

Annual Report 2022 - 2023

and Unaudited Accounts
Year Ending March 31st 2023





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VISION AND MISSION

Our Vision and Mission statements define the work of the RSG.

Every year we will check to ensure our progress and achievements continue to reflect our commitments.

Our Vision

We are aiming to make Berkshire a supporting and inclusive society which embraces refugees and asylum seekers with humanity, respect and dignity.

Progress

As always, this is RSG's focus. We continue to campaign and advocate for refugees and asylum seekers throughout the County of Berkshire.

Through the work of Reading City of Sanctuary, the Berkshire community is becoming more aware of the needs of refugees and asylum seekers allowing them to get more involved in the community and to feel valued.

Our Mission

To improve the lives of refugees and asylum seekers through advice and support which promote awareness and integration into the Berkshire community.

Progress

Our improving relationships with local partner charities help to encourage integration into Berkshire life, allowing all parts of the community to be accessible to refugees and asylum seekers.

Reading City of Sanctuary is making various community groups aware of the needs of those we help.



RSG VALUES

Our Values are set and remain central to the work of the RSG and guide the staff and trustees.

We review them every year to ensure we are upholding our values in everything we do.

1. That social justice, human dignity and respect as prescribed by the European Convention on Human Rights and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) must be upheld.

There is much misinformation in the media and social platforms about refugees and asylum seekers and we have been vigorous in correcting the misconceptions generated.

2. That diversity including race, culture, ability, sexuality, gender, age, religion and other beliefs is beneficial to the community and should be celebrated.

We have continued to improve our relationships with different borough councils in Berkshire. Reading City of Sanctuary has also continued to spread awareness about refugees and asylum seekers in the county, and has created initiatives for our equality, diversity and inclusion strategies.

3. That the rights of individuals defined in the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the responsibilities of signatories to that convention should be respected and upheld.

Throughout the year, we have campaigned to give effect to rights and responsibilities and to make sure that those with authority are held to account.

4. That working in partnership with other organisations improves effectiveness and spreads understanding.

We would like to thank all the different charities and organisations we have partnered over the year; together we are creating a network of support for refugees and asylum seekers, and we are very grateful for all your help.

5. That maintaining confidentiality in working with those we seek to help is of the greatest importance in generating trust and security.

We have reviewed and improved our confidentiality policy, ensuring that all staff and volunteers are familiar with it.

6. That the services and activities of the organisation should be accessible to all people who need them regardless of their individual circumstances.

We have reviewed our internal services and are working on plans to have a drop-in space wholly accessible to all.



Mike Martin MBE

Chair



In April 2022 when trustees were considering the budget, I remarked that our income had increased ten-fold in eight years with a big rise in staffing levels. However, another perspective occupied trustees during the year. With several contracts ending imminently, we could see a potential cash flow crisis with redundancies or service cuts. Happily, the team succeeded in securing new contracts and the continuation of our work. Nevertheless, it brought home to us the precarious reality of life in a local charity. When it comes to income generation we can never rest.

The Refugee Support Group is a membership organisation giving members the ultimate authority to elect trustees and approve our accounts. However, we are keen to go beyond these constitutional requirements by engaging members and our wider supporter base in our work. At our AGM in November 2022, we began a consultation with them which is ongoing. We hope that when we launch our new website, we can find more ways to interact with you, our members. You are important to us.

Also at the AGM, held in Newbury, members agreed to the change of name by dropping "Reading" from our title. We are proud of our history and origins as a Reading organisation but with our growth and services delivered in Wokingham and West Berkshire it was clearly inaccurate to present ourselves as a solely Reading organisation.

Our business plan is of fundamental importance in steering a course through the turbulent world of support for refugees and asylum seekers. In the latter part of this last year the trustees developed a new two-year plan. We consulted staff and users, much work was done by the Chief Executive and myself and our draft document was subject to intense debate at board meetings. For me it was very satisfying to see the competing, sometimes conflicting, perspectives distilled into a programme and direction that everyone could get behind. We also developed a marketing and fundraising plan giving us clear numerical targets for the income we hope to generate through our different fundraising activities.

The Refugee Support Group is all about teamwork. On behalf of the board, I want to thank our wonderful staff team - employees and volunteers - and I cannot finish without acknowledging the work of trustees who left during the year: Patrick Ismond, Richard Hanson-James and (special mention) our Treasurer Jon Linley. And a big welcome and thanks to those who joined during the year: Sam Lee, Sarah Seddon and Simon Price.



OUR PATRONS

"I feel that you are like my family at RSG and are helping me when everybody else has been turning me away" ~ RSG Client



Alf Dubs

Lord Alf
Dubs Labour Peer

This year has been tough for refugees and asylum seekers with the negatively changing views of the government and society on this group. I am impressed with their continuation to fight for refugee rights and how they have increased the support they offer for refugees and asylum seekers despite the turbulence they face in terms of public opinion on refugees and asylum seekers.

It has been another successful year for Refugee Support Group. The shift in public opinion highlights just how valuable the work of RSG is within Berkshire, with Reading City of Sanctuary helping local organisations to understand the needs of this vulnerable group.

Both RSG and I have publicly spoken against the Rwanda flights as they are inhumane and degrading on asylum seekers. I am proud to be supporting them and will continue to lobby for the protection of refugees and asylum seekers.



+Olivia Graham

Reverend Olivia
Graham is the
Bishop of Reading.

This year Refugee Support Group has worked tirelessly to support refugees and asylum seekers – a task which is all the more needed as powerful voices in society call into question their rights, and our responsibilities towards these precious and vulnerable people.

This is an organisation which is marked out by the skill and dedication of wonderful staff, ever ready to adapt to the needs of the refugee community, and always willing to go the extra mile. In this they set us all a shining and inspiring example of how to listen to, and care for the most disadvantaged in our midst.

Being a patron of RSG is both a joy and a privilege. I look forward to supporting RSG for many more years to come and continue to pray for the impact of all they do. My heartfelt thanks to the staff and volunteers for all their incredible work.



CEO REPORTS



Nick Harborne
CEO

RSG is an amazing place to work. You meet some unforgettable people from all over the world. The desperation of some is heartbreaking. The gratitude others express gets you through to the next day. And you start all over again.

The staff at RSG are all compassionate colleagues, dedicated, experienced and resilient, but they are not superhuman. My biggest concern this year is the increased workload and stress faced by our team. We are working hard on our mental health well-being.

The mental health of asylum seekers trapped in dispersal accommodation is a big challenge we as a caring society face. We are proud of our achievements with our City of Sanctuary streams, which play a small part in helping to show refugees and asylum seekers that Berkshire is a place of welcome for all seeking sanctuary.



Flora Roshi
Deputy CEO

As a long-standing charity that since 1994 has supported asylum seekers and refugees in Berkshire, RSG demonstrates the compassion that drives us. The stories of clients navigating the UK's system are heartbreaking and become progressively more so. Our team – staff and volunteers – is faced with increased support demands. Funding is a challenge. It's the hard work of each colleague, volunteer, trustee, supporter and client that gives us hope. It's a privilege to work with you all.



KEY OUTPUTS

FUN FACTS:

Top 5 countries clients came from:

1. Afghanistan
2. Eritrea
3. Syria
4. Iraq
5. Sudan



Casework Team dealt with
529 clients
totalling over **1,568** hours



1,612
food parcels
distributed with
the help of
Readifoods and
Wokingham Food
Bank

50% OF STAFF ARE FROM BAMER COMMUNITIES *



25% OF STAFF AND TRUSTEES HAVE LIVED EXPERIENCE



4
The number of
active campaigns
that RSG got
involved with



Resettlement Team
supported
70 families
and **156**
people still in hotels



Our **49** volunteers have given
around **1,679** hours through this
year

*<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc376/index.html>

*Office of Immigration Services Commissioner

*Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee



MENTAL HEALTH

Twice a year we conduct an internationally recognised wellbeing survey* across our service user community to ensure that our policies and services support our community's needs. This year has been disappointing, however that means we will strive to make sure that we can fulfil these failings.

2023 (2022) Results:

59.2% (56.1%) of RSG service users were found to be below the UK average for wellbeing.

24.48% (21.6%) of RSG service users were found to be below the score of 40 for the NHS low wellbeing threshold.

Positively, RSG service users have been feeling more optimistic about the future. However, the lowest score was in response to "I am feeling relaxed". This could be partially due to the hostile environment that has been created by those in power.

93.87% (65.9%) of service users were satisfied with the support and services of RSG.

What are we doing about it?

We have increased our signposting to well-being organisations, such as Hempen Farm and Together charity. We have also increased the support within the drop-in and Atrium to help create a space that is safer and that our clients feel comfortable in. We are focusing on each department to help understand how we can support our clients through these services better in order to improve satisfaction with support and services from RSG.

Forbury Gardens

It is RSG's belief that earlier and coordinated mental health intervention and support would have prevented the tragedy in Forbury Gardens in June 2020. RSG will continue to be involved in the inquiry held, as well as further sharing our experiences as we believe we can contribute immensely to these enquiries.

Staff

Our staff are the front line of the charity; we must monitor and protect our staff's wellbeing. Results from the survey show that the staff team feel stressed and overloaded. The management team and trustees are using this information to support the team. We have introduced access to counselling support 24/7 days a week. We have introduced a number of 'welfare days' and we offer flexible working where possible.



As a small charity, RSG aims to maintain a high level of transparency, trust and accountability throughout the organisation. We uphold the regulation and standards of these organisations and groups.

OUR SERVICES



RSG is registered with the [fundraising regulator](#) and complies with its code of conduct.



