



## Strategic Plan 2019-22

*'If I stay at home I feel depressed and exhausted,  
coming here helps me overcome depression'.*

Sanctuary visitor

Updated version: January 2019

## **Executive Summary:**

### **Mission Statement**

***‘Our mission is to welcome asylum seekers and refugees in and around Leicester, and support them to rebuild their lives, develop their skills and feel part of the community’.***

Leicester City of Sanctuary (LCoS) was established in 2007 and transferred from being a registered charity (No: 1138017) to a CIO (No: 1172819) in May 2017. The organisation is governed by a board of 7 trustees and has 2 employees and over 90 active volunteers. LCoS is a member of the UK wide City of Sanctuary network.

The most recent accounts (2017/18) show an income of £62k and an expenditure of £51k. The major source of income is grants followed by donations from individuals and organisations. The majority of reserves are unrestricted and stood at £44.5k at the end of 2017/18.

The key activity of LCoS is a weekly drop-in which is open every Wednesday morning (10:30 – 13:30) and attended by between 70 and 100 asylum seekers and refugees. During 2017/18 an estimated 250 individual asylum seekers and refugees were supported at 49 drop-in sessions.

The drop-in provides a social space, lunch, gifts of food, toiletries and clothing, activities, signposting and advice. Around half the volunteer team running the drop-in are asylum seekers or refugees themselves, this provides our clients with opportunities to rebuild their confidence, develop skills and feel they are making a contribution. The drop-in also hosts talks and visits from other agencies such as the Police; this enables asylum seekers and refugees to build trust in other services and the services to deepen their understanding of the client group.

Alongside the drop-in LCoS provide ESOL classes (English for speakers of other languages) in partnership with the University of Leicester, computer classes, lifeskill workshops and other activities such as sewing and exercise. A hardship fund enables LCoS to make small payments to those in desperate circumstances and the NEST (New Evidence Search Team) scheme uses volunteers to help asylum seekers to better organise their evidence for case preparation. There are also regular trips, a bike scheme providing bikes to the most isolated asylum seekers, and on a Saturday morning a football session (with a coach from Leicester City Football Club) is attended by around 40 young men.

LCoS believe partnership working helps to ensure services are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner. Good relationships exist with many organisations including the Red Cross,

University of Leicester, Leicester City Football Club, the Police, Assist GP practice (hold the contract for healthcare for asylum seekers) and local specialist services such as Art Reach.

Users of the LCoS services come from a wide range of countries. As asylum seekers or refugees they have a unique set of disadvantages: many speak no English and have no experience of a westernised practices and expectations. Depending on their status they are subject to a complex array of different rights and restrictions; the whole asylum process can be confusing and have a disempowering effect. Some clients will have incurred trauma in their own country before leaving; many are in poor health, isolated, living under continual stress and experiencing low self confidence and self-esteem. They often have little trust of authorities including the Police: in their home country the action of the authorities towards them may well be the reason they are claiming asylum.

Service user feedback demonstrate that LCoS services deliver positive outcomes against these needs. Comments from service users include:

- *'it (the drop-in) keeps me healthier and happier'.*
- *'I regained my self-confidence and motivation to go forward'.*
- *'Waking up and going to the drop-in, where I volunteer, makes me feel like I've achieved something for that week'.*
- *'I feel less alone, glad I came, I met people who know my language'.*
- *'I am gaining skills from volunteering at LCoS'.*

Alongside direct work with asylum seekers and refugees LCoS encourages people in the host community to deepen their understanding of asylum seekers and refugees and to become more accepting and welcoming. This includes school visits, attendance at events, radio and social media coverage and an ambassador programme which enables asylum seekers and refugees to play a lead role in these activities.

The need for LCoS remains high. Whilst numbers of asylum seekers have stabilised there has been an increase in the rejection of claims. Coupled with the hostile environment approach of the government this is causing an increase in levels of destitution. A 2017 Red Cross report identified increasing destitution among asylum seekers and refugees, it highlighted Leicester, along with London and Cardiff, as the cities with the highest number of destitute individuals. LCoS intend to be ready to increase the capacity of, and broaden its services, if demand rises.

LCoS has many organisational strengths including in-depth experience of working with asylum seekers and refugees, a strength based approach that empowers service users, high service user involvement, excellent networks/partnerships and a good local profile. Weaker areas include financial uncertainty, lack of formal collection of outcome data, and a lack of capacity; current services are considered over-reliant on one key role and the goodwill of volunteers.

In this context LCoS has set six strategic aims:

- **To support asylum seekers and refugees meet their basic and social needs.**
- **To support asylum seekers and refugees to rebuild their confidence and develop their skills, enabling them to feel part of society**
- **To encourage people in and around Leicester to welcome asylum seekers and refugees into their communities**
- **To build organisational capacity to sustain existing levels and prepare for growth.**
- **To operate with a financially sustainable model.**
- **To develop the LCoS network and increase collaboration.**

The outcomes, outcomes and indicators that flow from this Strategic Plan can be found in the accompanying Business and Action Plan, which will be reviewed and updated in the light of changing circumstances.

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## 1. Vision and Mission Statements

### Vision Statement:

Our vision statement describes the future we desire. It is idealistic and reflects the long-term impact we expect our work to contribute to.

***‘Our vision is that all people fleeing violence and persecution are provided with sanctuary and are given opportunities to thrive’.***

### Mission Statement:

Our mission statement describes the specific contribution of LCoS to making the vision a reality. It seeks to give a sense of overall purpose and a broad outline of our approach.

***‘Our mission is to welcome asylum seekers and refugees in and around Leicester, and support them to rebuild their lives, develop their skills and feel part of the community’.***

#### Definitions and statutory support

Asylum Seeker – someone who has arrived in a country (which is not their country of origin) and seeks safety by claiming asylum. In the UK asylum seekers receive £37.75p/week (Nov 2018) and basic free accommodation, with no choice of location, whilst their application is assessed.

Refugee – someone who has been forced to leave his/her own country because of persecution and claimed asylum in another country and who has been given refugee status or leave to remain in accordance with the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees. In the UK they are entitled to all statutory services including Social Housing, Education, Healthcare and Welfare Benefits.

