some on 'flexi-furlough'); our Coordinator Mike was away during June to August. You can read below of some of the great work that they still managed to achieve.

We were due to host the national 2020 CoS conference here in Bradford last November, so it was very disappointing when it had to be cancelled. We are delighted though that planning is now taking place for 22nd September at the wonderful Kala Sangam. Save the date!

One of our proudest achievements has been the recent launch of the Welcome to Bradford website (see below) which we believe will be an invaluable resource for migrants newly arriving in Bradford. The original vision for this came from Mandy Oates, one of our trustees, who has expended huge amounts of time, energy and creativity to see it come to fruition.

As always, our regular work continues as we daily circulate relevant information to the local network of asylum support agencies, respond to requests for information both locally and nationally, signpost, promote campaigns focusing on issues facing sanctuary seekers, and engage with the local media. We love taking our message out 'in person' but opportunities have been fewer - and limited to online this year. As the year drew to a close we were busy working with other local agencies to produce a webinar, including a **NEW FILM**, for Bradford University's new **UNify Festival**. This is intended to become an annual event: we are already meeting to plan a programme for 2022! It has also been hugely encouraging to collaborate with the University's Sanctuary Working Group as they extend the range of support they offer to sanctuary seekers – not least **Sanctuary Scholarships**.

We continue to advocate on behalf of sanctuary seekers with Bradford Council and key local service providers – not least the Home Office asylum accommodation provider. We're delighted that Bradford has joined the new national CoS Local Authorities Network and agreed to work towards achieving the new **Council of Sanctuary Award**: this has replaced the earlier process through which Bradford was first recognised as a City of Sanctuary back in 2010.

Supporting our two staff members we have a team of capable, committed and hardworking trustees. We were very sad to say goodbye this year to Ian McIver, who has been with us since the very early days and served for a long time as our treasurer, and most recently to Avril Barker as she leaves Bradford. Each has contributed so much to our work over the years and will be greatly missed. The saddest loss of the year however was of long-time volunteer Deborah Mullins who lost her long but very brave fight with cancer just before Christmas. Deborah was a very gifted textile artist (examples of her work can be seen at <http://www.deborahmullins.uk>) and committed to the Palestinian cause. Her husband Peter and the family have been much in our thoughts.

On a happier note, it's been great to welcome to the board of trustees Rosie MacPherson, Artistic Director of the wonderful **Stand and Be Counted**, who in 2016 SBC became the UK's first 'Theatre Company of Sanctuary'; then in November Alun Pelleschi, who brings a wealth of leadership experience in education.



Celebrating Bradford University of Sanctuary

Schools of Sanctuary (SoS) Report

At the time of writing this report, it feels like Bradford Schools of Sanctuary is slowly, but enthusiastically emerging from a long period of hibernation.

Like many groups and projects, the lockdowns of 2020 and the beginning of 2021 severely hampered our work and access to schools, a core component of the project, was completely restricted. However, work has continued behind the scenes and plans for the future are positive.

We are very proud that our planned exhibition for Refugee Week 2020, showcasing work between four secondary schools and the University of Bradford was able to go ahead. The exhibition (still available at <https://thisismeexhibition.co.uk>) was showcased as part of the national programme of events for Refugee Week.

Plans for Refugee Week in June this year are underway and we are very hopeful that a group of schools will be receiving their Schools of Sanctuary award this year.

The application process for schools to apply for the award and record their achievements has been streamlined and made available online, providing more opportunities for existing and potential Schools of Sanctuary to easily record their work all year round.

We remain close to the national School of Sanctuary work stream and look forward to developing new opportunities as the year progresses. Similarly, relationships with supporting organisations and networks across Bradford remain strong and lots of ideas are developing for collaborative work with our schools. We are pleased to have developed a good relationship with Shipley College and hope that they will soon become the first College of Sanctuary in the Bradford district.

We were fortunate to receive money from the Stronger Communities partnership to develop a schools resource on Critical Thinking, focusing on why it's so important to understand where our information comes from and what we do with it in everyday life. We have developed this resource for primary and secondary settings and look forward to delivering it in schools as soon as we are allowed.

Whilst uncertainties continue, we are optimistic. This optimism is testament to the schools and organisations across Bradford who continue to support the project and hold the values of sanctuary and welcome as their ethos.

We remain focussed on a time when we can all come back together to share creativity and celebrate all our Schools of Sanctuary.

Any education professionals who are interested in finding out more about the Schools of Sanctuary work are warmly invited to get in touch via the website, or by emailing Sarah on schools@bradford.cityofsanctuary.org.uk

Sarah Cartin

Schools of Sanctuary Project Coordinator

Coordinators' Report

This has been my first full year working as Coordinator for Bradford City of Sanctuary, and despite the one significant unexpected challenge, has been very enjoyable, supported and fulfilling. I am so impressed with the commitment, communication and compassion here, and have been humbled to be a part of the team to deliver some incredible achievements.