RSG is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner up to level 3 services. Click here for more info [OISC](#).



RSG is a member of the [Living Wage Foundation](#).



RSG was awarded the [Queen's Award for Voluntary Services](#) in 2017.



RSG is a member of the [Thames Valley Immigration Alliance](#), collaborating with 3 other charities: Slough Refugee Support, Asylum Welcome and Settled.



RSG has achieved the [Safe and Sound](#) standard, ensuring that the governance of the organisation meets statutory and charity sector standards.



RSG has achieved the [Reading Advice Network standard](#) for charities that offer advice services,.



CASEWORK

The casework team has supported more than 500 clients: asylum seekers (68%), refugees (17%), failed asylum seekers (4%) and others (11%).

Over half of clients are in either initial or dispersal Home Office accommodation; alarmingly, nearly one in four is suffering housing insecurity.

The problem of limited access to legal aid representation permeates all areas of our work. Many asylum seekers appealing adverse decisions have no access to legal aid or private funds to pursue their appeals. These appeals are important: reports from the Refugee Council show that “the proportion of asylum appeals allowed in the year to March 2023 was 43%”. This highlights the importance of the opportunity to go to appeal as nearly half are successful. The casework team’s intervention adds significantly to the success rate.

The continuing backlog of claimants waiting for their substantive interviews leaves families waiting months, if not years, in Home Office accommodation waiting for a decision. Clients report unacceptable conditions in initial Home Office accommodation. Hotel conditions experienced by our clients match those found by Refugee Action's report. Families are living in single rooms for over a year, children have no space or safe place to play. Hotel staff enter rooms without permission. There are reports of unhygienic conditions such as mould; of overcrowding, leading to the spread of disease; of barriers to movement hampering the less mobile; of inedible food leaving families struggling to remain fed; of isolation with mental health consequences.

SG arrived in the UK in 2002 and applied for asylum. She approached RSG after eviction from her cousin's home in March 2022. SG had no financial or housing support. We submitted a Subject Access Request and regularly chased, given severe delays in the Home Office. Our in-house solicitor liaised with various authorities.. SG was at risk of homelessness. Eventually a Sanctuary Hosting application was successful and SG was placed with a host. We referred her to a facility where she learnt to garden, forage, and paint. She now has Indefinite Leave to Remain, her English is good and she has an active social life with many activities, and stable housing. She regularly shows us pictures of everything she is doing.

Caseworkers have continually to chase the authorities for financial support, for payment cards, for correcting incorrect payments, for quick dispersal, and to ensure safeguarding. Our contacts with the departments and authorities. In particular, we have had spent much time complaining to housing providers about sub-optimal living conditions. With the introduction of the Home Office-styled "accommodation centres" we expect these problems to get worse.

In 2009 CW applied for asylum, which was refused. Her support was removed, and she appealed; she was moved into initial accommodation. Once again, there were attempts to remove her support: the Home Office said she had no outstanding claims. RSG showed that CW was not given enough time to provide the additional evidence and requested additional time, which was refused. A formal appeal was lodged, The tribunal supported CW, the Home office withdrew the decision to remove her support and CW now lives in the same house.

We have had successful outcomes on many cases. We have built links with Reading Borough council housing team to expedite support for recent refugees at risk of homelessness.

Our partnership with Reading Community Learning Centre (RCLC), began in November 2022. Through this partnership, female clients can more easily access RCLC's educational programmes specific to their needs; male clients are referred to our services for further support. In this way, we have helped over thirty clients.

Our dedicated casework team, Bronte, Nargus, Abi and Hussam, have worked with dedication and diligence. The efforts are impressive, as are the results. Thank you all.



Mahmuna Hasnath, OISC Casework Team Manager



RESETTLEMENT



In West Berkshire, we currently support 11 Syrian and Afghan families - 46 individuals. We have helped with housing, education, driving licences car ownership. It's gratifying to see them become more independent and integrating in the West Berkshire community. All have made great progress in English and are confident with the education systems and their children's schoolwork.

A Syrian family who completed five years with local authority support is well settled. The dad is working, the mum is confident with daily tasks and activities with her children. She supports them with school forms, letters, and homework. They say they wouldn't have been able to get that far without RSG's bespoke hard work.

We also support 25 Afghan families in hotels around the area. The main challenges are finding houses and employment. The rental market is extremely difficult as private landlords often won't rent to refugees. Rental rates are higher than the Universal Credit housing payment, making private properties unaffordable for families on benefits. Explaining the complex rules and systems to families is challenging. Our team liaises with the Home Office and local authorities to ensure temporary accommodation after hotel closures. This is slow and frustrating .

This year, West Berkshire resettlement clients have been enthusiastic in response to a Reading University student's dissertation, They discussed how the resettlement scheme has helped integration into the Berkshire community. This experience has been eye-opening and helpful for us to understand how our support can really influence and help those on the scheme. The positive feedback from this dissertation has reinforced the need for resettlement schemes.

**Samera Abba-Mjid, West Berkshire Resettlement
Support Manager**

The Reading resettlement team is now supporting 20 Afghan families under resettlement schemes. We had concerns that some families might still need our intensive support as they are not yet fully independent. We shared these concerns with Reading Borough Council, who agreed to extend the support for another year.

All clients are now enrolled with English classes to improve their language skills. Many women have joined sewing and beauty classes. All new mothers now attend or on the waiting list for an English class. We work to give these women a creche so they can further their education and their English language. We even found a volunteer to provide English lessons for one client at home.

Eight clients have gained employment, and one has finished his Master's at Henley Business School. We supported him with his successful sanctuary scholarship application. Many of our clients have passed their driving tests.

We continued with our wellbeing programme. We included activities for the families such as Flying Seagull and Jamie Gibberish where children learnt circus skills and magic tricks and had fun making new friends. We organised Eid parties and a women-only party. Help was given for families with school holidays activities and camps. The Women's Coffee group continues successfully. We are part of the maternity- and sanctuary-seeking programme to support and help mothers-to-be, winning a national award. Language and cultural differences remain big challenges. As do managing expectations, and all our dealings with officialdom.

In Wokingham we are supporting two Syrian families. As families become independent, we see the success of our plan was to ready them for life in the community at the end of the five years' support.

Our support embraces several different areas: school admission and transport; GP appointments as many GP surgeries refuse to provide interpreters leaving families unable to manage their appointments. There has been a rise in the number of Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) applications when families come to the end of their initial leave.

One family faced many challenges as their English was limited and they are illiterate in their own language. The mother was pregnant with her fourth baby and the father had medical issues. With our help, his English improved. His teacher describes him as very attentive. The mother is learning English as well. The father found work against the odds. The children's school reports are positive.

Soha Hafez, Reading Resettlement Support Manager



Ukraine was invaded in February 2022. RSG immediately responded and started supporting Ukrainians under the Homes for Ukraine scheme or the Family Scheme. The needs of the families have changed during the year. We have helped with rehousing, job searching, improving English, translation and documentation filing. While we are helping families to integrate, new families continue to arrive with their immediate needs for basic set-up information and signposting to various organisations.

We secured funding from Reading Borough Council to cover Ukrainian support from March 2023 until March 2024. The objectives are to help Ukrainian families integrate and absorb the basics of life in the UK. The challenges are the lack of housing and jobs We find English language courses - ESOL and volunteer- led. Another problem this year was the mental health of our clients We have continued our volunteer-run wellbeing workshops for the year. We included fun activities like canoeing and rock climbing where children could learn new skills and have fun. We organised Easter & Christmas parties at the Atrium. There was a volunteer-led Jazz concert at Greyfriars Church to raise funds the purchase of generators. Dance and Pilates classes attracted adults and children.

One family faced a lot of challenges with temporary accommodation, struggling to express their needs due to limited English. The property was very unsuitable and the family with a disabled person and a 2yr old toddler had to be moved. After several months of conversations, the family moved into a suitable flat with a disabled access throughout. Dad has managed to find work and Mum will be looking for jobs after their son is settled into nursery.

While finding ESOL and informal English classes will continue to be a challenge, we are proud to report that most of the clients are now enrolled with ESOL classes. We even set up English for Grannies, Talk and Tea and Conversational Kitchen to help improve language skills. Almost half of the Ukrainians have now found employment. However, many have found employment not within their area of expertise due to the language barrier.

Mainly language barriers and some cultural differences remain our biggest challenges as well as managing expectations, referring to RBC housing team. Supporting clients with their mental health referrals, signposting to access free dental care and GP, benefits applications and job seeking. These challenges are heightened as new families continue to arrive on the Ukrainian schemes.

Tatiana Miller, Ukraine Resettlement Coordinator



We believe that every person and local institution can have a role in making Reading a welcoming place for people seeking sanctuary. We work with mainstream organisations to support refugees through the '[Sanctuary Award](#)' process.

Arts: There are currently four different art centres in Berkshire: the Rising Sun Art Centre (RSAC), MERL, Reading Museum, and Rank and File. RSAC has run sewing and art sessions for sixteen women and it hosted a refugee artists' exhibition in refugee week. MERL is pursuing the Museum of Sanctuary award and during refugee week it hosted Rank and File Theatre group. Reading Museum has Arts Council funding to with a view to becoming a Museums of Sanctuary.

Churches : **Greyfriars and New Hope Churches** are the first churches to receive the Church of Sanctuary award. They are RSG's partners at the Atrium drop-in where befrienders meet up. They host English for Grannies and Talk and Tea on Saturdays and provide college stationery packs. **St Nicholas Church** has been utilising its gallery space to showcase the work of refugee artists, and St Mary's Minster has been fundraising and holding awareness raising events.