Refused Asylum Seeker – An asylum seeker whose application has been refused – in this situation rights and support normally reduce and the individual often endures a period of destitution or no recourse to public funds while they attempt to make a fresh claim for asylum. Refused asylum seekers may eventually be deported to their country of origin but often they become invisible and go underground.

#### Claiming Asylum and gaining Refugee Status – an overview

The process of applying for asylum and being granted refugee status is complex. A summary can be found at: <https://www.asylumaid.org.uk/the-asylum-process-made-simple/>

## 2. Value Statements:

Our values underpin the work of Leicester City of Sanctuary and how we behave as an organisation and as individuals. The staff, board and volunteers seek to model these values and behaviours to those we work with, those we seek to influence, and wider society.

<b>Leicester City of Sanctuary value...</b>	<b>So...</b>
<b>Welcome</b>	We create and encourage an environment in which all people can mix, feel safe, be valued and participate. We ensure all cultures and ways of life are respected, promoted and celebrated.
<b>Empathy</b>	We work towards a deep understanding of the difficulties those we support experience/have experienced. We make sure we are available to listen and respond to their needs, hopes and aspirations, standing alongside them in the challenges and anxieties they face. We acknowledge that not everyone will want to share, and recognise the importance of respecting confidentiality as the basis of building trust.
<b>Empowerment</b>	We encourage people (those we support, volunteers and staff) to recognise their strengths and we support them to build on their abilities and confidence. We actively engage asylum seekers and refugees in decision making. We encourage them to be ambassadors for LCoS work and to assist in the delivery of services to others.
<b>Education</b>	We encourage people to be open to learning and create pathways for asylum seekers and refugees to gain access to education. We challenge half-truths, mistruths and prejudice, attempting to help the wider community understand the real experience of asylum seekers and refugees.
<b>Cooperation</b>	We encourage compassion, care and consideration to others; conversation, communication and connection between people; and recognise the need for compromise and consensus. This enables us to work effectively as a team and to collectively deliver LCoS aims and mission.

### **3 About Leicester City of Sanctuary**

Leicester City of Sanctuary (LCoS) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (No: 1172819) registered in May 2017. The organisation was established in 2007 as an unincorporated entity that registered as a charity, (No: 1138017) in 2010.

LCoS is a member of, and emerged from, the National City of Sanctuary movement which is committed to building a culture of welcome and hospitality for asylum seekers and refugees across the UK. The organisation covers Leicester City, Leicestershire County and Rutland with the majority of its activity being based in the city.

The charity's main focus is to welcome asylum seekers and refugees, provide a community to which they can belong, help to meet their basic needs and to provide opportunities to develop skills and rebuild self-confidence. The organisation also encourages people in the host community to deepen their understanding of asylum seekers and refugees and to become more accepting and welcoming. There is a strong emphasis on partnership working to ensure the best possible services are delivered to LCoS service users and to minimise overlap and inefficiencies within the sector.

#### **3.1 Governance, Management and Staffing**

The organisation is governed by the Board of Trustees which in November 2018 comprised seven members (the minimum number is 5 and the maximum number 12). At every AGM one third of the trustees retire by rotation. Retiring trustees may stand for re-election unless they have served for three terms in which case one year must pass before they can stand for re-election. New trustees can be appointed at any time but must step down for re-election at the next AGM. The trustees elect officers, presently a Chair and Treasurer, in accordance with their skill sets, at the first meeting following the AGM. Brief biographical details of Board Members are included as Appendix 1.

The board meet bi-monthly and meetings are attended by the two members of staff; the Co-ordinator (4 days/week) and a Finance Officer (3 days/week). Three key volunteers, who have management responsibility for specific services, meet monthly with the two paid staff to form the Management team. LCoS is supported by 90 active volunteers and approximately a third of these volunteers are previous or current service users.

#### **3.2 Financial Situation.**

Accounts for year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 consist of one month as an unincorporated charity and 11 months as CIO. Combined income from independently examined accounts for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017) show a total income of £61.5k (£82k) and an expenditure of





£51.1k (£70k). Total reserves are £53.8k (£43.5k) of which £44.5k (£39.0k) are unrestricted. The accounts are independently examined. Current forecasts for the year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 indicate an income of £50k and expenditure of £60.5k leading a deficit of £10.7k, this is in line with the planned budgeted deficit of £10.8k. Around 75% of income is received through grants from statutory bodies and trusts (eg the Police & Crime Commissioner, The Big Lottery (via the Red Cross), Lloyds Bank Foundation and the National Lottery). The remainder is received as donations from organisations and individuals.

### **3.3 Services and service users**

The key activity of LCoS is a weekly drop-in which is open every Wednesday morning (10:30 – 13:30) and attended by between 70 and 100 asylum seekers and refugees. During 2017/18, 134 new asylum seekers attended and an estimated 250 unique individuals were supported at 49 drop-in sessions.



The drop-in provides a social space, lunch, therapeutic massage, signposting and advice. Food, toiletries and good quality second hand clothing is available and a scheme called 'Appealing 4' sources specific items that people need but cannot afford such as a pushchair. There is a specific area for pre-school age children with dedicated activities for around 12 children each week.

The drop-in also provides purposeful activity for asylum seekers. More than half the volunteer team running the drop-in are asylum seekers themselves, fulfilling roles such as welcoming service users, serving food and helping with set up and taking down. Depending on skills and experience many also assist with running activities and services within the drop-in.

The drop-in is unique in the city and LCoS are often approached by local organisations who want to engage with asylum seekers and refugees. The drop-in acts as a 'hub' with regular visits and talks from agencies such as the police; this enables service users to build trust and confidence in other agencies and find out about other services available in the city. The agencies also benefit by deepening their understanding of the client group and the challenges they face.

LCoS also deliver ESOL classes (English for speakers of other languages) in partnership with the University of Leicester, computer classes, lifeskill workshops and other activities such as sewing, cooking and exercise (soccerise). A hardship fund enables LCoS to make small payments to those in desperate circumstances and the NEST (New Evidence Search Team) scheme uses volunteers to help asylum seekers to better organise their evidence for case preparation. There are also regular trips organised, a bike scheme providing bikes to the most isolated asylum seekers, and on a Saturday morning a football session (with Leicester City Football Club) is attended by around 40 young men.



