

# **Leeds Refugee Forum**

Charity number 1160845

A company limited by guarantee number 06231434

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**



# **Leeds Refugee Forum**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**

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**Prepared by West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO**

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

Name	Position	Dates
Katayoun Saemian	Chair	
Godefroid Rubomboza	Treasurer	
Taurai Cheteni		
Andrew Rathbone		
Maxmed Hussein		
Pria Bhabra		
Louise Waite	Secretary	
Haleh Jahanshahlou		Resigned 31 January 2024
Naima Mohamed		Resigned 31 January 2024
Fatemeh Khansalar		Appointed 31 January 2024
Luke Farley		
<b>Charity number</b>	1160845	Registered in England and Wales
<b>Company number</b>	06231434	Registered in England and Wales
<b>Registered and principal address</b>	<b>Bankers</b>	
One Community Centre	HSBC Bank plc	
Cromwell Street	PO Box 105	
Lincoln Green	33 Park Row	
Leeds	Leeds	
LS9 7SG	LS1 1LD	

### Independent examiner

Simon Bostrom FCIE

### West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO

Stringer House  
34 Lupton Street  
Leeds  
LS10 2QW

### Structure, governance and management

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was formed on 30 Apr 2007. It is governed by a memorandum and articles of association which were amended by special resolution on 19 Aug 2014. The liability of the members in the event of the company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £10.

### Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees of the charity are also the directors for the purposes of company law and are appointed by the members at the AGM.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Objectives and activities

#### The charity's objects

The Objects of the Charity, being for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Yorkshire and the Humber region, in particular Leeds, and in particular for the benefit of people who are refugees or asylum seekers, are:

The relief of need for refugees and asylum seekers and to advance them in life with a view to helping them develop their capacities and skills so that they may better participate in their community, in particular by providing advice, training, practical assistance and liaising with other organisations that can help achieve these aims

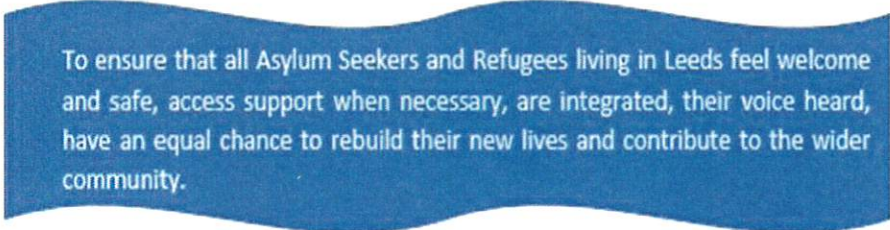
The advancement of education and training and the relief of unemployment,

The preservation and protection of health,

To provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age infirmity of disability, financial hardship or social circumstances, in particular refugees, with the object of improving their condition of life,

The promotion of the voluntary sector for the public benefit by providing advice, information and services to refugee community organisations in Leeds.

### Vision



To ensure that all Asylum Seekers and Refugees living in Leeds feel welcome and safe, access support when necessary, are integrated, their voice heard, have an equal chance to rebuild their new lives and contribute to the wider community.

#### Mission – In order to achieve its vision, LRF has as its mission:

1. To be the voice for refugees and refugee communities
2. To provide a resource for refugees and refugee communities

Leeds Refugee Forum works closely with the Leeds Migration Partnership to link our concerns and proposed activities to meetings in Leeds where topics are discussed and decisions are made. For example, housing, health and safety, employment and education. Our work helps the city to meet its vision of being a welcome and compassionate city.

#### Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our Trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

### The charity's main activities

The Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF) is a refugee-led organisation committed to supporting refugees and asylum seekers as they begin new lives in our city. Despite facing social and economic disadvantages, refugees bring a wealth of experience, knowledge, expertise, and resourcefulness. LRF harnesses these skills to benefit refugees, asylum seekers, refugee communities, and the wider community. We identify, inspire, develop, encourage, and support members of the refugee community.

### Strategic Role

#### Advocating for Refugees

- Communicating Needs: Ensuring that organisations and agencies respond effectively to refugee needs. Raising Awareness: Promoting understanding, empathy, and integration by improving awareness of refugee experiences.
- Linking to Community Leaders: Providing a reliable way to identify spokespeople, gather views, and disseminate information within and between communities.
- Sharing Information: Offering insights into refugee communities in Leeds, including their cultures and the organisations that support them.

#### Providing Resources

- Accessing Services: Acting as a conduit to various services available in Leeds.
- Building Capacity: Ensuring refugee communities have the necessary facilities and skills to support themselves.

This year, we focused on enhancing our capacity to meet the needs of our service users. Addressing safety issues within refugee communities, especially concerning children, was a priority. We also improved connectivity for asylum seekers in temporary accommodations by providing free SIM cards and lending tablets. These efforts ensured that those living in hotels and other temporary settings could stay connected and access vital services.

In summary, the Leeds Refugee Forum plays a crucial role in advocating for refugees, providing essential resources, and fostering a supportive community. Our work this year underscores our commitment to empowering refugees and asylum seekers, helping them integrate and thrive in Leeds.

### Achievements and performance

The Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF) plays a vital role in supporting refugees and asylum seekers in Leeds. This report illustrates the diversity of provisions provided by LRF and highlights the outstanding efforts of our dedicated staff and volunteers.