Education: Reading School became Reading's first 'School of Sanctuary'. As part of the award process, they undertook staff and student training on refugee issues, and set up a student sanctuary ambassador group which included learning about migration in the curriculum. They run Wednesday afternoon activities for children of sanctuary seeking background in Reading, including canoeing sessions. **University of Reading** is developing their application.

Sport and Leisure. We have several organisations that fill this category, including **Hempden Farm** who is a 'Garden of Sanctuary' and has been developing their 'Growing Solidarity' Project which hosts farm days every Wednesday which include meditation, yoga, cooking and growing sessions. Recently it organised a camping day and have been doing up a caravan which they hope to make available for 'Sanctuary breaks' which is a mini holiday for people stuck in hotels. **Newbury Library** is working towards becoming Berkshire's first 'Library of Sanctuary' and are partnered with other local refugee organisations. **Climbing Hanger** (Refugee Rocks) is running activities for sanctuary seeking families as part of their sanctuary award process.



Other Highlights:

- **Reading Borough Council** has renewed its commitment to supporting sanctuary seekers in Reading by passing a full council motion and agreeing to reaffirm its City of Sanctuary status and are establishing a Refugee and Asylum team and convening several multi-agency refugee forums.
- **Wokingham Borough Council** is planning council motion committing to becoming recognised as a Council of Sanctuary.
- **Royal Berkshire NHS Trust Maternity Services** is working toward recognition as a maternity service of sanctuary for its commitment and inclusive practices in supporting moms of sanctuary seeking background.

KB. passed her driving theory test and is very proficient in English after 2 years of lessons. She meets her befriender on Friday at Atrium (Greyfriars church is recognised as Church of Sanctuary) for 2 hours. Also, K is involved with the "Growing Solidarity" project in Hempen farm (recognised as Garden of Sanctuary) and sewing session at Rising Sun Arts Centre (encourage them to be recognised as a place of Sanctuary).

DA. is very much involved with the difficulties some of her family face, but befriender sees it as a positive step that she talks about what she would like to do in the future.

Reading City of Sanctuary: Befriending programme.

The befriending programme is a unique programme offered to refugees and asylum seekers. The results of can be significant, not just in reducing isolation and loneliness but also in shaping the future of the befriender. The befrienders make huge efforts online and face-to-face to make sure their tutee is improving in conversational English skills, engaging in local activities, searching for jobs, filling out forms, making a GP appointment, and more. We had 41 registered befrienders who helped more than 48 individuals. The result of the one-to-one programme exceeded 1500 hours of help, support, and engagement.

Talk and Tea

At the time of writing, Talk and Tea, an initiative set up by volunteers under the Reading City of Sanctuary umbrella, has been running for over a year on Saturday afternoons at the Greyfriars Atrium. Run by a tiny number of volunteers, it offers an opportunity for conversation and discussion, and works best when there is a total group of between five and ten people. Notable achievements include helping a young person to address her local church congregation and facilitating access to cricket opportunities for a young 12-year-old lad. Also, a carefully crafted discussion about memories of SCUD missile attacks on Shiraz during the Iran-Iraq war.

Many thanks to Greyfriars Church who agreed to us using the venue and the sessions. And, of course, thanks to the volunteers - you know who you are. Thanks! - Michael Prewett
Editor's note. Thank you Michael.

Maggie Filipova-Rivers, RCoS Coordinator



Over the last year we held 42 Monday drop-in sessions and 37 Wednesday sessions. 1045 clients came to the Monday session with 357 of those from hotels, while 300 clients came to the Wednesday one, 146 were from hotels.



The last year has seen an increase in the number of asylum seekers arriving in Reading and surrounding areas. Most drop-in attendees have been clients from hotels. This might also be due to no longer being able to pay clients travel expenses to attend the drop-in, due to lack of funding. Despite that, the Monday drop-in is still a valuable and important service. It provides clients with a safe space to socialise, meet new people and access information. The laptops donated by the Reading Rotary Club last year continue to be used allowing people to search for jobs, gain online support or even contact family.

Over the last year, one of my goals as the drop-in coordinator has been to not only to focus on a welcoming environment for our clients, but also to create an information hub with regular visits from partner organisations to promote their services. Providing a safe space for clients in hotels to voice their issues and concerns is of particular importance as they don't feel comfortable enough to do so in the hotels.

For light entertainment, we provide board games, playing cards and magazines for the adults. For the children we have books, Lego, toys and colouring books. During the festive season we held a Christmas party and children received presents provided by Reading Family Aid.

Brighter Futures For Children, National Careers Services and Eurospeak are some of the local organisations who have visited the drop-in centre over the last year, providing information on their services, including how to access funded childcare, advice on CV writing and interview skills. Eurospeak Language School held four workshops specifically developed for refugees and asylum seekers, to help them settle into their new country and to integrate within their communities.

The purpose of the Wednesday sessions is to give our clients English lessons. Some of our volunteers are retired teachers and they possess the right skills to give these lessons. The lessons are structured and planned. Our volunteers are extremely dedicated and hardworking, spending their own time devising lesson plans weeks in advance.

The overall atmosphere of the lessons is one conducive to learning, it's relaxed, joyous and gives clients an opportunity to practise their conversational skills. The number of attendees is significantly lower than that of the Monday-drop in, so clients can receive more attention and at times one to one assistance, which would not happen in college.

Kushinga Hare, Drop-In Coordinator



INTEGRATION & ACTIVITIES



We embrace many of the festivals and celebrations that are important to our client group. This has included Eid, Easter and Nowruz where we had parties with music, food and activities. Alongside this, we have introduced the clients to British life whilst helping them improve their English language skills.

Our annual Christmas party was popular and Father Christmas was there to give out gifts to both children and adults. Art and craft activities and biscuit decorating were on offer too. A highlight was a Coronation party in May where we showed parts of the Coronation on the big screen and had our own 'King' and Queen' waving Union Jack flags. Clients enjoyed a traditional English cream tea and learnt about the British Royal family. For these parties we have around 50-70 attendees, with lots of comments asking, 'when is the next party?' We were lucky to get a children's entertainer during the Easter holidays called the Flying Seagulls and asylum seeking and refugee children had a chance to practice magic and circus skills while their parents watched happily. Activities have included a boat trip in Henley, a visit to a coffee shop, picnics and trips to Bournemouth and Caversham lakes are planned. The aim of our activities is to improve English, celebrate the richness of the many cultures and religions within our client group, and to aid integration into British society, promote friendships and positive relationships. We try to create an environment where people can have a distraction from their day to day worries and receive useful information.

The homework club during the last academic year has brought together sanctuary seeking children and their families with 6th form students at 2 local girls' schools in Reading. The Tuesday session has been at Abbey school and led by head of 6th form Edmund Hills. The sessions have been creative and fun as well as providing a learning environment and a chance for help with homework. At the end of term the students raised some money for RSG by selling ice lollies during their lunch breaks.

The Kendrick school club is led by head teacher Karen Perry and some of her team. This takes place on Thursday afternoon between 4 and 5pm. Our sessions are in the canteen area with the library close by. This has proved useful as sometimes the tutors go in and bring out books, magazines and resources for the children and waiting parents. A keyboard was brought out at the request of a Ukrainian family and the sound of her playing was music to our ears! The Kendrick staff team has been proactive in looking for ways to assist the families further.

A very successful academic year with the homework clubs. Approximately 6 families attend each week with around 8 children of primary school age from 4 nationalities per session.

Maria Baker, Integration and Activities Co-Ordinator



TRANS-NATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT

“The migration of people is not just physical”.

These are the words of one of the Community Researchers engaged on this project which seeks to unpick the complexities of giving and maintaining care in migrant communities across national borders, in different cultures, through linguistic barriers and across generations.

A snapshot of these experiences has been gathered by the in-depth interviews RSG and RCLC Community Researchers have conducted with 18 families in the Reading area over the past year. This data is now being analysed by the University of Reading team. Professor Ruth Evans reports: “We have undertaken a total of 292 interviews with family members, including members in countries of origin or third countries, and have exceeded our objective of undertaking research with 100 families across the four partner countries (UK, Spain, France, Sweden) by collecting data from 116 families for the large sample. This has produced rich data about complex transnational family caring arrangements and inequalities in social protection and support. Preliminary findings reveal how population mobility has been restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and care needs and socio-economic inequalities facing transnational families have increased.”

On a local level, an informal meeting hosted by RSG and RCLC and attended by representatives of the university research team, as well as partner organisations and the three councils RSG works with - Reading, West Berkshire, and Wokingham – concentrated on the human stories of both the interviewees and Community Researchers behind these numbers as well as on explaining this innovative interview approach. The Wokingham Council Lead on Housing, Neighbourhoods & Communities reflected: “My officers would never have got this kind of information”. Much discussion was devoted to the mental suffering the interviewed families experienced exacerbated by language and cultural barriers when dealing with authorities and support groups. All of the Community Researchers reflected that care is just the tip of the iceberg. “All conversations around care raise so many other inter-connected issues – access to housing, medical support, advice.” The process of interviewing took longer and was more emotionally challenging than initially thought.

In this final year of this research, the various teams aim to present the results of this transnational research to policy-makers at an international conference whilst ensuring that the feedback from the project is made available to all participants through more informal workshops.



L to R: Lina Domani (CR), Kamila Othman (CR), Rihab Mohammed (CR), Buhle Mpofu (CR), Grady Walker (UoR), Khrishne Neupane (CR).



Alison McQuity, Project Coordinator



SANCTUARY STRIKERS



This football team started in 2017 and was created by a former client/volunteer.

