

Impact Report 2021/2022

"A message from the Chair of Trustees"

The Refugee Hub has had one year of supporting refugees, asylum seekers and at risk migrants in our community. We are very thankful to the excellent multi-agency support provided, as well as the sharp increase in client referrals from education, foodbanks, social and local services in the city.'

A year with unique challenges

This year Portsmouth City of Sanctuary (PCoS) supported a rise in newly dispersed asylum seekers to the city. A local hotel was commissioned as emergency overspill accommodation by the Home Office. And a further apartment block in Portsmouth North, saw significantly increased numbers requiring orientation and other support, which we immediately provided.

Impact Snapshot

200

English lessons delivered

600

Clients registered with
us for casework
support.

200

Asylum Seekers
accessed community
projects

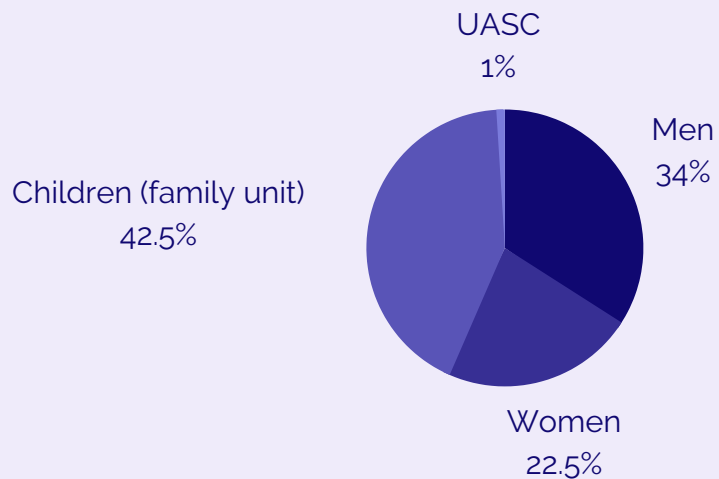
250

Asylum Seekers
received a welcome
box.



Local Trends Casework

We have assisted over 600 asylum seekers and refugees (including dependants) with orientation casework in the last year. Asylum seekers are accommodated across the city, with at least 70% registered with PCoS arriving in Portsmouth in the last 12-18 months.



Top Casework Issues

Access to Justice

Many asylum seekers are without legal advice or representation because of extended waiting periods and low availability. This is a local and national trend. Newly dispersed asylum seekers may be waiting in excess of six months to access a legal aid solicitor, the closest being in Southampton.

Mental Health

We have seen an increase in mental health issues, and focus on tackling this within our casework and project support. Many clients are survivors of abuse and torture, presenting with PTSD, and feelings of depression and helplessness.

Gender Violence

More women are also presenting with gender and domestic violence experiences, including forced marriage, trafficking, exploitation, and FGM violence, which has occurred en route to the UK, in their country of origin, or indeed here.

Details

Top Nationalities

We have assisted over 20 different nationalities, the top five being:

Eritrean
Iranian
Iraq
Namibian
Nigerian



Top Referrals to agencies

Details

Citizens Advice

We have referred 82 clients from October 2021 - September 2022 to Citizens Advice for immigration advice which does not fall under asylum legal aid.

EMAS - Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

Family units make up a large number of the clients we see. EMAS continue to help asylum seeking children to register in schools and get support within schools.

Local MP for Advocacy Issues

We have seen an increase of referrals to local MP's for issues around long wait times for substantive interviews, ARC Card enquiries and housing issues.



We are thankful to many organisations for providing activities

- In December 2021, 60 asylum seekers attended the pantomime at the Kings Theatre.
- Our men's football team toured The Emirates Football stadium.
- 60 asylum seekers visited the historic dockyard.
- Over 20 children participated in HAF Activities throughout the summer.
- Asylum seekers on our gardening project planted over 300 saplings as part of the Queens Canopy, Jubilee Celebrations.
- We gave away nearly 20 bicycles to those in the community.
- 40 Asylum seekers were given First Aid training in the community.
- Nearly 30 women attended our women's group HAVEN, for empowerment, well-being sessions.

Bicycle Project

**HAVEN
women's
Groups**

**Shore/Beach
Clean Up
Project**

**Football,
dance, boxing**

**Youth
Parliament**

**Welcome
Boxes**

**Allotment/Planting
Projects**



Portsmouth
City of Sanctuary

Testimonial



"I am gaining skills by volunteering as a teaching assistant within the refugee hub" Kadie



"Dancing makes me feel free, I was unable to dance freely in Iran" - Behnoosh



"I am part of Portsmouth Youth Cabinet, and in full time education. Women in Afghanistan are often denied these opportunities - Hirina

We couldn't have done it without our 20+ dedicated volunteers

95% of our volunteers would recommend us to a friend
and 100% feel like valued members within the team

80% of our volunteers are from refugee/asylum seeker backgrounds, with a rise in English teachers providing English lessons from within the community.

Thank you to all our donors and volunteers
We could not deliver these vital Outcomes without you.



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