#### **Integration Efforts:**

**LRF offers English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes and development opportunities for both children and adults, enabling them to achieve their full potential.**

#### **Inputs and Outputs**

Our committed staff and volunteers are the backbone of LRF. Their tireless efforts ensure the smooth delivery of our programs and services. From teaching ESOL classes to providing development workshops, their work has a profound impact on the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

#### **Program Impact**

**ESOL Classes:** Hundreds of refugees and asylum seekers have improved their English language skills, enhancing their ability to integrate into the community, access employment opportunities, mainstream services and bilingual advocacy support.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

**Development Workshops:** Children and adults have participated in a variety of workshops, gaining valuable skills and knowledge that contribute to their personal and professional growth.

### Community Engagement

Our staff and volunteers have successfully organised numerous events and activities that foster community engagement and cultural exchange, promoting understanding and empathy between refugees and the wider community.

In summary, the fantastic work done by LRF's staff and volunteers has significantly contributed to the successful integration and empowerment of refugees and asylum seekers in Leeds. Their dedication and hard work ensure that our service users have the resources and support they need to thrive in their new community.

**English for Speaking for Other Language (ESOL) Project** at Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF) equips learners with essential English language skills for everyday life in the UK. Additionally, it serves as a wonderful opportunity for individuals to meet new people and engage with the community.

The goal of Leeds Refugee Forum is to offer classes catering to all proficiency levels, from beginners with little to no English knowledge to intermediate speakers. This includes a weekly self-study group and a drop-in University of Leeds STAR English Conversation Class, which helps students practice their conversational skills.



Addressing the English language barrier is crucial for refugees and immigrants, as effective communication is vital for daily interactions and integration into society. By offering informal education through English language teaching, the Leeds Refugee Forum aims to bridge this gap and facilitate smoother communication and interaction in various settings.

### Project Activities and Achievements

Throughout the project's duration, several key activities were conducted:

**ESOL Classes:** Offered both in-person and online, catering to non-speakers, beginners, pre-intermediate, and intermediate learners. Classes run four days a week, year-round, excluding school holidays. Currently, there are 885 enrolled students and 56 volunteers.

**STAR English Conversation Class:** A drop-in session hosted in collaboration with the University of Leeds,

**Leeds City Library Tour:** Organised for six ESOL students on June 30, 2023, offering a behind-the-scenes tour facilitated by one volunteer.

**ESOL Parties:** Special events for the Christmas holiday season and Refugee Week, attended by 50 people.

### Volunteer Engagement

As part of the volunteer experience program, various volunteers were engaged across different class levels. Non-Speaker Class, Beginner Class, Pre-Intermediate Class and Intermediate Class.

**ESOL Classes:** 11 months, 450 sessions (1.5 hours each), totalling 675 hours, involving 56 volunteers and 885 participants.

**Students Action for Refugees (STAR) English Conversation Class:** 32 sessions (2 hours each), totalling 64 hours, involving 10 volunteers and 67 participants.



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

Leeds City Library Tour: 2 hours, involving 1 volunteer and 6 participants.  
ESOL Parties: 8 hours, involving 8 volunteers and 50 participants.

The ESOL project has significantly impacted the community by providing essential language skills and fostering a sense of belonging among participants. The statistics and activities reflect the project's scope, reach, and the dedicated involvement of volunteers and participants.

The diagram above illustrates the key statistics of the ESOL project, highlighting the number of sessions, total hours, volunteers involved, and participants for each activity.

### Homework Club & GCSE Support

#### Weekly Hours

Homework Club: Approximately 4 hours per week (Tuesday 4:30 pm-6:00 pm, Thursday 4:30 pm-6:00 pm)  
GCSE Support: Approximately 2 hours per week (Saturday 10:00 am-12:00 pm)

#### Summary

The Homework Club and GCSE support sessions provide vital educational assistance and community building for students. The Homework Club, catering to children from year 1 to year 6, focuses on English and Maths while offering a supportive and enjoyable environment. Activities include games and quizzes that help children develop social skills and form friendships. Held every Tuesday and Thursday during term time, these sessions are supported by dedicated volunteers.

The GCSE support group operates on Saturday mornings, targeting year 10 and year 11 students as well as mature learners. These sessions offer focused, personalised support for GCSE Maths, English, and Science, allowing students to choose their study topics. The group also fosters teamwork among students.

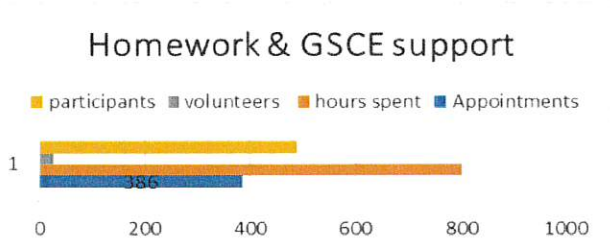
#### Beneficiary Count

The Homework Club registered approximately 80 students for the June 2023/June 2024 period, doubling from the previous year. Consistent retention has led to noticeable improvements in students' confidence, social skills, and academic abilities. The sessions also provide free childcare, enabling parents to connect and support one another.