The aim of the club is to promote integration and unity between refugees and non-refugees through the sport of football.

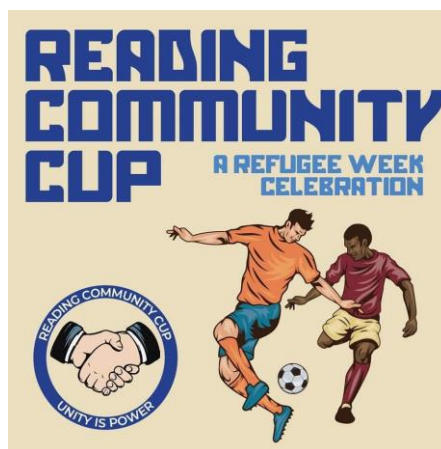
Sanctuary Strikers Football Club are Berkshire's only refugee football club.

Currently they are playing in Division 3 and the Reading and District Sunday League. So far, they have played together for 6 seasons. Their home ground is Palmer Park.

Over the last 2 years they have celebrated Refugee Week by hosting and creating the Reading Community Cup Tournament. We are hopeful that this will continue to be an annual event.

It has taken a considerable amount of time and effort to create this team and we are incredible grateful for everyone who has helped organise it and fund the Sanctuary Strikers. Including The FA's Grow the Fame fund, AKG and Adam Moss and AKM Geoconsulting.

We would like to give a big thank you to Joe and Tomson who have put so much time and energy into running this unique and special team.



Tomson Chauke, Volunteer



CAMPAIGNS

We actively campaigned for refugee rights across 2022-23. Our key campaign areas were opposing anti-refugee legislation and promoting safe routes, speaking out against the Rwanda plan, raising awareness about unsuitable accommodation and resisting the hostile environment.

Fight the Anti-Refugee Laws: Last year saw the implementation of the Nationality and Borders Act and the introduction and subsequent passage of the Illegal Migration Act. As a member of the Together with Refugees coalition, and signatory of Refugee Action's *'Fight the Anti Refugee Laws'* pledge, RSG has made the case that these laws defy the spirit of the Refugee Convention, neglect our international duties, and effectively place a ban on claiming asylum in the UK. We called for the Home Secretary to establish safe routes as an alternative to deadly channel crossings.

Stop the Flights! In April 2022, the UK struck a deal with the Rwandan authorities to remove people to the East African country before hearing their asylum claims. The first flight, set to take off on 14th June, was grounded following intervention from the European Court of Human Rights. The Rwanda plan was then scrutinised by the High Court; RSG staff and service users demonstrated outside the Royal Courts of Justice. As the Rwanda case progressed to the courts, RSG continued to argue that we must not abandon our responsibilities towards people claiming asylum. We encouraged supporters to contact their MPs and sign petitions, we promoted Freedom from Torture's successful campaign to encourage private airlines to withdraw from the scheme and joined Together with Refugees *'Fill the Skies with Hope'* campaign action.

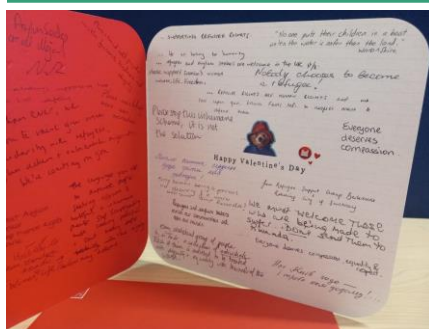
Challenging Unsuitable Accommodation: RSG was committed to raising awareness about the largely forgotten Afghan families held in 'transition accommodation' for over a year, in Berkshire and across the country. To mark the one-year anniversary of their arrival in the UK, RSG honoured the 800-year-old tradition of Afghan kite flying as part of the *'Fly With Me'* festival. We called on the government to create a family reunification route for Afghans on the ARAP and ACRS schemes. We continue to argue that a 28-day time limit on detention must be imposed and enforced across the UK, in line with other European countries. We supported Women for Refugee Women by sending over 30 'Valentine's Day' cards to the directors of Mitie and Serco, which spoke out against the imprisonment of women in immigration detention. RSG also became a member organization of the Coalition to Keep Campsfield Closed.

Resisting the Hostile Environment: The immigration controls that make up the 'Hostile Environment' are designed to prevent individuals without leave to remain from accessing healthcare, housing, education, work, and benefits. The aim is to criminalise the everyday activities of undocumented migrants and disincentivise them from accessing public services. We affirm that refugees should be protected without discrimination of any kind that is based on their characteristics, beliefs or origin.

Hari Reed, Campaigns and Advocacy Co-ordinator



FUNDRAISING & COMMUNICATIONS



It's been another very challenging year, but despite this, we've managed to achieve much to be proud of. The Government's increasing hostility and neglect of refugees has stirred up the Far Right and led to more refugees suffering. While more refugees are turning to us for help than ever before, seeing pressure on our services soar, the Cost-of-Living Crisis has seen donations decline at a time when we need them most.

In spite of all of this, we continue to punch above our weight, reaching ever wider audiences, increasing our income, and ultimately supporting more refugees in crisis. We continue to be staggered by the generosity of you, our supporters, and your desire to do more to help refugees here in Berkshire. We have had massive successes this year. Our third Gospel Carols Concert was again the best Christmas concert in town, with our biggest crowd ever dancing in the aisles and helping to raise £6,500. We had our biggest ever team for the Reading Legal Walk and raised £3,500. We raised a record £16,200 in just seven days with The Big Give Christmas Challenge thanks to so much public support.

This year was our biggest ever Refugee Week programme, with film events in Wokingham and Reading, the Reading Community Cup football tournament, multiple art exhibitions, theatre performances and so much more over four weeks – more a Refugee Month, really. It was incredible to have so many people attend, participate and support refugees in Berkshire.

Our supporters have done so much for us these past twelve months. Three people ran 100km for Race To The Stones raising £3,200. Redstor ran for 24 hours solid and raised £4,000 as part of Endure24. Reading SSKI Karate and Singh Sabha Reading TKD raised £3450 with a martial arts tournament. More than 70 people ran 5km for us as part of The Grumpy Goat's fun runs. We were even three Christmas concerts in our support beside our own!

Overall, we've seen a -7% decrease in unrestricted monthly income, which is particularly tough as demand for our services continues to grow at pace. This is a sector-wide issue, and we continue to focus on trying to reach new audiences and nurture our current supporters to fund our frontline services.

Every penny we receive means we can do more to help refugees here in Berkshire, so we're eternally grateful to you, our brilliant supporters.



Corporate Fundraising Our three-year partnership with Deloitte Reading drew to a close in June. While we were sad to see it end, we are unbelievably grateful for everything we achieved as part of it. We raised over £70,000, had hundreds of volunteer hours, donated laptops and furniture, pro bono work that we could not have afforded included impact reports, a plan for buying a permanent home for refugees, and a new website.

This year we also had a one-year partnership with the wonderful Porterhouse Medical, who supported us on The Reading Legal Walk, donated to The Big Give and supported us throughout the year. We look forward to more partnerships in the year ahead.

Communications We continued to build on past success and to reach more people in Berkshire and beyond this year. We received widespread media coverage, from national outlets like BBC News, Sky News, LBC, and Times Radio, as well as more local outlets like BBC Berkshire, Heart Thames Valley and BBC South Today. Our Communications Strategy continued to deliver success, with more people visiting our website, receiving our supporter newsletters and following us on social media.

To everyone who has supported refugees in Berkshire this year, thank you for your support.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Jonjo Warrick , Fundraising and Communications Manager



DONORS & FUNDERS

SPECIAL THANKS

Grants and significant donations

Grants

A B Charitable Trust
Berkshire Community Foundation- Jubilee Fund and RLW
Englefield Charitable Trust – Mental Health (Good Exchange)
Human Rights Fund – match funding with The Big Give
Justice Together Foundation - Thames Valley Immigration Alliance and Casework
Land Aid – Ukraine Support
Lloyds Bank Foundation

NACCOM
NHS Berks West Clinical Commissioning Group - mental health
Reading Borough Council - Ukraine and Narrowing The Gap
The Earley Charity – City of Sanctuary
The Greenham Trust – Mental Health
The Henry Denman and Agneta Mary Cook Charity
The Sara & Michael Scanlon Trust
Vodafone Charities Connected

Donors

Adam Moss and AKM Geoconsulting
Andy Barnes
Anne Wheldon
Bracknell Parish
Greyfriars Church and The Atrium
Healthwatch Reading
Hope Law Limited
Ian Korner
Serco Foundation
Nature Nurture CIC
Jamia Masjid & Islamic Centre, Slough
Iain MacMillan
Leighton Park School
Margaret Laurie
Porterhouse Medical (corporate partner)
Pangbourne Rotary Club
Parenthesis Choir
Peter and Liz Driver
Petr Sadilek
R S Brownless Charitable Trust
Reading Catenian Circle
Reading Community Gospel Choir
Reading Labour Councilors

Reading Phoenix Choir
Reading Quakers
Reading Rotary Club
Reading SSKI Karate
Rotary Club of Reading Abbey
Rotary Club of Reading Maiden Erleigh
Rotary Club of Reading Matins
Rotary Club of Reading Thames
Shinfield Baptist Church
Singh Sabha Reading TKD
Six Bells Pub, Beenham
South Street Arts Centre and Craft Theory
St John The Baptist, Crowthorne
St Luke's Church, Reading
The Grumpy Goat
The Tannery Trust
Tilehurst Methodist Church
Tilehurst Methodist Wesley Guild
Daniel Symes
Kirsten Makepeace
Anne Wheldon
Cris Harborne
The Sewing Space Social

As always, whilst we have tried our best to include an acknowledgement to everyone who supports us. We are sorry if we have inadvertently missed someone. Please do let us know and we will correct the situation immediately.