Users of the drop-in are extremely varied coming from a wide range of countries and speaking many different languages. As asylum seekers or refugees they have a unique set of disadvantages and needs. Many clients speak no English at all and have no experience of a westernised practices and expectations.

Depending on their exact status they are subject to a complex array of different rights and restrictions; the whole asylum process can be confusing and have a disempowering effect. Some clients will have incurred trauma in their own country before leaving; many are in poor health, isolated, living under continual stress and experiencing low self confidence and self-esteem. They often have little trust of authorities including the Police: in their home country the action of the authorities towards them may well be the reason they are claiming asylum.

### **3.4 Engaging and influencing the 'host' community**

Alongside the direct work supporting asylum seekers and refugees LCoS encourages people in and around Leicester to become more accepting and welcoming of asylum seekers and refugees. This is achieved by providing opportunities to learn about, and interact with, asylum seekers and refugees. Most of this work directly involves asylum seekers and refugees through the LCoS 'Ambassador' project. This trains and support them to welcome visitors to the drop-in

and represent LCoS at talks, events and school visits and provides another opportunity to build confidence and skills.

### **3.5 Outcomes**

LCoS plans to develop a formal evaluation and monitoring framework during the first year of this business plan. At present data is collected informally through the feedback of service users and via work completed by partners (The Red Cross and University of Leicester). This data clearly indicates that LCoS is delivering positive health and wellbeing outcomes including reduction of isolation, increased emotional well-being and the development of skills.

Informal feedback from asylum seekers that have volunteered at the Drop-in includes:

- *'it keeps me healthier and happier'.*
- *'I love making someone else's life a little easier and I get mental calm'.*
- *'I feel depressed at home but comfortable and relaxed at LCoS'.*
- *'I am gaining skills from volunteering at LCoS'.*
- *'I regained my self-confidence and motivation to go forward'.*
- *'Waking up and going to the drop-in makes me feel like I've achieved something for that week'.*

The Red Cross evaluate the drop-in as part of their monitoring for the Big Lottery project, The Leicester Refugee Project in which LCoS is a partner. In the most recent survey 85% (121 of 143) of those surveyed reported a reduction in isolation, and an increase in social networks, as a result of their attendance at the drop-in.

In mid-2018 the University of Leicester, in partnership with LCoS, commenced a longitudinal study 'The Quality of Life Project'. This focuses on asylum seekers and refugees and will identify the impact that LCoS has on their lives. It is too early for quantitative data to be available but initial feedback from the researcher includes *'the voluntary role is highly valued'*. Comments from service users include:

- *'I feel less alone, glad I came, I met people who know my language'.*
- *'Coming here is like another home, I have friends and family here'.*
- *'I feel alone at home, here I feel relaxed'.*
- *'If I stay at home I feel depressed and exhausted, coming here helps me overcome depression'.*
- *'It's like a balloon, it fills up with tension and could explode, I feel it will explode if I do not release it, without the activities at the sanctuary I may as well just die'.*

Client case histories and an illustration of the work with the wider community are included as Appendix 2.

## 4 The Need for Leicester City of Sanctuary

### Broad trends in numbers of Refugees & Asylum Seekers

The UNHCR 2017 Global Trends report (<http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2017/>) states that in 2017 the number of people forcibly displaced from their homes worldwide came at a record rate of 44,400 every day. The population of displaced people is now 68.5m, in excess of the UK's population. The top three countries of origin are Syria, Afghanistan and South Sudan.

The most recent immigration statistics (end June 2018) released by the Home Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2018/summary-of-latest-statistics>) showed there were 27,044 applications for asylum from a main applicant (ie excluding dependents) in the last 12 months, down 1% on the previous year. This is a return to the level before the 2015 European migration crisis and the highest number of claims continue to be from those from Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. In the same period 14,308 grants of asylum or alternative forms of protection and resettlement were made, down 12% compared with the previous year.

### The situation in Leicester

In October 2018 G4S advised the Leicester Multi Agency Forum that there were 964 asylum seekers housed in NASS accommodation in Leicester. This is likely to understate the real situation as refused asylum seekers are unlikely to live in NASS accommodation. An independent, unpublished, analysis in 2014 indicated that there were around 4000 asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in Leicester with no recourse to public funds. The 2015 European migrant crisis is likely to have increased numbers since then and the policy of creating a 'hostile environment' for immigration is likely to have increased levels of hardship and destitution further.

A British Red Cross report published in February 2017 reported a 10% increase in destitution among asylum seekers and refugees with the highest number of destitute individuals found in Leicester, London and Cardiff. The destitution occurs due to asylum support payments being stopped or suspended when a claim is refused and, for those that have been granted refugee status, only being allowed a 28 day period of continued payments. This is not long enough to secure alternative income through job applications/earning (asylum seekers are not allowed to work) or to claim welfare benefit payments.



## 5 **Situational Analysis**

### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEICESTER CITY OF SANCTUARY**

- **Increasing capacity and breadth of services**

Conflict (especially in the Middle East), continued religious and political persecution, natural disasters and poverty continue to create high numbers of asylum seekers. The UK government policy of creating a 'hostile environment' means that whilst numbers seeking asylum may be stable, they are increasingly isolated, at threat of deportation and/or experiencing destitution with minimal recourse to public funds and services. This creates an opportunity to increase capacity and broaden the services offered.

- **Influencing and educating the general public**

Immigration issues continue to have a high profile and the public appear to be confused about the various 'types' of migrant. This is compounded by the rise in far right politics, Islamophobia and racially motivated hate crime and violence. Leicester City is likely to be the first city with a majority non-white population; there may be particular opportunities to share learning with other locations.

- **Increased volunteer engagement**

The ageing demographic and demonstrable high levels of civic engagement in the response to tragedies (e.g. Grenfell Tower) suggest there is an opportunity to grow volunteer numbers to increase the capacity of LCoS's work.

- **Incorporating new funding models**

Reduced public expenditure creates the need to explore new income generating ideas, including individual donors and corporate support. The Windrush scandal demonstrated that many public have sympathy for, and will support, migrants; connecting with these individuals creates an opportunity to build support for the work of LCoS.