The GCSE support group has around 30 registered users, primarily aged 14-16, with a separate section for mature students. Although retention fluctuates due to exam completions, recent sessions have focused on one-to-one tutoring for year 10 students. Additionally, Saturday sessions now offer ESOL level 2 and 3 support for young Ukrainian students, enhancing their English skills.

#### Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers are integral to these programs. The Homework Club's WhatsApp group includes 31 volunteers, with 5-6 attending regularly. Volunteers assist with academic tasks, games, quizzes, and special activities like Refugee Week celebrations. Their interaction with students significantly boosts the children's confidence and social skills.



For the GCSE support, retired professors and teachers volunteer, providing specialised knowledge. Collaborations with other project officers have led to tailored support, such as recruiting a translator for students who speak English as a second language.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Project Outcomes

The sessions have led to improved academic performance and positive feedback from parents. Mature students in the GCSE support group have appreciated the tailored revision materials, which have bolstered their exam confidence. The incorporation of well-being activities alongside educational support has encouraged students to celebrate their achievements and strengths, boosting engagement and motivation. Wellbeing checks, where children discuss their interests and strengths, have further enhanced their motivation.

Overall, these sessions have not only fostered academic growth but also nurtured a supportive community, promoting both educational and personal development for all participants.

### Leeds Refugee Forum: Bilingual Advocacy Service Report

Weekly Hours:

DWP Social Justice Team: 6 hrs/week (Mon 10am-4pm) for benefits advice

Advocacy: 16 hrs/week (Tues-Fri), with 2 staff members each working 12 hrs/week.

### Volunteer Involvement:

Active Volunteers: 7 volunteers providing 1:1 advocacy support, 4-6 hrs/week or ad hoc. Languages: Arabic, Tigrinya, Kurdish Sorani, Azerbaijani, German, French.

Community Interpreters: 20 additional volunteers available as needed, speaking languages including Ukrainian, Turkish, Amharic, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Pashto, Farsi, Dari, and Urdu.

### Overview:

Leeds Refugee Forum's Bilingual Advocacy Service assists refugees, asylum seekers, and local community members in accessing services and engaging with organisations. Our advocates ensure clients' voices are heard and rights are upheld, assisting with:

- Completing forms
- Contacting service providers
- Accessing health and education services
- Housing and welfare issues
- Complaints and local government contacts
- Reporting hate crimes

### Impact:

Service Usage: From June 2023 to May 2024, 386 appointments, up from 318 the previous year.

Volunteer Growth: Increased from 2 to 7 active volunteers, with improved training and support, including courses from Advonet, Voluntary Action Leeds, and Refugee Action.



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024



**OISC Registration:** Now registered to provide Level 1 Asylum and Protection advice, with plans to expand to Level 1 Immigration. Two staff and one volunteer are registered, with more training underway.

**Client Feedback:** Positive feedback highlights gratitude for face-to-face support and assistance with overcoming language, cultural, and system barriers.

Overall, the service has seen increased capacity and volunteer involvement, contributing to significant support for the community.

### Tech Lending Project

#### Overview:

The Tech Lending Project aimed to address digital isolation by providing tablets, mobile data, and digital skills sessions to people in temporary accommodation. Officially concluded in 2024, the Leeds Refugee Forum continues to run the project as a Tablet Lending Bank with 200 tablets. The project collaborates with 13 organizations in Leeds supporting asylum seekers and refugees.

#### Service Provision:

As of June 2024, 172 tablets are in use, with 14 broken or lost, and 14 available for lending.

#### Impact:

The project improved digital access for vulnerable individuals, including unaccompanied young refugees, women seeking asylum, abuse victims, and asylum seekers in hotels. The tablets enabled educational pursuits, and housing applications, and facilitated communication with family and friends. Participants showed enthusiasm and gratitude, fostering community and self-sufficiency.

#### Issues:

Communication with several partner organisations, such as Palm Cove Society, RETAS, and WEAM FAIA, has been challenging due to staff changes. This has led to missing tablets and necessitated an investigation by a new staff member to track down the devices and recruit new participants.

### Phone Line Support Project

#### Overview:

The Phone Line Support Project runs two weekly SIM Card Drop-ins for refugees and asylum seekers in Leeds. The SIM cards, provided by the Good Things Foundation's National Digital Inclusion project, offer 25GB of data, unlimited calls, and unlimited texts monthly.

#### Service Provision:

From June 2023 to June 2024, 715 service users received SIM cards and vouchers, enhancing digital inclusion, saving money, and improving access to online services, jobs, and education.

#### Issues:

Some service users lost their phones or SIM cards but were unable to receive replacements due to policy restrictions. Others ran out of data mid-month and were reminded of their plan's limits and next voucher dates.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Conclusion

Both projects have significantly impacted digital inclusion for vulnerable individuals, promoting education, self-reliance, and community connections. Despite challenges in communication and resource management, the projects have provided crucial support and demonstrated the importance of continued digital access initiatives.

### Social Media and Graphic Design

Beneficiary Count: Over 6000 monthly online views

#### Importance of Social Media:

Social media is essential for raising awareness, fundraising, advocacy, and direct assistance for our organisation. Platforms like Facebook and Twitter allow us to educate the public and share refugees' personal stories, providing timely updates during crises to drive urgent actions. Social media also facilitates targeted donation campaigns, connecting with local communities to request specific items such as clothing and household goods, often pairing users with donors within days. This contributes to a zero-waste society and strengthens community bonds.