SPECIAL THANKS

In memory of Kiran Tailor,
Thomas Palmer, Louis Barratt
and Alice Drive



Honorable Mentions

Abbey School, Reading
Alex Warren
Asylum Welcome, Oxford
Barret & Co Solicitors
Berkshire Cricket Foundation
Care4Calais Reading
Compass Recovery College
Daneshill School, Hook
Diana and James Brooks, Will Fitch and friends
Harry and Maxx Media
Hewlett Packard Reading
John Sykes Foundation
Greenways, Reading
Kendrick School, Reading
Leslie Barron, Mary Chambers and Alina
Linzi Blakely, Freddie Burger and friends
London Legal Support Trust
Pocketalk
Queen Anne's School, Reading

Rank & File Theatre
Reading Biscuit Factory
Reading Buses
Reading Family Aid
Reading Football Club Community Trust
REDA
Reading Minster Church
Reading Red Kitchen
Reading School
Reading Scientific Services Ltd and Mondelez
Reading University Students Union
Settled, Oxford
Slough Refugee Support
Thames Water
The Cowshed, Wokingham
The University of Reading
Wokingham Film Society
Sarah Snow and Stepping Forward
Gary and Rhiannon Stocking-Williams



As always, whilst we have tried our best to include an acknowledgement to everyone who supports us. We are sorry if we have inadvertently missed someone. Please do let us know and we will correct the situation immediately.



APPEAL

BIG PLANS for a NEW OFFICE

RSG is excited to announce a long-term plan to buy its own office and refugee centre.

Refugee Support Group has been supporting refugees in Berkshire for nearly thirty years. We have been working in West Berkshire and Wokingham for six years. Unfortunately, we suspect our services will be needed for another 30 years at least.

First and foremost, we need to offer refugees and asylum seekers a safe space where we can hold our drop-ins **every day**, ideally with a small café and perhaps a kitchen. We need facilities that can accommodate disabled members of staff, volunteers and service users. We need to create a place where people can come to socialise, to learn, to get help advice and support, but overall a place that is theirs, where they can feel safe.

We are open to sharing this office with other charities who may also looking for a more stable and sustainable future, all of whom will support the most marginalised and disadvantaged people in Berkshire. Together, we can be more efficient and stronger.

We have drawn up a business case. We know we would like the office to be located within a mile of Reading Station. We know we will need a minimum of £500,000 as a deposit.

Big plans will take time: we have started fundraising. We have set aside two legacy donations and have the promise of further financial assistance and interest free loans from one of our supports.

Do you feel you could be part of our plans?

Could you:

- make a substantial capital contribution
- provide an interest free loan
- fundraise for us
- do you have a suitable property or land that might be available, or skills & connections that may help us?

Please contact nick@rrsg.org.uk

Be part of the next 30 years in the history of the Refugee Support Group.





CORPORATE PARTNER

Your **logo** here!

Refugee Support Group has had an amazing three years working with Deloitte. We firmly believe it was a two – way partnership, and that there are many benefits to be gained for a corporate partner.

What we offer:

- An opportunity for your staff to learn about and better understand international events and how they impact on us all, here in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham. We are happy to give talks. We have some clients who are motivated and willing to share their stories and testimonies.
- An opportunity for your staff to engage in activities and events in support of a longstanding local Berkshire charity who supports a very disadvantaged part of our Reading community.
- Volunteering and befriending opportunities with full training and support.
- An opportunity for a large corporate organisation to make a local difference in the town is lives and works in.

What we ask of you:

- Preferably a three-year partnership. This gives us time to turn meaningful plans into action.
- We would like to address your staff team and ask for support through Give As You Earn
- We would like you to extend your professional skills and experience and help us in areas like business planning, planning against cyber-attacks, organisational digital development, EDI policy development, and impact reporting. We currently need help to finish an IT skills training and job search website specifically aimed at the refugee community.
- We have an ambitious project to fund and buy our own refugee centre (see page 32). Any help you can bring to the table would be welcomed.
- We would love to hear your ideas and thoughts on what you feel you could do to help.

Please contact nick@rrsg.org.uk



**Refugee
Support
Group**



Your logo



PARTNER CHARITIES



**CARE4
CALAIS**



**Wycliffe
Baptist
Church**



ReadiFood
Reading's Food Bank



THE COWSHED



**Alliance for cohesion
and racial equality**



West Berks Action for Refugees



Our volunteers and supporters are the unsung heroes at RSG. We wouldn't be able to run RSG without the incredible support of our volunteers, supporters and friends. Thank you for standing by RSG throughout this year!

Drop-In and Admin

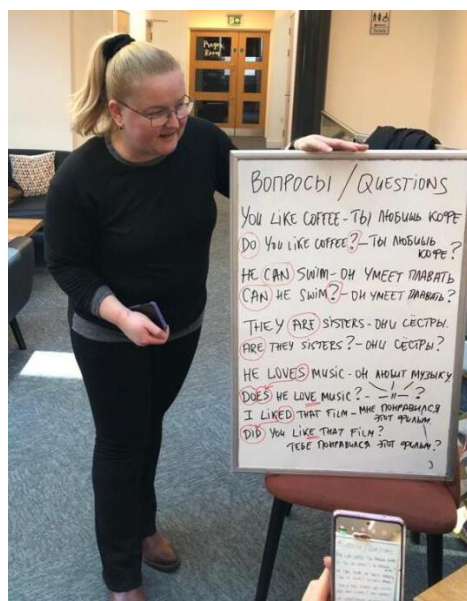
May Akhalifa, Francis O'Neill, Siddiq Haroon, Colin Campbell, Marina Hart, Alison Mcquitty, Jenny Carr, Arsalan San-Ahmed, Jacklin Mikhael, Paula De Wet, Teagan Rooney, Seleyian Kennedy, Emma Conway, and Sorrel Bulpitt

Fundraising and Events

Thank you to everyone who took part or volunteered at any of our events this year!

RCoS & Befriending

Ian Finlayson, Martin Ashford, Andrew Linnell, Graham Bates, Hilary Pierce, Naomi Iliff, Colin Campbell, Peter Hutton, Edward Reynold, Nilufer Patel, Elaine Edge, Rachel Thake, Marc Edwards, Eric Moyse, Chloe Elizabeth Smart, Hazel Davies, Jenny Gordon, Sergio Gallego-Schmid, Amanda Jennings, Elizabeth Bailey, Joanna Hanson, Loraine McQueen Fletcher, Andrea Leonelli, Laiba Ather, Rohin Sharma, Imogen Eddings, Selina Whiteley, Regina Maria Conibera, Teresa Jane Waring, Katharine Margaret Donegan, Eithne Sarson, Lottie Temblett-Wood, Christine Davidson (Chrissie), Helen Muriel Hathaway, Anna Elizabeth Huxtable Lister, Emily Cork, Paula Lucido, Melanie Khuddro





STAFF TEAM

A big thank you to the fantastic staff team who go above and beyond what is expected of them! RSG wouldn't be the organisation it is, without the dedication, support and compassion from our staff.

Abiodun Popoola
Alison McQuity
Arsalan San-Ahmed
Bronte Makepeace
Emma Conway
Flora Roshi
Hadil Tamim
Hari Reed
Hussam Allahham
Jonjo Warrick
Kushinga Hare
Mahmuna Hasnath
Maria Baker

Maggie Filipova-Rivers
Nargus Ijaz
Nick Harborne
Oscar Manjengwa
Paula de Wet
Samera Abbas-Majid
Shady Hagag
Soha Hafez
Sorrel Bulpitt
Tatiana Miller
Teagan Rooney
Tony Cornwell
Tori Baddeley

**Goodbye, good luck and thank you to: Shady,
Arsalan, Hussam, Sorrel and Emma**





Trustee Profile

Fiona Zeneii
Treasurer



We are recruiting trustees with skills and experience of safeguarding, mental health, fundraising and property.

You can find out more on our website or contact the Chair for an informal discussion

I decided to become a trustee for the Refugee Support Group because of the deeply personal connection I share with this charity. My family and I moved to the UK when I only just six years old, seeking refuge and a chance for a better life.

During our challenging journey to gain our indefinite leave to remain, the Refugee Support Group played an indispensable role in providing us with invaluable support, resources, and a sense of belonging. Their unwavering commitment to helping newcomers like us not only transformed our lives but also instilled in me a profound sense of gratitude and the desire to give back to the community that had welcomed us with open arms.

By becoming a trustee, I hope to contribute my skills, experiences, and passion to help others find the same hope, resilience, and opportunity that this incredible charity offered me and my family. It's my way of expressing my gratitude and ensuring that more refugees can find the support they need to rebuild their lives and thrive in their new home, just as I have.

~Fiona Zeneli





TRUSTEES 2022-2023

Thank you to Jon, Richard and Patrick who have stood down this year.