- **Improving communications, fundraising and campaigning**

Developments around social media and communications create opportunities to mobilise support quickly and efficiently for fundraising and influencing activity.

- **Improving Efficiency**

New technology also creates the opportunity to allow more flexible working, reduce costs and improve productivity.



## **THREATS TO LEICESTER CITY OF SANCTUARY**

- **Public Opinion on Immigration issues and extremism**

The extreme negative attitudes of some members of society is worsening the working environment of LCoS. This increases the threat of violence towards LCoS staff, volunteers and clients and is a threat to client's ongoing wellbeing as these attitudes further undermine their already weakened self-esteem. The hostile environment also presents particular challenges when trying to encourage local communities to engage with asylum seekers and refugees.

- **Reducing public expenditure and austerity**

Reducing Local Authority funding is also leading to increased competition for grants from trust funds and for donations from individuals. Uncertainty about Brexit, slow growth in wages and increasing inflation is reducing disposable incomes especially for younger people who spend a high proportion of income on rent/mortgage. Potentially people are less able to donate funds; this is balanced in part by the increasing polarisation of wealth resulting in a cohort that are more able to donate assuming they are sympathetic to the LCoS cause.

- **Government policies on Immigration, Asylum Seekers and Refugees.**

The policy of creating a hostile environment is a threat to those we support; as noted in opportunities this may create a need for increased services due to increasing destitution, this could overwhelm services. If policies do reduce the numbers of asylum seekers the need for LCoS services may reduce.

- **Evidencing outcomes and impact.**

The need to provide evidence is a threat as it takes time and resources. It is difficult to apportion outcomes and find appropriate measures given the 'soft' nature of much of LCoS work. The emphasis on targets from government and many funders, however well-intentioned, can detract from individual's actual needs and de-personalise clients.

- **Capacity to embrace new technology**

Use of new technology can improve long-term efficiency but will require additional time and funds to purchase hard/software, integrate into existing systems, to train users and keep data up to date. Some staff, volunteers and service users may be resistant and/or unable to embrace change regardless of the wider benefits. There is a risk of damage to reputation from social media content due to the difficulties of controlling content.

- **Regulation**

Increasing regulation, including GDPR, increases the risk of non-compliance which could result in reputational damage and an adverse impact on LCoS.

## **STRENGTHS OF LEICESTER CITY OF SANCTUARY**

- LCoS has a high level of ‘hands-on’ experience of working with asylum seekers and refugees.
- LCoS adopts a strength-based approach that aims to empower service users. As one service user states *‘I can now speak to large crowds – who would believe I was once a shy lady who found it difficult to speak to even one person’*.
- LCoS delivers positive outcomes (As one user states *‘it (the drop-in) keeps me healthier and happier’*, see section 3.4).
- The organisation ensures service users are central to all work undertaken; this empowers individuals and assures services fit the needs of service users. Ex-service users are represented on the board and many become volunteers, delivering services to other service users.
- The organisation provides a diverse range of services and provides a choice of activities from fun/social activities to learning opportunities.
- The drop-ins are characterised by a positive, friendly and welcoming atmosphere. This lowers barriers to engagement and helps build trust between staff, volunteers and service users.
- LCoS is good at networking and have developed several strategic partnerships (eg The Red Cross and University of Leicester) which have enhanced services and increased opportunities for progression by service users.
- LCoS has a good local profile, enjoys an excellent local reputation and has a network that includes several influential individuals.
- LCoS have an effective and regularly updated on-line presence and De Montfort University is assisting further developments with social media. LCoS Facebook page has 1176 followers and requests for assistance are usually resolved within a couple of hours of posting.
- LCoS have successfully secured funding from a number of sources including National Lottery People’s Project, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Comic Relief and the A B Foundation.
- LCoS are part of the wider City of Sanctuary network that provides information (eg policy briefings on changes affecting the sector), support with infrastructure (eg policies) and networking opportunities.

### **WEAKNESSES OF LEICESTER CITY OF SANCTUARY**

- The organisation is operating beyond its capacity and there is a heavy reliance on the Co-ordinator and the goodwill of volunteers. There is no succession planning for the key member of staff.
- There is financial uncertainty and no significant regular funding. There is no funding strategy or financial planning and no dedicated fundraising resource: this role falls, amongst many other duties, to the Co-ordinator.
- There is no fixed office which can make communications difficult.
- Capturing of outcome information has been inconsistent and weakens funding applications. A University of Leicester research project will help generate some outcome data.
- There are skills and experience gaps within the board especially around marketing and fundraising.
- There are some inconsistencies in how policies are practically applied across the organisation which can result in misunderstandings and confusion.
- The organisation is small and lacks financial resilience.
- Service boundaries are occasionally crossed due to the passion of the staff to support those in need. This is in tension with the empowerment approach of the organisation and linked to a lack of clarity on service user exit from the service.



## **COMPETITOR & COLLABORATOR ANALYSIS**

There is a delicate balance between competition and collaboration for organisations in the voluntary sector. This section highlights existing and potential collaboration and possible threats from competition. A more complete analysis can be found in Appendix 3.

### **National Organisations**

There are a number of national organisations that focus totally, or in part, on supporting asylum seekers and refugees. These include Refugee Council, Refugee Action and the Red Cross.

All these organisations have campaigning aspects to which LCoS can signpost individuals keen to engage in that type of activity. They all offer a good source of information of policy changes and good practice.

Of these organisations only the Red Cross delivers support services in Leicester and LCoS works in close partnership with their local team minimising overlap and ensuring synergism between services. The Refugee Council and Refugee Action are unlikely to compete by introducing services in Leicester; in areas where they are not providing services the approach is to signpost to existing services.

LCoS also has a good working relationship with G4S who provide NASS accommodation for asylum seekers in and around Leicester, LCoS advocates, with some success, regarding individual's specific needs when appropriate.

Additionally LCoS is a member of the City of Sanctuary movement and receives information, support with policies, and networking opportunities including a regional conference.