Cost-effective compared to traditional media, social media allows us to allocate more funds to our activities. It enables collaborations with other organisations, expanding our reach and impact while signposting relevant services and events. We provide critical information about legal assistance, employment, healthcare, and recreational activities, fostering a sense of community among refugees. Regular updates build trust and transparency by showing how donations are used and the positive outcomes achieved. Social media also offers a platform for direct feedback from beneficiaries and supporters, refining our approaches and building credibility.

#### Content Strategy:

We post important community information, event photos, and videos, with donation call-outs achieving an almost 100% response rate. Our social media advertises classes and groups, ensuring maximum attendance. We share events and schemes of interest, like Mafwa theatre events and food banks. Showcasing event pictures and videos helps dispel anxieties about attending, highlighting the efforts of our staff and volunteers.

#### Statistics:

X (Twitter): 2,251 followers

Facebook: 839 followers

Instagram: 1040 followers (40% increase)

#### Physical Design and Marketing:

We design posters and flyers for events and services, ensuring appealing and easy-to-understand information. I connected with Leeds Volunteer Centre, distributing flyers to community spaces and engaging with organisations like Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service to raise awareness of our offerings.

All of these stats are higher than last year, with Instagram growing the most by 40%.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024



### Branding:

We developed and refined branding guidelines, ensuring professional and recognisable outputs. New staff are trained on these guidelines to maintain consistency.

### Video Production:

We are producing a video showcasing LRF's work, including interviews and testimonials, with careful attention to consent policies and the safety of under-18s. The video will be shared on our website and social media.

### Website Modernisation:

Collaborating with volunteers, LRF updated the website design to align with our branding, creating a bright, welcoming, and easy-to-navigate site. Continuous updates will keep the content relevant.

### Well-being Project for Refugee Women and Men's Group

The Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF) has successfully facilitated a well-being project aimed at supporting refugee women and men through various activities designed to build community, enhance skills, and support mental health and trauma recovery. This report highlights the project's achievements, challenges, and collaborative efforts.

#### Project Overview

##### Women's Well-being Group

Initially focused on sewing, the women's well-being group quickly evolved to include a broader range of activities. Attendance initially fluctuated as participants adjusted to the expanded offerings, but the group eventually stabilised with strong participation. The group fostered a familial atmosphere, encouraging members to support each other both within and outside the organisation. Activities built confidence, leading some participants to take on leadership roles and volunteer positions. The group's development has been remarkable, with members now ready to start their own businesses and showcase their work on social media.

##### Men's Well-being Group

Following the success of the women's group, a men's well-being group was launched, offering weekly two-hour sessions to build community and support among male refugees.

#### Key Activities and Achievements

**Community and Cultural Events:** Activities such as a Halloween party, Iftar events, and International Women's Day celebrations fostered cultural exchange and community bonding.



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

**Skill-building Workshops:** Participants engaged in beauty sessions with professional stylists, cooking sessions, and print workshops with artists, enhancing their creative and practical skills.

**Health and Well-being Support:** Collaborations with MESMAC Leeds, NHS health checks, and the Job Centre helped address health and language barriers while improving overall well-being.

**Entrepreneurial Development:** A cultural day during Refugee Week empowered women to start and market their own businesses. The men's group created an Eagle sculpture exhibited in London, symbolising support for animals.

**Exhibitions and Public Engagement:** The Leeds University Exhibition showcased the groups' creativity, and various community projects, including partnerships with the West Yorkshire Police and paint donations from Seagulls and Dulux, enhanced visibility and community integration.

### Challenges and Development

The project faced several challenges, including language barriers, health issues, transportation difficulties, and marketing needs. Despite these obstacles, the group managed to create a supportive environment that facilitated personal and professional growth.

### Future Plans

The women's group aims to involve more diverse communities, collaborate with local artists, and participate in Leeds events to boost confidence and community engagement. Focus areas will include well-being, fitness, and skill exchange, particularly with the Ukrainian community. The men's group will work on building attendance and addressing specific needs.

### Volunteer Involvement

Volunteers have been crucial to the project's success, with 16 volunteers helping run activities. Moving forward, the project plans to recruit skilled volunteers from various backgrounds to further support the groups.

### Conclusion

The well-being project has successfully transformed participants into a supportive, confident community ready to engage with broader society and pursue professional opportunities. Through strategic partnerships and a diverse range of activities, LRF continues to address trauma and mental health issues, fostering a resilient and inclusive community for refugees in Leeds.

### Hardship Fund

The fund has provided financial assistance to destitute asylum seekers (Hardship Fund payments) through cash payments and vouchers for refugee families. Cash payments are directed towards immediate needs such as shelter, food, and essential services. Vouchers are also distributed to support families, ensuring access to necessities like groceries, clothing, and other essential items. This approach aims to provide direct relief to those in need while ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to address the diverse needs of asylum seekers and their families.

The hardship fund has implemented a referral system in collaboration with other organisations within the Leeds sector. This system facilitates the identification and support of individuals and families facing financial hardship, particularly destitute asylum seekers. This network makes referrals to ensure that assistance reaches those who need it most.