COVID-19

Clearly the Pandemic has had a significant impact on BCoS and on my work, which has brought its challenges. I spent a short period on furlough but was happy to soon return, initially on half hours enabling us to stay visible and to support as much as we could. Throughout the pandemic some of our key achievements were:

- Creating a local COVID Document, listing available services (You can see this document [here](#).)
- Delivering a number of online talks, introducing people to our work
- Delivering two Help into Volunteering sessions
- Delivering two Refugee Employment Webinars (NB. Arup)
- Beginning new relationships with organisations such as the Landmark Trust, Bradford Literature Festival and the Science & Media Museum who are working towards our Sanctuary Award
- Helping to organise the Peace Artistes' musical fundraising event

BCoS Website

Our Website has continued to see some alterations and updates after a significant change in the previous year. We are averaging around 900 page views per month, which is also up from the previous year. It continues to be a first port of call for many people who want to get in touch or learn more about our work and the wider asylum support sector in Bradford. The website also acts as the portal for individual donations through [Give as you Live](#), which continues to receive much cherished support. We also maintain a thriving social media presence with nearly 900 facebook followers and 933 on Twitter. As well as sharing events and our work, social media helps us to stay connected with local and national organisations and campaigns

National Conference

Due to happen in June last year, City of Sanctuary has recently confirmed the new date of the 22nd September 2022 for Bradford to be hosting the National Conference. It will come at a time when many people will be happy and excited to be able to meet up again in person. It will be a great opportunity to showcase Bradford's achievements and brilliant support network. I am meeting soon with COS UK National team to develop plans further.

Help into Volunteering

On Monday 25th January, Myself, Steve Blackman and Lorraine Greenald from Bradford Volunteer centre delivered our first online [Help into Volunteering](#) session for The Bradford African Community. We had very encouraging attendance at the session and, with the support of a Swahili interpreter, were able to answer all of the questions that people had. On Thursday 11th February we delivered our second session for Refugee Action's BRAVE group. We had a great response from these sessions and all those who attended were very grateful for the information. We now endeavour to deliver more, initially with BIASAN, as well as develop a system of recruitment.

Sanctuary Awards

Bradford Interchange – Station of Sanctuary

Conversations with Interchange continued this year at first, but slowed with the pandemic. We aim to re-start this conversation now and hopefully propose some ambitious plans for what a Bradford Station of Sanctuary could look like.

Bradford Literature Festival – Festival of Sanctuary

Bradford Literature Festival are fully committed to becoming a Festival of Sanctuary and are now applying digitally due to the pandemic. We await their completed application, at which point I will gather the assessment panel and hopefully make the award at the upcoming Literature Festival.

Science and Media Museum

After a very positive and successful training talk given to the staff at the S&MM, they have agreed to consider the Awards process and see how they could move closer towards becoming a museum of sanctuary.

Other organisations currently expressing interest in applying for these awards include:

- Kala Sangam
- Oxfam shops
- Bradford Cathedral
- Horton Community Farm
- Friends of Northcliffe Park

BREW (Bradford Refugee Employment Webinar)

The Bradford Refugee Employment Webinar (or BREW) was a huge success, well attended and a very valuable session for all involved. We have since received some brilliant feedback and are discussing with a local specialist employment project how we can continue this process, and further the conversations. Here is some of the feedback we received:

"It was great to be able to share our experiences and network with other organisations providing vital employment services, we look forward to the next BREW!" Barnaby Dathan, Code Your Future

"I found the BREW session very insightful and it was a great opportunity to connect with, and (virtually) meet others within the circle." Seye Onabolu, Sona Circle

Refugee Week

This year is set to be another exciting and varied selection of art, music and events across the city, including a 'walking route' through the city where people can view different art works. Myself, Rosie, Sarah, Phil Lickley and Deb Collet have met regularly to organise and support the event, despite little resource and time. There is a lot of potential for Bradford Refugee Week in the future, and I endeavour to continue conversations about what this could look like in the coming years.

Mike Auger

Bradford City of Sanctuary Coordinator



Welcome to Bradford

A Guide to Life in Bradford

We are pleased to report that Bradford now has an accessible, comprehensive, up to date information hub for new migrants. The **welcomebradford.org** site was launched in December 2020. It is the result of a collaboration between Bradford City of Sanctuary, **Refugee Action** and **Solidaritech**, funded by a £15,000 grant from Bradford Council's Innovation Fund. The content and design of the site has been developed and tested in regular consultation with a group of experts by experience.