### **Local Organisations**

LCoS has good relationships with Leicester University and Leicester Football Club. The university is supporting through a research project focused on identifying the outcomes and impact of the organisation as well as providing ESOL classes to many LCoS service users. The football club helps through the provision of football training on a Saturday and soccerise exercise activity at the drop-in.

There are a wide range of specialist providers that provide additional support to LCoS service users. These range from Assist GP practice to Art Reach. Often the model is that the organisations have a presence at the drop-in making access easy for service users. There is a good relationship with the local police force that also regularly visits the drop-in. LCoS refers service users to other organisations such as Afro-Innovation (employability for refugees) and TREC for more specialised support.

A range of Faith-based groups and churches are supportive offering a source of volunteers, funds and donated goods. Colleges present an opportunity to develop additional ESOL support and to provide pathways into education.

The vast majority of local organisations pose a minimal threat to LCoS but some will compete for funding from local trusts and national funders such as the Big Lottery.

## 6 Funding Strategy

The National Council for Voluntary Sector Organisations (NCVO) describe 3 components to sustainable funding:

- Planning – knowing what funds are required for and when
- Matching the right type of funding to the need
- Ensuring adequate resource is available to deliver the fundraising activity

### Matching: Funding Streams and fit to the Leicester City of Sanctuary's work

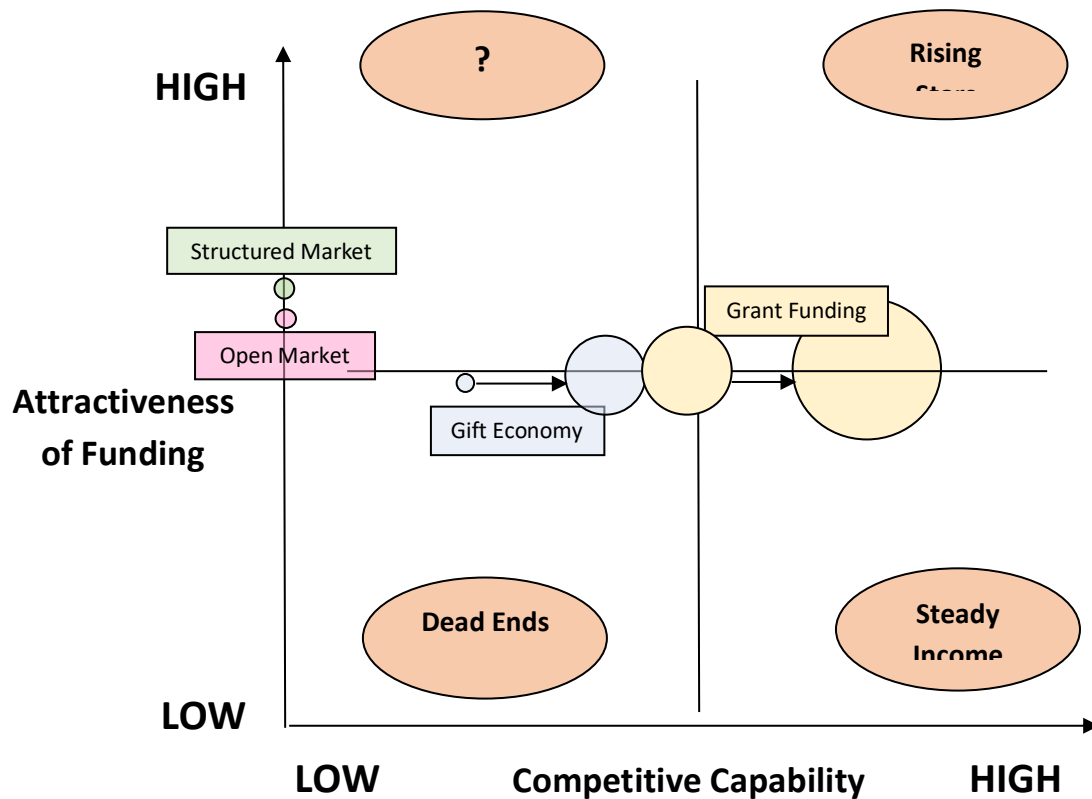
There are four main funding/income streams available to the voluntary and community sector.

The table below highlights the streams and ways in which the LCoS currently receive and/or could potentially receive income.

<b>Income strand and definition</b>	<b>Leicester City of Sanctuary - current position and potential</b>
<b><u>OPEN MARKET</u></b> The trading of goods and services	<u>Current situation:</u> No income.  <u>Potential:</u> Minimal opportunity to charge service users even for drinks/food as many are destitute.
<b><u>STRUCTURED MARKET</u></b> Delivery of services and goods to terms set out in a contract, for payment. Legally binding.	<u>Current Situation:</u> No contracts or sub-contracts  <u>Potential:</u> Unlikely to be relevant contracts to cover the work LCoS deliver.
<b><u>GRANT FUNDING</u></b> Funds tied to specific objectives....not normally legally binding to outcomes/outputs	<u>Current Situation:</u> Have received funding from a range of grant funders including National Lottery People's Project, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Police & Crime Commissioner, YAPP Trust and Red Cross.  <u>Potential:</u> There are other grant funders that would potentially support the work of the LCoS. Some can be approached for 'Core' rather than project funding.
<b><u>GIFT ECONOMY</u></b> Money given by individuals (or organisations) to support a cause – may be broadly or narrowly defined	<u>Current Situation:</u> Income received from individuals and local organisations (eg Quakers). Limited amount as regular giving.  <u>Potential:</u> Opportunity to develop support from individuals, organisations and corporates and to convert one-off giving into regular donations.

### Funding Matrix and overall strategies

This tool can be used to guide funding strategy; it plots the 'external attractiveness' of the funding (e.g. is it increasing/decreasing, easily accessible etc.) against an organisation's internal 'competitive capability' (e.g. experience and expertise) in securing the funding from that strand. The matrix can be completed at a variety of levels; the funding matrix below represents the four main strands in the table above. The size of the circles are broadly in proportion to the current level of funding received and the arrows show the likely/desired direction of travel.