An assessment process is typically employed for families supported by food vouchers, primarily targeting individuals receiving benefits. This assessment helps determine the eligibility of individuals and families for support through distributing food vouchers. By utilising assessment forms, the fund can ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to those in need within the community.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

We started 27 September 2023 and ended on 27 March 2024

Total people supported	Families	Single male	Single female	Payments made	Total spent
94	3	77	11	279	£7115.00

### Vouchers for Refugee Families:

Number of People Helped		Number of Vouchers Given Out			Value of Vouchers Given Out		
No. Households	No. Individuals	Aldi	Morrisons	Total	Aldi	Morrisons	Total
75	269	55	20	75	£1,100.00	£500.00	£1600.00

### Leeds Refugee Week 2024

Refugee Week 2024, coordinated by Leeds Refugee Forum, celebrates the theme 'Our Home,' encouraging conversations about the meaning of home. This year's events span culture, training, socializing, and celebrating achievements, culminating in football tournaments to unite communities.

The Burmantofts Community Festival and Cultural Day featured traditional folk dance, music, cultural displays, belly dancing, a traditional costume fashion show, and national food, with agencies providing information. RETAS organized a photography exhibition in Harehills, showcasing portraits of locals reflecting on the theme of home. Women's Health Matters hosted a Women's Celebration event, where the Rainbow Hearts group shared food and music from various countries.

The Leeds Refugee Forum's well-being groups hosted a Mind well session, discussing the concept of home. Carefree Calligraphy offered an alternative evening out to learn modern calligraphy. The 'Calling Harehills Our Home' exhibition encouraged community members to enjoy picnic food, music, and games.

The MEGA Conversation Café at Leeds Playhouse provided an opportunity to meet new people over hot drinks and games. The Community Kitchen Take-over featured food from around the world prepared by members of the Theatre of Sanctuary programme, available on a pay-as-you-feel basis. The Sanctuary's Got Talent event at Leeds Playhouse showcased local talent.

The 'Ten Years of Sanctuary' gala celebrated a decade of sanctuary with performances by Asmarina Voices women's choir, Harmony Choir, Headingley Voices Choir, and other guests. The Leeds Refugee Forum ESOL Class Party honoured students from diverse backgrounds with fun and games. Opera North hosted a special concert for World Refugee Day with Maya Youssef, offering pay-what-you-can tickets to ensure accessibility.

The Advocacy for Inclusion event celebrated a year of support and training for refugee and asylum-seeking communities. The Light of Refugee Week event, hosted by the Well-being Women group, combined Eid and Refugee Week celebrations with food, dancing, and music. The Leeds Refugee Forum Homework Club Party featured cultural games, flag colouring, face painting, and dancing.

The Refugee Week Flourish Party by Mafwa Theatre is celebrated with performances, stalls, activities, and workshops exploring the theme of home. The Refugee World Cup 2022 brought together 18 men's teams and 4 women's teams, with the Eritrean team winning the trophy, in a fun, inclusive environment with refreshments and family entertainment.

Overall, Refugee Week 2024 in Leeds fostered a sense of community, celebrating diverse experiences and the shared concept of home through a variety of inclusive events and activities.



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Ukrainian Support Project:

The Ukrainian Project at Leeds Refugee Forum has significantly supported Ukrainian refugees through various services and activities. Since June 2023, ESOL classes have expanded to serve 200 students across four levels, with online classes for intermediate learners. Integration visits to Bolton Abbey and Blackpool, facilitated by Karmand Community Centre, involved 90 participants. Three Latte Art sessions with Starbucks led to employment for two Ukrainian women. Weekly yoga classes since December 2022, and handmade classes starting April 2024, have fostered physical and mental well-being. Safeguarding training and employment support sessions, including collaborations with Smart Works, Reed in Partnership, and Generation UK, have provided critical employment guidance. Housing training with the Red Cross and NHS healthcare talks addressed practical living and health concerns. Cultural Day and a robust WhatsApp support group further enhanced community integration and support. Overall, the project has created a comprehensive support network for Ukrainian refugees in Leeds.

The project's key services include ESOL classes (both online and offline), a well-being group featuring yoga and handmade classes, advocacy support, employment and self-employment coaching, and a volunteer experience program.

#### Key Services:

ESOL Classes: 200 participants engaged over 11 months.

Well-being Group: Yoga (47 sessions) and handmade classes (8 sessions), serving 18 and 12 participants respectively.

**Advocacy Support:** Assistance with forms, GP registration, college enrolment, and signposting to other essential services like food, clothing, and housing.

**Employment Support:** Coaching for employment and self-employment, including sessions with Smart Works, Reed, and Generation UK.

**Volunteer Experience Program:** Offers training and volunteer roles, providing valuable UK references for 40 participants.

**Information Hub:** Acts as a central point for information on local classes, activities, and support services.

#### Community Engagement:

**Trips:** Blackpool trip (50 participants, 8 hours), Bolton Abbey (40 participants, 7 hours).

**Cultural and Training Events:** Latte Art session with Starbucks (31 participants, 6 hours), Safeguarding training (16 participants, 2 hours), NHS Healthcare talk (8 participants, 1 hour), Housing training with Red Cross (25 participants, 4 hours), Culture Day (30 participants, 4 hours).