As at March 2021, data analysis shows an average of 365 visits per month, each with an average duration of about 5 minutes. We expect the number of visits to increase with the 'snowballing' roll-out of the site. The first launch was aimed mainly at professionals and support workers. Since then, the site has been introduced to new migrants and volunteers at a BIASAN's monthly Zoom meeting and with a BEACON's CHAT Zoom group. Early feedback has been positive and constructive. We look forward to sharing more detailed user data in the next annual report, to show the impact of **welcomebradford.org**.

The aim now is that all new migrants find out about the site and its usefulness as early as possible on coming to Bradford. So, technically, we need to ensure a quick and easy search return for independent users of the site. All support workers need to know, use and recommend it. We need optimum distribution of information about the site, for example to schools, GP surgeries, community centres and libraries. With this in mind, among our next steps is the introduction of the site to people in Home Office asylum housing, in collaboration with Mears, who are keen to facilitate this. We will also shortly run a trial in an inner-city School of Sanctuary that has a significant number of new migrant families. Of course, everything has been by Zoom recently and we look forward to having a live event which further promotes the website and begins Phase 2 of 'Welcome to Bradford'. This is to be a sort of induction 'package' to do with settling in Bradford: opportunities, rights and responsibilities.

There is still much to do with the site itself, which will never be 'finished' as such. Tweaks to functionality are made in response to feedback from users. The photos we need in order to showcase the vibrancy of the city will be gathered over the next few months, deliberately postponed till when social interaction is more normal. We are also recruiting a small number of volunteer experts by experience to be the 'W2B Update Team'. The team will be trained in May and June this year, then in July the volunteers will begin the first full round of six-monthly checks with all 300 organisations listed on the site. The first round of updates in particular is crucial, as services and activities affected by Covid are able to be face to face once again. Overall, there is much to be excited about in this resource, which should make a real difference to Bradford's new migrants' sense of welcome, confidence and empowerment.

Mandy Oates - BCoS Trustee

FUNDING

We have been greatly encouraged this year by a significant increase in the number of regular donors and, in particular, for one extremely generous anonymous gift. We are very grateful too to the following grant funders for their support of our work over the past year: The Hilden Trust; Evan Cornish Foundation; Sovereign Healthcare; Society for the Holy Child Jesus; the Brelms Trust; Scurrah Wainwright; the Yapp Trust and Bradford Council (for the developing a Critical Thinking resource in schools).

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT						
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2021						
	General	Coordi-	Schools	Critical		Previous
	Fund	nator	Worker	Thinking	TOTAL	Year
INCOME						
Donations and legacies	17,848	0	0	0	17,848	2,886
Gift Aid Tax repayment	356	0	0	0	356	0
Grants	0	10,084	17,569	3,500	31,153	7,000
TOTAL INCOME	18,204	10,084	17,569	3,500	49,357	9,886
EXPENDITURE						
Wages	0	7,624	8,961	1,976	18,561	23,338
Travel	0	0	0	0	0	515
Miscellaneous	30	12	0	0	42	10
Telephones	0	31	0	0	31	60
Insurance	114	114	114	0	342	342
Accommodation	115	90	90	0	295	425
Events	125	0	0	0	125	368
Accounting	58	58	58	0	174	114
Payroll processing	0	307	307	0	614	568
Professional Services	90	0	0	0	90	40
Recruitment Costs	0	0	0	0	0	60
TOTAL COSTS	532	8,236	9,530	1,976	20,274	25,840
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	17,672	1,848	8,039	1,524	29,083	(15,954)

BALANCE SHEET AT 31ST MARCH 2021						
	General Fund	Coordi- nator	Schools Worker	Critical Thinking	TOTAL	Previous Year
ASSETS						
Bank balance					40,158	11,127
Payment made in advance (note 1)					6,030	5,272
TOTAL ASSETS					46,188	16,399
FUNDS						
Balances from last year	2,660	7,766	5,974	0	16,400	30,907
Adjustments (note 2)	0	353	352	0	705	1,446
Surplus/deficit this year	17,672	1,848	8,039	1,524	29,083	(15,954)
CLOSING FUND BALANCES	20,332	9,967	14,365	1,524	46,188	16,399
NOTES						
1. At the beginning of each quarter we make an advance payment to our payroll bureau based on an estimate of the amount to be spent each quarter. The above payment made in late March covers wages for April to June 2021.						
2. The adjustments in the balance sheet relate to reconciliations of our figures with those of the payroll bureau, which in the past have caused some difficulties. These have now been overcome and will not occur in the future.						

TRUSTEES for the year

- Chair: Will Sutcliffe from 2008
- Treasurer: Phil Lawler since 25.3.19
- Roger Cowell - since 18.04.2018
- Kay Holden – since 18.04.2018
- Mandy Oates - since 18.04.2018
- Rosie MacPherson – since 24.8.20
- Alun Pelleschi – since 7.11.20
- Ian McIver – since 15.05.2013 Resigned 1.3.21
- Avril Barker – since 15.5.19 Resigned 8.4.21

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