The strategies suggested by the matrix depend on the quadrant in which funding strands are placed. Overall the most attractive funding streams are structured and open reflecting the current emphasis on charities earning income in order to become sustainable. However for LCoS these are simply not accessible given the nature of the work and the client group. Grant funding and gift economy, whilst not significantly growing, remain the most appropriate source of funding.

The funding strategy of LCoS is to:

- **Continue to develop grant income from trusts, foundations and other grant funders**  
LCoS will build on previous success and invest resources to increase the competitiveness of, and number of, applications.

- **Develop gift income from individuals, organisations and corporates**

LCoS receive some support from individuals though this is generally of an adhoc nature, little deliberate planned fundraising activity is carried out. LCoS consider this type of funding highly resilient and desirable; despite the longer timescales to achieve a return LCoS intend to invest in developing this income stream. The initial effort will be focused on developing relationships with those already donating followed by identifying others within the network who may support LCoS work.

LCoS recognise the specialised nature of fundraising work from individuals and will seek to develop their fundraising expertise through appropriate training and support as well as ensuring activity is proportionate to the size of the organisation and remains fully within the LCoS value base.

## **7 Strategic Goals**

Based on the vision and mission statement, values and the situational analysis Leicester City of Sanctuary have set six strategic aims:

**1. To support asylum seekers and refugees meet their basic and social needs.**

**Rationale:** There is a hierarchy of needs when supporting people. Before asylum seekers and refugee's confidence and skills can be built, basic needs, such as food, housing and having a sense of belonging, must be addressed.

**2. To support asylum seekers and refugees to rebuild their confidence and develop their skills, enabling them to feel part of society**

**Rationale:** Those we support are usually disempowered by their experiences, many have experienced trauma and high stress which adversely affects their emotional well-being. LCoS role is to provide opportunities to asylum seekers and refugees to rebuild their confidence and skills, and to encourage them to use these within the wider community.

**3. To encourage people in and around Leicester to welcome asylum seekers and refugees into their communities**

**Rationale:** If the host community's understanding of asylum seekers and refugees was more complete they would be more likely to recognise the reality of why individuals choose to seek refuge in another country. This would lead to society becoming more accepting and welcoming.

**4. To build organisational capacity to sustain existing levels and prepare for growth.**

**Rationale:** LCoS is currently over-stretched and there is likely to be increasing demand for LCoS services. Further resources (eg staff, volunteers, IT and premises etc) and the continual improvement and development of services are required to ensure clients receive the best possible support.

**5. To operate with a financially sustainable model.**

**Rationale:** LCoS can only fulfil its mission if it has adequate resources and the security of a financially sustainable model.

**6. To develop the LCoS network and increase collaboration.**

**Rationale:** LCoS recognises that many other groups have similar aims and have expertise that can help asylum seekers and refugees. Rather than reinvent the wheel LCoS is keen to identify and work with others, adding synergy to each other's work and improving/co-ordinating the support available to asylum seekers and refugees.

There is a separate Business and Action Plan, containing outcomes, outcomes and indicators that flow from the Strategic Plan. This will be reviewed and updated in the light of changing circumstances.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 – Biographies of Trustees and Co-ordinator as at January 2019**

**Rev. Peter Hobson** (Chair, trustee since October 2014) - I bring knowledge of charity law and of how to make organisations work, and experience in leading meetings and managing relationships. I have aimed to bring clarity to governance and to the relationship between trustees as those legally responsible for the charity and others who work for it in a range of roles. I have been personally deeply committed to working with and on behalf of asylum seekers for many years, and see this as close to the heart of my calling as a Christian minister.

**Mr Ajay Aggarwal** (trustee since June 2018) - I am a solicitor and practicing in Leicester my specialization is in the UK Immigration and Family Law. I have a PhD from the University of Delhi and the study was an attempt to understand the resettlement process of Tibetan refugees in India. I have been part of Leicester City of Sanctuary and NEST team for a long time (and a past trustee for 3 years). I believe to work for the marginalized section of our society. I have been working with different migrant communities to promote dialogue and mutual understanding since I came to the UK. I offer my legal expertise, networking with many communities in Leicester and my experience of more than 25 years.

**Dr Margaret Bonney** (trustee since June 2018) - I have watched the development of LCoS since 2007 with admiration and I applaud the work it does to support refugees and asylum seekers. I am keen to share in its future. As former head of the Record Office in Wigston, I can bring:

- experience of managing volunteers, who are vital to the organisation
- developing policies, essential within the charity sector today
- supporting staff actively

As former Education and Programmes Officer at St Philip's Centre, working to help interfaith/ intercommunity understanding, I can bring a passion for communicating the importance of LCoS's work and ethos in particular to young people and children.

**Ms Jenny Dnes** (vice-chair and trustee since October 2017) - I have had a long-standing concern for asylum seekers and when I retired in 2016 I hoped to become involved with the work in Leicester City of Sanctuary. As Director of Admissions at the University of Leicester, my work included recruitment, finances, managing change and employment issues. Since becoming a trustee I have worked closely with paid staff on a number of areas, including financial reporting and implementing the new data protection regulations.

**Mr Samuel Javid** (trustee since June 2015) - My relationship with the organisation started in 2013 when in my role as a Producer for ArtReach I fundraised for and delivered the first 'Journeys Festival' – an arts festival dedicated to sharing the experiences of refugees and asylum

seekers. I have been a Trustee of Curve theatre and currently serve as a Trustee for the Leicester Print Workshop. I understand the important role good governance plays in non-profit organisations; especially one as values-driven and community-led as LCoS. I hope to continue serving in this role and supporting the great work its volunteers and coordinators do every single day.

**Mr Golden Ngwenya** (trustee since June 2015) - I have been engaged with asylum seekers' issues and reporting back to trustee meetings about concerns from asylum seekers. I also attend Red Cross steering group meetings for asylum seekers. The language barrier also has been a stumbling block to resolve some of the unknown asylum seeker problems. Despite having some interpreters there is still much to be done for those who cannot speak English. Our English classes have enabled most asylum seekers to bring forward their asylum claims I personally know who are now able to speak out about their asylum plights. There is still a lot to do and as a trustee I aim to ensure that genuine demands from asylum seekers are resolved accordingly.