Emily Cantrell
Lead for Fundraising



Patrick Ismond
Lead for Diversity,
Inclusion and Equality



Charlene Wattley
Safeguarding Lead



Mike Martin MBE
Chair of Trustees



Richard Hanson-James
Business, Property and
Campaigning



Jon Linley
Treasurer



Sam Lee
Lead for
Marketing



Prof. Mary Richardson
Deputy Chair



Thabo Makuyana
Lived Experience &
Lead for Activism



Fiona Zeneli
Lead for Project
Management



Simon Price
Lead for Local Authorities



CLIENT TESTIMONIES

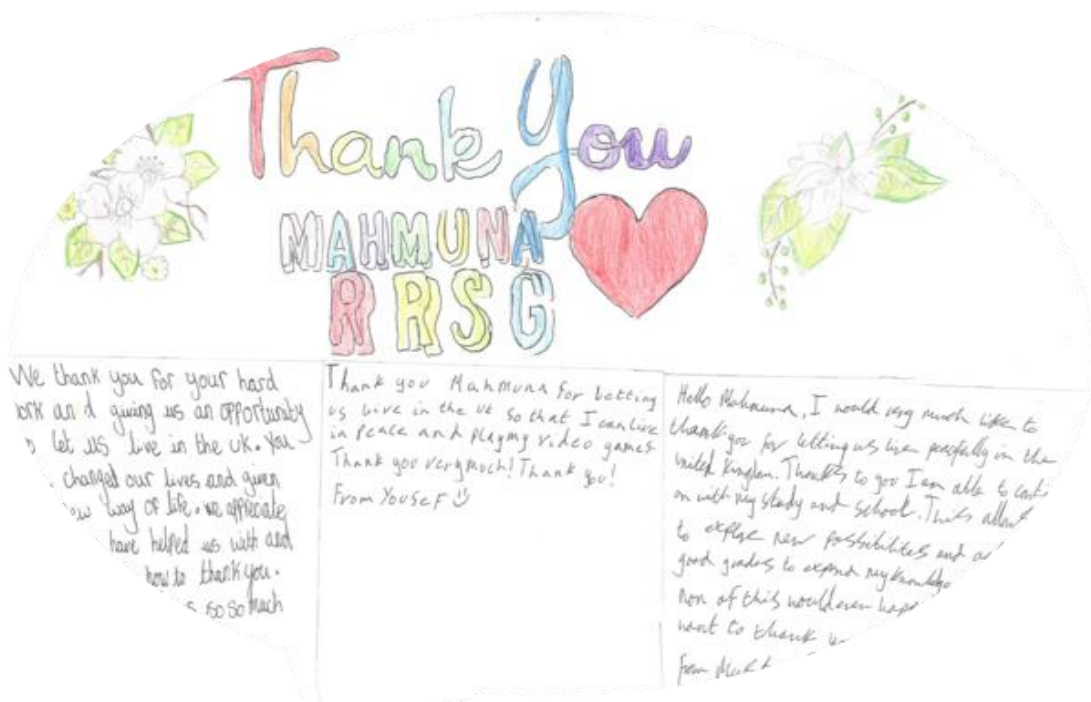
"I would like to say thanks to everyone at RSG for working hard to get me my Leave to Remain. They have been very helpful throughout the process and supported me whenever I needed help. Thank you"

"I wanted to say thanks in ton for getting my card issue sorted I have received my card today - Thank you so much once again"

"The staff respect people and I can speak to them when I need help."

*"Thank you so much for the great news!"
(Client being granted refugee status)*

"Thank you so much for taking your time and helping me out"



"Since ages I needed someone to cry and today that happened which makes me feel so much better. Thank you for listening to me and for your valuable time."

"The community and socialising. Staff are helpful and care about people. You feel like there's someone who cares."

"When I come to the drop-in I have a community, friends and family."



ALICE DRIVER
13th Dec 1990
- 6th Jun 2019



*“Try to be good to each other, all of you.
Be brave, and be the kindest
human beings you can be.”*

Alice Driver



www.refugeesupportgroup.org.uk/donate



FINANCIAL REPORT

Unaudited Financial Statements

for the year ended

31 March 2023

REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mr Mike Martin MBE Ms Fiona Zeneli Mrs Emily Lloyd Prof. Mary Richardson Mr Thabo Makuyana Ms Samantha Lee Ms Sarah Seddon Mr Simon Price Mrs Emma Broomfield Mr Patrick Ismond Mr Richard Hanson-James Mr Jon Linley Mrs Charlene Wattley	Chair Treasurer Appointed 13/04/2022 Appointed 12/10/2022 Appointed 14/12/2022 Resigned 21/04/2022 Resigned 21/10/2022 Resigned 16/11/2022 Resigned 18/05/2023 Resigned 24/09/2023
Chief Executive Officer Deputy CEO	Mr Nick Harborne Ms Flora Roshi	
Charity number	1098058	
Company number	04515238	
Principal address and Registered Office	First Floor, R.I.S.C 35-39 London Street Reading Berkshire RG1 4PS	
Independent examiner	Rachel Eden ACMA Curious Lounge, 1st Floor, Pinnacle Building Tudor Road Reading Berkshire RG1 1NH	
Bankers	The Co-operative Bank 13 New Road Oxford OX1 1LG	MetroBank One Southampton Row London WC1B 5HA

REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the charitable company's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (published in October 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Principal objectives

The Charitable objectives of Refugee Support Group are:

- to provide relief to refugees and asylum seekers (including those granted exceptional leave to remain) and their dependants, regardless of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, sex, marital status, sexuality, social class, disability or HIV status, who are resident in the area of benefit and in conditions of need and distress; and
- to preserve and protect the physical and mental health of such refugees and asylum seekers by assisting them to access the health services appropriate to their needs; and
- to provide information, advice and support to refugees and asylum seekers in accessing training and to help ensure that their children receive the education they are entitled to by law, including language support where needed; and
- to promote and assist refugees and asylum seekers in obtaining suitable employment; and
- to help refugees, asylum seekers and their dependants access grants and services of all kinds from other charitable organisations; and
- to educate the general public about issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers.

In going about our work and establishing our aims and objectives, the Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee incorporated on 20 August 2002 and governed by its Articles of Association. It was registered as a charity under the Charities Act 2011 on 17 June 2003.

None of the Trustees have any beneficial interest in the charitable company. All of the Trustees are volunteers. Trustees are assisted to fulfil their duties by the chief executive and by other advisors, who offer information and assistance in undertaking all their governance tasks. It is the responsibility of the Trustees to meet to make balanced, proportionate and clear decisions about the future of the charitable company, and make all disclosures about the organisation.

Through consideration of reports on financial management, income, expenditure, liquidity and of forecasts for the next twelve months, Trustees have analysed any risks to the company alongside the strategic plan for growth, and have identified no material uncertainties that cast doubt about the ability of the company to continue as a going concern.

REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year were:

Mr Mike Martin MBE	Chair
Ms Fiona Zeneli	Treasurer
Mrs Emily Lloyd	
Dr Mary Richardson	
Mr Thabo Makuyana	
Ms Samantha Lee	Appointed 13/04/2022
Ms Sarah Seddon	Appointed 12/10/2022
Mr Simon Price	Appointed 14/12/22022
Mrs Emma Broomfield	Resigned 21/04/2022
Mr Patrick Ismond	Resigned 21/10/2022
Mr Richard Hanson-James	Resigned 16/11/2022
Mr Jon Linley	Resigned 18/05/2023
Mrs Charlene Wattley	Resigned 24/09/2023

Trustee Appointment, Induction and Training

Potential trustees are asked to demonstrate their skills and knowledge for the role. Our trustee induction and training programme ensures that they are equipped with knowledge of the organisation, its activities and aims and have a clear understanding of their role as a trustee.

Our trustee induction programme is in place which includes introduction to the charity and organisation, visiting our services, meeting staff and volunteers. It also includes training about the role and responsibilities of a trustee. We have a rolling policy, procedures and guidelines review programme. Trustee training is offered which covers changes to guidance for trustees and updates on charity commission guidance and support for trustees.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees are responsible for making strategic and policy decisions, approval of budgets, the sale or purchase of major assets such as land, and the starting/ending of services under local authority contracts or others. The operational and day-to-day decisions are made by the Chief Executive Officer and the senior management team.

REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

FINANCE REVIEW

The organisation is funded by statutory authorities, grant funders, clinical commissioning groups and donations.

In the year the charitable company's income totalled £570,220 (2022: £563,622). The charity had a net deficit before transfers of £58,414 (2022: net surplus £59,997).

As at the year ending 31 March 2023, the Charity had unrestricted reserves of £168,365 (2022: £235,379), and free reserves of £89,423 (2022: £170,379).

Reserves Policy

In line with the Charities Commission guidelines for best practice, RSG will maintain a cash reserve in its total unrestricted funds that are sufficient to fund a minimum of 3 months' (90 days) of operating expenditure. The Trustees consider that 3 months in reserve would allow RSG to continue to operate in the extreme scenario that its income reduces materially over a very short period. During that 3-month period RSG could restructure its finances or even wind up its operation. This would include renegotiation of any contractual liabilities that extend beyond the 3-month window and cover its longer-term liabilities.

It is the stated intention of the Trustees to increase reserves through a designated fund with the intention of purchasing a building from which the charity would operate. At 31 March 2023 the charity had £168,365 (2022: £235,379) of unrestricted reserves, including £75,000 (2022: £65,000) in the designated fund. The unrestricted reserves equates to approximately 3 months operating expenses.

Risk Management

The organisation has a robust risk management procedure in place, and this is reviewed and revised by the senior management team and trustees on a regular basis. The biggest risk to the organisation is the income received from grant funding and statutory bodies (both as contracts and grants). We have plans in place to mitigate this by maintaining focus on our Fundraising Strategy and strategic relationships with statutory partners.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Strategy, business plan and budget

The budget agreed for the current year being a balanced budget that is dependent on securing future grant funding and that the trustees will regularly monitor and review the financial position. We have an agreed current Business Plan in place which is reviewed at every trustee meeting.