The project successfully facilitated the integration of Ukrainian refugees into the Leeds community, helping them access vital services, gain employment, and build social connections. Through continuous support and engagement, the Ukrainian Project has significantly contributed to the well-being and settlement of its participants.



# **Leeds Refugee Forum**

## **Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024**

### **Conclusion**

The Leeds Refugee Forum (LRF) has made significant strides this year in supporting and empowering refugee communities through a variety of comprehensive programs and services. Our grassroots efforts focus on building the capacity of refugees and asylum seekers to integrate and thrive in Leeds. From ESOL classes and development workshops to advocacy services and well-being projects, our initiatives have provided essential resources, fostered community engagement, and addressed the unique challenges faced by our service users. The success of these programs is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our staff, volunteers, and the continued support from partners and supporters.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to enhancing our capacity to meet the evolving needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Your continued support is vital in making this happen. Together, we can ensure that refugees in Leeds have the opportunities and resources they need to build fulfilling lives in their new homes. Thank you for your unwavering support and partnership in this crucial work.

### **Financial review**

The net income for the year was £3,025, including net income of £7,002 on unrestricted funds and net expenditure of £3,977 on restricted funds after transfers.

### **Reserves policy**

The reserves policy is:

- i) to maintain minimum reserves sufficient to cover 3 months operating expenditure.
- ii) if possible to allocate income from One Community Centre to reserves (i.e.. To aim to cover operating expenditure from other sources);
- iii) to adopt a target for the time being of accumulating sufficient reserves to cover at least 6, and up to 12, months operating expenditure.

The charity's free reserves, excluding fixed assets, at the year end were £53,522.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Trustees' report (continued) for the year ended 31 March 2024

### Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and UK Accounting Standards.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial accounts 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, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;

observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

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 accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable 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 charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity 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 (Charities SORP (FRS102)), and in accordance with the special provisions of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by the board of trustees on 2.10.2024

Signed:  (Trustee)

Name: TAURAI CHETENI

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Leeds Refugee Forum

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 17 to 24.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts 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 charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the accounts 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
- 4 the accounts 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 accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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 accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Simon Bostrom FCIE

03/10/2024

**West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO**

Stringer House  
34 Lupton Street  
Leeds  
LS10 2QW



**Leeds Refugee Forum**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**(including summary income and expenditure account)**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

	Notes	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Grants and donations	(2)	9,213	129,203	138,416	141,519
Donated services	(3)	2,730	-	2,730	1,163
Fees and charges		131	-	131	642
Other income		-	-	-	520
<b>Total income</b>		<b>12,074</b>	<b>129,203</b>	<b>141,277</b>	<b>143,844</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Salaries, NIC and pensions	(4)	36	94,162	94,198	75,346
Payroll fees		1,345	-	1,345	963
Donated services		2,730	-	2,730	1,163
Donations to others	(5)	-	14,120	14,120	9,210
Volunteer expenses		433	3,478	3,911	3,150
Utilities		1,835	3,309	5,144	4,118
Printing, postage and stationery		-	2,222	2,222	1,915
Telephone and Internet		575	519	1,094	929
Insurance		-	220	220	210
Independent examination		-	990	990	990
Equipment		-	433	433	798
Food and refreshments		-	509	509	2,287
Other premises costs		-	657	657	332
Travel and transport		169	99	268	374
Training and support		-	-	-	195
Website		-	132	132	1,573
Membership fees		-	117	117	45
Other office costs		10	112	122	134
Bank Charges		129	86	215	217
Depreciation		1,304	-	1,304	703
IT and software		44	836	880	914
Activities		22	7,619	7,641	6,112
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>8,632</b>	<b>129,620</b>	<b>138,252</b>	<b>111,678</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>		<b>3,442</b>	<b>(417)</b>	<b>3,025</b>	<b>32,166</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>		<b>3,560</b>	<b>(3,560)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>7,002</b>	<b>(3,977)</b>	<b>3,025</b>	<b>32,166</b>
<b>Fund balances brought forward</b>		<b>47,760</b>	<b>98,326</b>	<b>146,086</b>	<b>113,920</b>
<b>Fund balances carried forward</b>	(6)	<b>54,762</b>	<b>94,349</b>	<b>149,111</b>	<b>146,086</b>

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Balance sheet

as at 31 March 2024

	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Tangible assets	(7) 1,240	-	1,240	724
<b>Total fixed assets</b>	<u>1,240</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,240</u>	<u>724</u>
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors and prepayments	(8) 35	-	35	35
Cash at bank and in hand	(9) 54,519	94,349	148,868	146,317
<b>Total current assets</b>	<u>54,554</u>	<u>94,349</u>	<u>148,903</u>	<u>146,352</u>
<b>Current liabilities:</b>				
<b>amounts falling due within one year</b>				
Creditors and accruals	(10) 1,032	-	1,032	990
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<u>1,032</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,032</u>	<u>990</u>
<b>Net current assets / (liabilities)</b>	<u>53,522</u>	<u>94,349</u>	<u>147,871</u>	<u>145,362</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>54,762</u>	<u>94,349</u>	<u>149,111</u>	<u>146,086</u>
<b>Funds</b>				
Unrestricted funds	54,762	-	54,762	47,760
Restricted funds	-	94,349	94,349	98,326
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>54,762</u>	<u>94,349</u>	<u>149,111</u>	<u>146,086</u>

For the year ending 31 March 2024 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and with FRS 102 (effective January 2019).