**Mr Eric Nkundumubano** (trustee since June 2018) - I am a former asylum seeker and refugee and I understand the concerns, challenges and aspirations of this client group. I am accredited to provide legal advice in the immigration and asylum field and am accustomed to keeping abreast of updates and information in the asylum field. I have experience of refugee support project management as well as budget oversight. I believe that I am a person who is compassionate, courageous and dynamic and promotes diversity and I will bring these values as a trustee.

**Ms Shali Bullough** (Co-ordinator)

I have previous experience working as an information scientist for various research associations and as the managing director of a small IT training company. I was a volunteer with LCoS for 3 years before becoming Co-ordinator, fulfilling various roles, including grants officer and Deputy Co-ordinator. Since joining LCoS I have brought in more than 100K in successful grant applications, and have run a most of the resulting projects. These include a £10,000 welcoming project funded by Big Lottery, a £50,000 Peoples Project funded by the Lottery which allowed the charity of harness the goodwill of the local community and engage with more than 40 organisations in a single year, and a project funded by the PCC related to the Prevent programme.



## **Appendix 2 – Case Histories**

John came to Leicester as an asylum seeker from Uganda in 2003. He was dispersed to Leicester in 2013, where he discovered LCoS. He quickly got involved in various projects at the drop-in, including helping to show new arrivals around the city. John took part in a fun run dressed as Santa to raise money for the charity and also represented LCoS at the annual Sanctuary in Parliament event. After getting his leave to remain, John got a job as a Housing Officer and used his knowledge to offer advice to other new refugees. John later became a trustee, serving on the board between 2015-2018. John really appreciates the help he got when he first arrived in Leicester.

*"It is very traumatising because you don't know what to expect, you don't know who to talk to because you are in a strange world. I've been through that, I know what it's like. If you don't have people to hold your hand then you end up in problems. If you get the opportunity to access services through organisations like Leicester City of Sanctuary, then you feel like you are at home."*

Yusef first came to the drop-in during 2015. He had previously been a management consultant but had been forced to flee the Yemen several months earlier, as he was being persecuted for his faith. Having good IT skills, he began helping the weekly IT class. The volunteer leader of the class fell ill and Yusef stepped up and led the sessions for over six months.

Eventually receiving leave to remain, he sought a place on an MSc course in Finance and graduated from Coventry University in April 2018. LCoS put him in touch with the Red Cross who helped him to bring his family to the UK to join him. Now reunited with his wife and son in Birmingham, Yusef says the support he received from LCoS was vital. *'I had gained hospitality from the LCoS team when I was new to Leicester. Most importantly, they financed my fare to and from Leicester-London without which I could never have been able to visit the solicitor handling my asylum case. I appreciated that because they did it in a situation when I was in need of it and where no one else was around for help.'*

Anju, an asylum seeker, spent 8 years living in London and Birmingham but never felt part of the community she lived in. This changed when she came to live in Leicester where Anju says *'the City of Sanctuary gave her a chance to bloom'*.

She is a volunteer and ambassador with LCoS as well as a service user. Over the last three and a half years, while living in Leicester, Anju says her English has improved 75% and her confidence to the degree that she can now not only write poetry in English but also read her poetry out to a crowd of hundreds of people. Thanks to LCoS Anju says she has *'changed from a very shy, quiet and friendless girl into a loving, friendly and confident lady'*.

Jafor is a young man from Bangladesh and first visited the drop-in in 2015. He volunteers registering new arrivals and also acts as an ambassador for the charity, accompanying us on talks and visits and talking about his experiences. Jafor says that the drop-in has helped him make friends and that he enjoys using his knowledge to help other vulnerable people who have experienced trauma. *'LCoS is good for my well-being. It has helped me to connect with the community and share my experience of being an asylum seeker. I am truly proud to be part of LCoS. Thank you so much LCoS for opening your door for us'.*

Deen and his family fled from Sri Lanka and were relocated to Leicester in 2013. Back in Sri Lanka, Deen had been a teacher. He has an economics degree from one of Sri Lanka's most prestigious universities but had to flee during the civil war.

*'My family was relocated to Leicester. We were isolated, mentally traumatised and struggling to cope with an entirely new environment. Thank god I was fortunate to find a brochure about LCoS where I found a friendly, cordial atmosphere, and a committed, dedicated team who warmly received me, my wife and 2 teenage kids.*

*At LCoS I have been enjoyed much assistance. It is an oasis in a desert of desolation. Thank God. LCoS helped my kids to get free transport to college. My wife who is a bit shy and poor in communication skills has gained immensely from the English classes. Above all I regained my self-confidence and motivation to go forward. I now have enough stamina to face any challenges with courage and vitality.'*

### **How the rural village of Billesdon became a place of welcome**

It all started on 24<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2015, when the Vicar of St. John Baptist Church in Billesdon village, heard that Leicester Cathedral was hosting a public meeting organised by Leicester City of Sanctuary. "The Refugee Crisis - What can we do to help?" brought together charities, groups and concerned individuals, to share information on what we could all do to welcome asylum seekers and refugees into our city and surrounding area.

Judy Brittenden and her son Daniel offered to represent St Johns, and felt particularly drawn to practical help being provided by LCoS. They asked LCoS volunteer Colleen Molloy how a small rural community like Billesdon could be of practical help, suggesting various offerings such as bicycles, sewing machines, toiletries etc, Colleen agreed that all of these would indeed be most welcome. Suddenly her face lit up, " But I'll tell you what would be really wonderful," she said, describing how heart-warming it would be for a group of asylum seekers to be welcomed to the village for a whole afternoon of 'getting to know one another'. There might be a walk in the countryside and a meal, but the aim would be to give the LCoS visitors a positive experience as well as allowing the villagers to see asylum seekers as real people, hear their stories and better understand the challenges they face.

Judy and Dan reported back, and were touched by the response in the village. Bicycles that hadn't seen the light of day for many years were hauled out of sheds and garages. And sewing machines came down from lofts. When it came to the proposed visit there was some anxiety and trepidation, but six people bravely came forward.

The trip was arranged for 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2016. Naturally the villagers were a little nervous, having no real idea what to expect, how the visitors might react, or how they would cope. Undaunted, they went to enormous efforts, organising not only a visit to the village, but also a tour of the local fire-station, a nature walk, games on the village green followed by an enormous high-tea.