Equality, diversity and Inclusion

RSG has an EDI strategy in place which is reviewed at every trustee meeting.

REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees, who are also directors of the charity are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charitable company for the year.

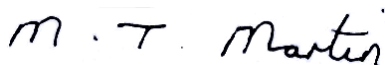
In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2019 (FRS 102) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by the Trustees/Directors on Wed 18th October 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



Mike Martin MBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees

REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Refugee Support Group (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 42 to 53.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charitable company's financial statements as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Direction given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

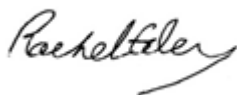
Independent examiner's statement

Since the charitable company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, which is one of those listed bodies.

I have completed by examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (i) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- (ii) the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- (iii) the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- (iv) the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



Rachel Eden ACMA
Holy Brook Associates Limited
Curious Lounge, 1st Floor, Pinnacle Building
Tudor Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 1NH

Dated: 12th Dec 2023



FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (including Income & Expenditure Account)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

		Unrestric ted funds	Restrict ed funds	Total	Unrestric ed funds <i>Restated</i>	Restricted funds <i>Restated</i>	Total
		2023	2023	2023	2022	2022	2022
	Notes	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>							
Donations & legacies	3	154,216	108,962	263,178	276,523	30,807	307,330
Charitable Activities	4	251,897	51,282	303,179	221,162	33,800	254,962
Other trading activities	5	3,863	-	3,863	-	-	-
Investments	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other income	7	-	-	-	1,330	-	1,330
Total income		409,976	160,244	570,220	499,015	64,607	563,622
<u>Expenditure:</u>							
Raising funds	8	31,630	3,872	35,502	1,150	254	1,404
Charitable Activities	9	445,360	147,772	593,132	485,430	16,792	502,222
Total resources expended		476,990	151,644	628,634	486,580	17,046	503,626
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		-67,014	8,600	-58,414	12,436	47,561	59,997
Transfers between funds	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year / net movement in funds		-67,014	8,600	-58,414	12,436	47,561	59,997
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		235,379	66,322	301,701	222,943	18,761	241,704
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		168,365	74,922	243,287	235,379	66,322	301,701

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirement for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.



BALANCE SHEET

For the year ended 31st March 2023

		2023		2022	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	13		3,942		-
Current assets					
Debtors	14	121,860		164,137	
Cash at bank and in hand		302,525		292,882	
		424,385		457,019	
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	15	185,040		155,318	
Net current assets			239,345		301,701
Total assets less current liabilities			243,287		301,701
Funds					<i>restated</i>
Restricted funds	17		74,922		66,322
Designated funds			75,000		65,000
Unrestricted funds			93,365		170,379
			243,287		301,701

The charitable company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2023. No member of the charitable company has deposited a notice, pursuant to section 476, requiring an audit of those accounts.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees on Wed 18th October 2023.

M. T. Martin

Michael Martin MBE
Chair of Trustees
Company Number 04515238



CASHFLOW STATEMENT

For the year ended 31st March 2023

	2023		2022
	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net movement in funds for the year	(58,414)		59,997
Depreciation	1,313		8
Investment income	-		-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	42,277		(92,106)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	29,723		94,605
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		14,899	62,504
Cash flow from investing activities			
Bank interest	-		-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(5,255)		-
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(5,255)	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		9,644	62,504
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2022		292,882	230,378
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2023		302,525	292,882
Cash and cash equivalents consists of:			
Cash at bank and in hand		302,525	292,882



NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31st March 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Refugee Support Group Ltd (formerly Reading Refugee Support Group) is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is First Floor R.I.S.C, 35-39 London Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 4PS .

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charitable company's memorandum and articles of association, the Companies Act 2006, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and applicable charity and company law. The charitable company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charitable company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Trustees have reviewed the going concern of the charity and consider that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

Designated funds are allocated by the Trustees towards specific purposes, and can be changed at the discretion of the Trustees if the need for the fund changes.

Transfers are made between funds when adequate justification and supporting evidence is provided.

1.4 Incoming resources

Contract income is accounted for on an accruals basis and allocated between funds according to the basis of the contract terms if necessary. Grant income is recognised when the charity is entitled to it after performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received. Where the charitable company is required to repay any part of the grant a provision is made for the amount due to be repaid.

Grants from local authorities and similar organisations have been included as contracts for services where applicable but as unrestricted income where the money is given with greater freedom of use.

Donations and legacies receivable are accounted for where there is entitlement, sufficient certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured reliably. In the case of unsolicited donations this is usually only when received. All other income is accounted for under the accruals concept. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers. Donated capital items are included within the financial statements at their current value at the time of donation. Income received for future periods is deferred until those periods.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Resources expended

All expenses are accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure incurred in connection with the specific objects of the charitable company is included under the heading of direct charitable expenditure, overheads are allocated to activities in proportion to their use of facilities. The irrecoverable element of VAT is included with the item of expense to which it relates.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and are stated at cost less depreciation. Donated assets are included at their current value at the time of donation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Office equipment	25% on cost
Computer equipment	33.33% on cost

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charitable company reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charitable company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charitable company's balance sheet when the charitable company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amorised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.9 Financial instruments (continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charitable company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.10 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charitable company is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.11 Retirement benefits

The charitable company operated a defined contribution scheme under auto-enrolment. Contributions payable are charged to the statement of financial activities in the year in which they are payable.

1.12 Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including lease incentives received, are charged as an expense on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

1.13 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charitable company has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement value.

1.14 Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charitable company's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	154,216	108,962	263,178	301,487
Legacies receivable	-	-	-	5,843
	154,216	108,962	263,178	307,330
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>	276,523	30,807		307,330

4 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Afghan refugee support	191,263	-	191,263	153,010
Syrian refugee support	44,002	-	44,002	85,975
Other	16,632	51,282	67,914	15,977
	251,897	51,282	303,179	254,962
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>	221,162	33,800		254,962

The above income includes government grants of £64,969 (2022: £8000) and specific government funded service level agreements £248,157 (2022: £224,610)

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising income	3,863	-	3,863	see note 20
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>	see note 20			-

6 Investments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Investment income	-	-

All investment income for the current and prior year was unrestricted.

7 Other income

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other income	-	1,330
	-	1,330

All other income for the current and prior year was unrestricted.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

8 Cost of raising funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising costs	31,630	3,872	35,502	9,139
Support costs	-	-	-	see note 20
	31,630	3,872	35,502	9,139
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>	<i>1,150</i>	<i>7,989</i>		<i>9,139</i>
9 Charitable activity expenditure	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	195,681	94,706	290,387	205,155
Service delivery	13,054	18,461	31,515	87,417
Freelance delivery of services	25,416	22,733	48,149	22,565
Volunteer costs	973	4,396	5,369	2,035
	235,124	140,296	375,420	317,172
Share of governance and support costs (see note 10)	210,236	7,476	217,712	177,315
	445,360	147,772	593,132	494,487
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>	<i>478,305</i>	<i>16,182</i>		<i>494,487</i>
10 Support and governance costs	Support costs	Governance costs	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Support				
Staff costs	145,887	2,993	148,880	126,969
Staff recruitment, training and development	3,860	-	3,860	7,090
Staff welfare	3,010	-	3,010	-
Administration	16,944	-	16,944	23,650
IT and communications	14,074	-	14,074	
Travel and subsistence	2,213	-	2,213	1,808
Premises costs	24,565	-	24,565	17,143
Depreciation	1,313	-	1,313	8
<i>Support costs are all allocated on the basis of staff time spent.</i>				
Governance				
Independent Examination	-	600	600	600
Legal and professional fees	-	1,948	1,948	18
Trustees' meeting expenses	-	305	305	29
	211,866	5,846	217,712	177,315
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>	<i>173,874</i>	<i>3,441</i>		<i>177,315</i>
Analysed between	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds		
Fundraising	-	-	-	
Charitable Activities	210,236	7,476	217,712	
	210,236	7,476	217,712	
<i>For the year ended 31 March 2022</i>				
<i>Fundraising</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>		<i>-</i>
<i>Charitable Activities</i>	<i>176,705</i>	<i>610</i>		<i>177,315</i>
	<i>176,705</i>	<i>610</i>		<i>177,315</i>

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

11 Trustees

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or reimbursed expenses during the current or prior year. Trustee indemnity insurance is included in the overall premium for the year.

12 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

Management

Other

2023	2022
Number	Number
2	2
23	19
25	21

Employment costs

Wages and salaries

Social security costs

Pension costs

2023	2022
£	£
405,037	304,995
42,767	21,073
23,612	13,791
471,416	339,859

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

The aggregate remuneration of key management personnel during the year was £90,272 (2022: £82,332)

In addition, a great amount of time, the value of which has not been reflected in these financial statements, is donated by our many volunteers and by staff members in excess of their contracted hours.