The financial statements were approved by the board of trustees on .....

Signed:  (Trustee)

Name: K. ATAYOUN SAEMIAN

# **Leeds Refugee Forum**

## **Notes to the accounts**

### **for the year ended 31 March 2024**

#### **1 Accounting policies**

##### **Basis of accounting**

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

There has been no change to the accounting policies since last year.

No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

##### **Going concern**

The trustees are satisfied that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

##### **Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the resources, if it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

##### **Grants and donations**

Grants and donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Where grants are related to performance and specific deliverables, they are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

Donated goods for resale are valued at the amount actually realised upon their sale.

Donated assets, facilities or services are valued at their estimated value to the charity. This is the price that the charity estimates it would pay in the open market for equivalent items; or services and facilities of equivalent utility to the charity.

##### **Expenditure and liabilities**

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

##### **Taxation**

As a charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

##### **Tangible fixed assets**

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised and included at cost including any incidental expenses of acquisition. Gifted assets are shown at the value to the charity on receipt. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

Computer Equipment: Over 3 Years

##### **Pensions**

The charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are recognised in the year they are payable.

##### **Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Notes to the accounts continued

### for the year ended 31 March 2024

2 Grants and donations	2024	2024	2024	2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	funds	funds	funds	funds
	£	£	£	£
Advonet	-	4,750	4,750	-
Disrupt Foundation	-	30,000	30,000	-
Hubbub Foundation	-	17,100	17,100	39,900
Leeds Asylum Seekers Support Network	-	300	300	750
Leeds Christian Community Trust (LCCT)	-	13,950	13,950	10,500
Leeds City Council (LCC)	-	3,969	3,969	26,320
Leeds Older People HSF Grant	-	5,000	5,000	-
Manuel Bravo Project	-	3,839	3,839	7,678
Manuel Bravo Project	-	3,639	3,639	-
Tudor Trust	-	42,000	42,000	42,000
Volition Leeds	-	-	-	6,293
Donations	9,213	4,656	13,869	8,078
	<u>9,213</u>	<u>129,203</u>	<u>138,416</u>	<u>141,519</u>

### 3 Donated services

The Forum was not charged rent of the One Community Centre during the year. The value of these donated services has been estimated as £2,730 (2023: £1,163).

### 4 Staff costs and numbers

	2024	2023
	£	£
Gross salaries	91,540	72,877
Social security costs	5,019	4,108
Employment allowance	(5,000)	(4,108)
Pensions	2,639	2,469
	<u>94,198</u>	<u>75,346</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 7.5, being an average of 3.1 full time equivalent (2023: 6.4, 3.2 FTE). There were no employees with emoluments above £60,000.

### Defined contribution pension scheme

	2024	2023
	£	£
Costs of the scheme to the charity for the year	2,639	2,469
Amount of any contributions outstanding at the year end	-	-

### 5 Grant making

Project or activity	2024	2023	2024	2023
	Grants to	Grants to	Grants to	Grants to
	institutions	institutions	individuals	individuals
	£	£	£	£
Hardship fund	-	-	7,795	5,010
Household support fund	4,250	-	2,075	4,200
Total	<u>4,250</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,870</u>	<u>9,210</u>

**Leeds Refugee Forum**  
**Notes to the accounts continued**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

<b>5 Restricted funds</b>	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
Manuel Bravo Project	188	3,839	3,955	-	72
Advonet	-	4,750	121	-	4,629
Manuel Bravo Project	4,317	3,639	7,151	-	805
Community Cohesion	6,631	-	396	-	6,235
Disrupt Foundation	-	30,000	14,936	-	15,064
Hardship Fund	12,524	11,706	7,666	(990)	15,574
LCCT Household Support Fund	5,890	6,600	6,490	-	6,000
Homework Club	397	1,704	1,732	-	369
LCC Inner East Committee	-	600	511	-	89
Redundancy Reserve	1,553	-	-	-	1,553
Refugee Week	2,791	1,050	743	-	3,098
Hubbub Foundation	19,992	17,100	21,071	-	16,021
Tudor Trust	22,360	42,000	47,928	-	16,432
LCC Ukraine Project	10,302	-	9,121	-	1,181
LCC Wellbeing Grant	3,812	-	3,812	-	-
Women's group	5,069	5,000	2,105	(750)	7,214
LCC Wellbeing Equipment	2,500	-	680	(1,820)	-
MICE	-	300	287	-	13
Women Group	-	915	915	-	-
	<u>98,326</u>	<u>129,203</u>	<u>129,620</u>	<u>(3,560)</u>	<u>94,349</u>