The fire-station was a particular highlight. Everyone had the chance to climb into the fire-engine, don a helmet and have a go at spraying water from a fire-hose. The more intrepid visitors also felt their way into a "smoke-filled" room to rescue a cuddly toy.

One young girl, newly arrived from Iran, remembers the trip well. Now 14, and well-integrated in school, she recalls 'it was a joyous place to play and meet other children. I really loved the picnic and games, it was a different experience for me to play in the countryside'. Her mother adds 'I loved the atmosphere of the church - so peaceful and calming'.

After all their initial anxieties, the villagers were surprised at how much they enjoyed the afternoon, and were even more amazed that the enjoyment was absolutely mutual.

Overall it was a wonderful trip where hope and resilience were renewed. A lovely example of connecting people and providing welcome, and the beginning of a great partnership and individual friendships.

The Billedson group became frequent visitors to our drop-in, regularly providing toiletries and building friendships with different families in our group. Another visit was arranged in 2017, where thanks to the generosity of their church, they hired a minibus to transport us to the village, thoroughly spoilt us with fun and food before returning us to Leicester.

Now in its third year, the Billesdon visit has become an annual event we all look forward to. Any previous apprehension and anxiety has been replaced by the joyful anticipation of renewing old friendships and forging new ones. And the event gets bigger and better each year, with more people in the Billesdon community getting involved. In Sept 2018, thanks to Edward Hill, seven LCoS families were invited on tour of a local dairy farm, where we saw the cows being milked and even had a chance to meet some calves. This was followed by a slap-up tea, games for the children and gifts for all. It was delightful to escape into the countryside, enjoy warm hospitality and see such a different way of life.

At the end of the day, one young mother who was visiting Billesdon for the third time, said to Judy, "When I come to your village, I feel as though I'm coming home."  
We could not ask for more than that.



### Appendix 3 – Competitors and Collaborators Analysis

Organisation & its work	Opportunities for Collaboration including existing work	Threats from Competition
<b>National Organisations</b>		
<b>Red Cross</b> – runs a number of refugee projects within UK. Offers Refugee Support services in Leicester at Thurmaston though shortly relocating into city centre.	Currently in year 3 of partnership with Red Cross who provide funds to LCoS along with skills, resources, and referrals.  Minimal overlap of services, hope to renew partnership and involved in joint funding application.	Minimal as both organisations offer distinct areas of support.  Some risk that ‘national’ Red Cross policy could impose a way of working that would not suit the current local arrangements.
<b>National City of Sanctuary Network</b> Umbrella body for City of Sanctuary movement which focuses on ensuring the UK is a welcoming place	As members of the umbrella we benefit through the sharing of good practice, networking opportunities, information, regional conferences and support with policies (eg GDPR)	No threat
<b>Refugee Council</b> – National organisation delivering support services within London and campaigning/influencing activity.	Good source of information especially on changes in policy.	Unlikely to start delivering locally. Work outside existing delivery areas through sign-posting
<b>Refugee Action</b> – delivers specific services in a number of cities (including London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester) including Syrian Vulnerable People Resettlement Scheme. Also campaigning work and offering support to other organisations working with asylum seekers and refugees.	We can direct people interested in campaigning to their activities.	
<b>Home Office</b> – Government department with responsibility for setting policy regarding asylum seekers and refugees.	Funding possibilities though hard to access as ‘small’ organisation.  Opportunity to join with others campaigning against aspects of policy	Policies making life difficult for LCoS service users and potentially organisations active in this area.
<b>Large Service Providers</b> – eg G4S who provide NASS accommodation for asylum seekers in Leicester.	LCoS have a relationship with local office. G4S refer to LCoS and provide information on number of asylum seekers in Leicester.  To advocate regarding individual cases regarding individual’s specific needs.	Unlikely to compete for work of funding LCoS would seek as ‘too small’ and not contract.

<b>General Medical Council</b> – Have a framework to enable refugee medics to get requalified to meet UK demands	Refer on.	N/A
<b>Amnesty International</b> – Local group at University	Some potential to support, focus likely to be on campaigning.	N/A
<b><u>Local Organisations</u></b>		
<b>Leicester University</b> - Recently became a University of Sanctuary.	Completing a research project to capture outcomes and impact. Delivers ESOL to LCoS service users. Potential source of volunteers Potentially offering scholarships to LCoS service users	N/A
<b>De Montford University</b>	Potential to develop similar collaboration as Leicester University	N/A
<b>Leicester City Football Club</b>	Fund and support LCoS football activities. Possible joint funding (Integration Fund) Potential to help setting up ladies sport eg Netball.	N/A
<b>Police</b> – often the first contact made with an UASC	Visit drop-in once a month. Provide sessions on hate crime. Promote LCoS services to asylum seekers and refugees.	N/A
<b>Organisations offering specialist activities eg</b> Art Reach Writing East Midlands	Volunteering and involvement opportunities for service users. Support and offering activities to service users (especially Art Reach which has seasonal lull in activity) and Writing East Midlands if funding achieved.	Unlikely to directly compete as these organisations have a wider remit. May compete generally for funds such as Big Lottery.
<b>Specialist Support Services focusing on asylum seekers and refugees eg</b> <b>Trec</b> (Refugee support only) <b>After 18</b> (Asylum seekers aged 18 – 24)	Generally good relationship[s] with cross referrals as appropriate especially: - employability programmes for refugees (Trec and Afro-Innovation).	Will compete for similar local trust funds and individual donors.

<p><b>Afro-Innovation</b> (has moved into asylum seekers and refugee support)  <b>Assist GP Practice</b> – has contract for healthcare services to asylum seekers and refugees</p>	<p>- Medical support to Drop-in (Assist GP)</p>	<p>Afro-Innovation particularly proactive and some LCoS volunteers have moved to support.</p>
<p><b>Faith based groups and Churches</b> – wide range of groups/churches with interest in refugee issues including Quakers</p>	<p>A good source of financial and practical support and volunteering.  Quakers provide funding and practical donations.</p>	<p>N/A</p>