13 Tangible Fixed Assets

Cost

At 1 April 2022

Additions

Disposals

At 31 March 2023

Office Equipment	Computer Equipment	Total
£	£	£
837	2,048	2,885
5,255	-	5,255
-	-	-
6,092	2,048	8,140

Depreciation

At 1 April 2022

Depreciation charge during the year

Eliminated on disposal

At 1 April 2022

£	£	£
837	2,048	2,885
1,313	-	1,313
-	-	-
2,150	2,048	4,198

Net Book Value

At 1 April 2022

At 31 March 2023

£	£	£
-	-	-
3,942	-	3,942

14 Debtors: amounts falling due within one year:

Trade debtors

Prepayments and accrued income

Other debtors

2023	2022
£	£
63,843	164,137
30,022	-
27,995	-
121,860	164,137

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

15 Creditors : amounts falling due within one year:

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	8,847	17,365
Other taxation and social security	4,980	40,782
Other creditors	8,874	-
Accruals & deferred income	162,339	97,171
	185,040	155,318

16 Restricted funds

Restricted funds	Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Berkshire Community Fund	-	5,000	2,535	-	2,465
Berkshire NHS	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
Bucks Oxford Berkshire ICB	-	25,000	25,000	-	-
Carewell Transnational Families	(2,726)	17,630	6,145		8,759
Carnation Trust	-	3,197	3,197	-	-
Closing the Gap		10,000	10,000		-
Deloitte		675	675	-	-
Earley Charities		3,000	3,000	-	-
Field Seymour Parks (FSP Foundation)		2,500	711		1,789
Greenham Trust	5,750	-	5,750		-
Greenham Trust - vouchers	3,450	-	2,050		1,400
Herrington		9,954	7,374	(2,580)	-
Jubilee Picnic (BCF)		6,346	6,346		-
Justice Together		33,652	33,652		-
Land Aid		5,000	5,000		-
Narrowing the Gap		18,623	18,623		-
Nature Nurture		600	600		-
Pangbourne Rotary		2,300	2,300		-
RBC Winter fund	3,700	5,000	4,970		3,730
Reading Dispensary Trust	500	-	500		-
Reading Matins		1,500	1,500		-
Reading Rotary		2,071	2,071		-
Sanctuary Strikers	2,224	2,696	3,718	2,580	3,782
Scanlon Trust	-	5,000	5,000	-	-
St Laurence Trust	3,424	-	427	-	2,997
Tannery Trust	-	500	500	-	-
	66,322	160,244	151,644	-	74,922

Prior year - restated

<i>Prior year - restated</i>	Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Berkshire NHS	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Carewell Transnational Families	-	-	2,726	-	(2,726)
Greenham Trust	-	5,750	-	-	5,750
Greenham Trust - vouchers	-	3,450	-		3,450
RBC Winter fund	-	5,000	1,300		3,700
Reading Dispensary Trust	1,000	-	500		500
Sanctuary Strikers	-	4,000	1,775	-	2,225
St Laurence Trust	3,673	-	249	-	3,424
Other smaller grants	13,552		13,552	-	-
	18,225	68,200	20,103	-	66,322

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

16 Restricted funds (continued)

Berkshire Community Fund is contributions towards the City of Sanctuary initiative.

Berkshire NHS was received in 2022 to fund a mental health worker post. After difficulty in recruiting, Berkshire NHS agreed a change of use to fund the Drop In Centres for 2 years from 2023 to 2025.

Bucks Oxford Berkshire ICB funds were for the Drop In Centres.

Carewell Transnational Families Research Project is a 3 year project running from June 2021 to June 2024.

Carnation Trust was a 3 year grant to cover the costs of the Fundraiser salary for 1 day a week.

Closing the Gap is a grant to tackle poverty and help reduce the equality gap in Reading, contributing towards our Casework team.

Deloitte provided funds for a meal for refugees.

Earley Charities Trust grant was to provide additional support to Ukrainian families.

Field Seymour Parks (FSP) Foundation grant is to provide refugee travel to events and activities.

Greenham Trust helped raise money through crowdfunding to support the Berkshire NHS funded mental health worker post. As the post was not taken up, this was reallocated to the Drop In Centres during the year (in line with the revised allocation of the Berkshire NHS grant).

Greenham Trust vouchers were to provide clothing to Afghani refugees living in hotel accommodation.

Herrington grant was to support the post of our event activity co-ordinator.

Jubilee Picnic was funded by Berkshire Community Fund for an event to celebrate Queen Elizabeths Platinum Jubilee.

Justice Together is part funding a solicitor post to support people who use the immigration system to access justice fairly and equally enabling them to move on with their lives.

Land Aid grant was to support Ukrainian families resettlement.

Narrowing the Gap is a grant to tackle poverty and help reduce the equality gap in Reading, contributing towards our Casework team. This ended in October 2022 and was replaced with Closing the Gap.

Nature Nurture grant was to support Afghani family resettlement.

Pangbourne Rotary grant was to support our Homework Club.

Reading Borough Council Winter Fund grant is to support families in need during the winter months. This purchased vouchers to give to families for clothing and food.

Reading Dispensary Trust was a grant to provide 2 scooters for families.

Reading Matins grant was to support our Homework Club.

Reading Rotary grant provided clothing vouchers for Ukrainian families.

Notes to the Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023

16 Restricted funds (continued)

Sanctuary Strikers is our football team and is supported by a generous individual donor and Reading University.

Scanlon Trust have committed a grant of £5k a year for 7 years and this is year 2. During the year this money has contributed towards a seconded employee from Asylum Welcome, and towards match funding for the Big Give campaign.

St Laurence Trust grant provides emergency hotel accommodation for refugees.

Tannery Trust grant was to support Ukrainian refugees.

17 Analysis of net assets between funds	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by				
Tangible assets	3,942	-	-	3,942
Current assets/(liabilities)	89,423	75,000	74,922	239,345
	93,365	75,000	74,922	243,287
<i>Prior year</i>	<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>	<i>Designated Funds</i>	<i>Restricted Funds</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>	<i>£</i>
<i>Fund balances at 31 March 2022 were represented by</i>				
<i>Tangible assets</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Current assets/(liabilities)</i>	170,379	65,000	66,322	301,701
	170,379	65,000	66,322	301,701

18 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charitable company had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	21,210	21,251
Between two and five years	42,000	63,210
	63,210	84,461

19 Related Party Transactions

There were no related party transactions during the year (2022: none).

20 Notes on Comparative figures

During the year to 31 March 2023 there has been a change in the way transactions have been recorded in order to give more clarity and management information. Therefore, direct comparatives are not available in all areas. Where possible direct comparatives have been included, and where has not been able to be determined they are included in the original analysis as per the 31 March 2022 accounts.

During the year to 31 March 2023 it also came to light that a restricted fund had been inadvertently classed as unrestricted in the accounts and so the comparative figures have been restated to adjust to the correct opening balances on the restricted funds.



STAFF TESTIMONIES



Ozzy

RSG
Resettlement
Officer

Through your donations, Refugee Support Group have supported many people, clients like Ozzie.

In 2003, Ozzie, a 12-year-old from Zimbabwe, embarked on a flight to the UK to join his mother in pursuit of a safer life, leaving his father and extended family behind.

Zimbabwe, then under the controversial rule of Robert Mugabe, was marked by corruption, economic mismanagement, and human rights abuses, prompting Ozzie's parents to make the difficult choice to leave their homeland out of fear for their children's safety.

While Ozzie's journey to the UK was relatively straightforward, seeking asylum was an arduous process and it took Ozzie a full 15 years to obtain leave to remain.

Back in 2003, there were still safe routes to reach the UK, allowing Ozzie to seek asylum at the airport—an option largely closed to asylum seekers in current times. However, Ozzie and his family faced a lack of government support, financial hardship, the threat of homelessness, and limited access to basic necessities.

Ozzie's mother turned to the Refugee Support Group, where they found assistance with their asylum claim, received food parcels, and experienced the warmth of a supportive community. Eventually, the family reunited and years later Ozzie, eager to give back, found an opportunity to volunteer as a caseworker at the Refugee Support Group, completing a full circle.

Ozzie still works for RSG, reflecting on his journey, Ozzie shared, "All my experiences have given me a passion to help people who are going through the same thing that I've gone through. I know what it's like to be separated from family. But it's much more volatile for people to seek asylum now. I have such sympathy for the people who risk their lives to get here, having met people who have gone through these journeys has given me an appreciation for my own journey, they risk everything to get here."



KEY DETAILS

General enquiries Support enquiries

0118 950 5356

info@rrsg.org.uk

www.refugeesupportgroup.org.uk

Key Contacts

CEO Nick Harborne

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Deputy CEO Flora Roshi

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Social Media:

Twitter:

[@readingrefugees](https://twitter.com/readingrefugees)

Facebook:

[@readingrefugees](https://www.facebook.com/readingrefugees)

Instagram:

[@readingrefugees](https://www.instagram.com/readingrefugees)

LinkedIn:

[@readingrefugees](https://www.linkedin.com/company/readingrefugees)

Threads:

Legal:

Charity Reg No:

1098058

Company No:

04515238

Data Protection

All personal details of individuals mentioned in case studies have been changed to protect people's anonymity and confidentiality. We have consent to publish pictures from those who feature in them.

Proud to be working in partnership with:



LEGACY APPEAL

GIVE THE NEXT GENERATION OF REFUGEES A LIFELINE BY LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Writing a Will lays out exactly what you want to leave your friends and family. Without one, intestacy laws decide who gets what from your estate.

Writing a Will ensures your loved ones are looked after and can also help the causes you hold dear to continue transforming lives long into the future

Remembering Refugee Support Group in your Will can give hope to the next generation of refugees in Berkshire. We've spent over 25 years helping refugees in Berkshire, and our aim is to be here for refugees long into the future.

Each year **HUNDREDS** of refugees need our support in Berkshire, and that number continues to grow.

Leaving a gift in your will can help us continue successful programmes like our Drop-In Centre that helps refugees to feel less isolated and improve their mental health.

It could fund our football team that lets refugees make friends through sport, or our Homework Club that aids children to achieve their potential at school.

A Legacy gift could even enable us to create new projects that will touch people's lives in new ways and help them to succeed

We are proud to be partnered with **Barrett & Co solicitors** to offer discounted Will services to our supporters! Please get in touch to request a referral.



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