<b>Fund name</b>	<b>Purpose of restriction</b>
Manuel Bravo Project	Advocacy support for the refugee community.
Advonet	For running costs.
Manuel Bravo Project	Towards strategic digital engagement.
Community Cohesion	For community activities (additional Tudor Trust funding).
Disrupt Foundation	Towards core support.
Hardship Fund	Funding from PAFRAS, LASSN and Leeds Christian Community Trust to support destitute asylum seekers in Leeds. The transfer relates to a management charge.
LCCT Household Support Fund	Towards household support costs.
Homework Club	For pupils from refugee background and new arrivals to support them in English, Maths and Science.
LCC Inner East Committee	Towards the Christmas party celebration for the Women Well-being group.
Redundancy Reserve	Redundancy reserve for staff transferred at the incorporation date.
Refugee Week	Towards the costs of the annual Refugee Week events.
Hubbub Foundation	Tech Lending Project – Tablets for Temporary Accommodations
Tudor Trust	Towards core costs including the salaries of the Director and an office administrator.
LCC Ukraine Project	Ukrainian Refugee Community Support Project.
LCC Wellbeing Grant	Five Way for Well-being - Migrant Health Grant, Health Board.
Women's group	Individual donation towards the women's group activities. The transfer relates to room hire.
LCC Wellbeing Equipment	Towards equipment purchases. The transfer relates to fixed assets purchased for the general purposes of the charity.

The transfers between funds relate to management charges at 15%.

**Leeds Refugee Forum**  
**Notes to the accounts continued**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

**7 Tangible assets**

**Cost**

At 1 April 2023  
Additions  
At 31 March 2024

Computer equipment	Total
£	£
3,855	3,855
1,820	1,820
<u>5,675</u>	<u>5,675</u>

**Depreciation**

At 1 April 2023  
Charge for year  
At 31 March 2024

3,131	3,131
1,304	1,304
<u>4,435</u>	<u>4,435</u>

**Net book value**

At 31 March 2024  
  
At 31 March 2023

<u>1,240</u>	<u>1,240</u>
<u>724</u>	<u>724</u>

**8 Debtors and prepayments**

Prepayments

2024	2023
£	£
35	35
<u>35</u>	<u>35</u>

**9 Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank  
Cash in hand

2024	2023
£	£
146,844	142,671
2,024	3,646
<u>148,868</u>	<u>146,317</u>

**10 Creditors and accruals**

Accruals

2024	2023
£	£
1,032	990
<u>1,032</u>	<u>990</u>



# Leeds Refugee Forum

## Notes to the accounts continued

### for the year ended 31 March 2024

#### 11 Related party transactions

##### Trustee expenses

No trustee received any expenses during this year or the previous year.

##### Trustee remuneration and benefits

No trustee received any remuneration or benefit during this or the previous year.

##### Remuneration and benefits received by key management personnel

The total employee benefits received by key management personnel were £49,045 (previous year: £38,630).

#### 12 Funds held as agent

	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£
Refugee Community Organisations	-	180	105	75
	-	180	105	75

##### Fund name

Refugee Community  
Organisations

##### Additional information

Funds held on behalf of individual refugee community organisations.

## Leeds Refugee Forum

### Statement of Financial Activities including comparatives for all funds (including summary income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2024

	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2023 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
<b>Income</b>						
Grants and donations	9,213	5,118	129,203	136,401	138,416	141,519
Donated services	2,730	1,163	-	-	2,730	1,163
Fees and charges	131	642	-	-	131	642
Other income	-	520	-	-	-	520
<b>Total income</b>	<b>12,074</b>	<b>7,443</b>	<b>129,203</b>	<b>136,401</b>	<b>141,277</b>	<b>143,844</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Salaries, NIC and pensions	36	825	94,162	74,521	94,198	75,346
Payroll fees	1,345	963	-	-	1,345	963
Donated services	2,730	1,163	-	-	2,730	1,163
Donations to others	-	-	14,120	9,210	14,120	9,210
Volunteer expenses	433	10	3,478	3,140	3,911	3,150
Utilities	1,835	90	3,309	4,028	5,144	4,118
Printing, postage and stationery	-	-	2,222	1,915	2,222	1,915
Telephone and Internet	575	125	519	804	1,094	929
Insurance	-	-	220	210	220	210
Independent examination	-	390	990	600	990	990
Equipment	-	-	433	798	433	798
Food and refreshments	-	-	509	2,287	509	2,287
Other premises costs	-	-	657	332	657	332
Travel and transport	169	-	99	374	268	374
Training and support	-	-	-	195	-	195
Website	-	500	132	1,073	132	1,573
Membership fees	-	-	117	45	117	45
Other office costs	10	20	112	114	122	134
Bank Charges	129	191	86	26	215	217
Depreciation	1,304	703	-	-	1,304	703
IT and software	44	499	836	415	880	914
Activities	22	93	7,619	6,019	7,641	6,112
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>8,632</b>	<b>5,572</b>	<b>129,620</b>	<b>106,106</b>	<b>138,252</b>	<b>111,678</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<b>3,442</b>	<b>1,871</b>	<b>(417)</b>	<b>30,295</b>	<b>3,025</b>	<b>32,166</b>
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	<b>3,560</b>	<b>1,516</b>	<b>(3,560)</b>	<b>(1,516)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>7,002</b>	<b>3,387</b>	<b>(3,977)</b>	<b>28,779</b>	<b>3,025</b>	<b>32,166</b>
<b>Fund balances brought forward</b>	<b>47,760</b>	<b>44,373</b>	<b>98,326</b>	<b>69,547</b>	<b>146,086</b>	<b>113,920</b>
<b>Fund balances carried forward</b>	<b>54,762</b>	<b>47,760</b>	<b>94,349</b>	<b>98,326</b>	<b>149,111</b>	<b>146,086</b>