



DARLINGTON ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES

CHARITY NUMBER 1170986

ANNUAL REPORT
2023

FRAN WOOD
CEO



Annual Report to the DAR Board of Trustees

This year has been marked by a significant period of transition for us. The Trustees unanimously decided to review and restructure DAR. We actively sought new Trustees and, specifically, a Chair. We are pleased to welcome the following Trustees to join our existing Board:

- Fiona Huddleston
- Dr Hassan Eisa
- Diane Toner
- Dr Peter Meek

Dr Peter Meek was elected as our new Chair of the Board, allowing me to focus more on the operational aspects of DAR and my role as CEO.

The Nationalities and Borders Act, passed in 2022, and the Illegal Migration Act in July 2023 have cast a shadow over the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We are witnessing the repercussions of divisive sound bites and rhetoric, leading to increased division and hate crime in our communities.

Despite these challenges, we consider ourselves fortunate to still be able to welcome and connect with people from around the world who have faced significant hardships and had to leave their homes.

Throughout the year, there has been a growing interest among our sanctuary seekers to engage in volunteer work with us, bringing a fresh dynamic to our operations. This reflects the outstanding efforts of our volunteers in welcoming newly arrived sanctuary seekers, providing support during the prolonged and challenging waiting period marked by uncertainty and anxiety. Receiving decisions from the Home Office initiates a flurry of paperwork and more, depending on the nature of the decision. Our mentors work incredibly hard throughout this process, guiding and supporting our asylum seekers. The impact our mentors have on the lives of asylum seekers and refugees is hard to measure so I will let the asylum seekers say it.

- "I wish that one day I will return all the good and beautiful things you have done for my family. Lucky to have a friend like you."
- "She organised all my hospital visits and got me groceries when I was ill"
- "Thanks for the love and care you showed to me and my daughter"
- "While we were in all the problems, sadness and emotions we experienced in our own country, you became a big brother and a sister to us. You have alleviated our pain, you have solved our problems. That's why we can't thank you enough"
- "...Our mentor supported me through various administrative processes, including opening a bank account, applying for Child Benefit and Universal Credit, scheduling my first Job Centre appointment, and attending my initial municipal assistance appointment."

There are so many expressions of gratitude but it is clear the lasting impact is that our refugees want to be part of our team and are becoming mentors themselves.



Our fundraising team secured a generous grant from Tesco's Community Grants which kick started our football team. Furthermore they secured a grant from Sport England enabling us to expand our sporting activities, beyond our vibrant football team to include boxing, keep fit and pilates

- "I am very grateful to be part of this project. I have been part of this team for almost two years now and I have learned a lot and made many new friends..."
- "I have been receiving boxing sessions since January 2023. It has been a great opportunity to integrate with society. It helped me make positive changes in my lifestyle. However, the most interesting part of the boxing club is the kindness of the staff. They are professional and friendly. I think that it is a family rather than a boxing club."
- "I couldn't sit down and cross my legs two weeks ago; I was too inflexible. Now I can sit on the floor and play with my daughter with my legs crossed thanks to pilates."

The School's Orientation program has evolved into the "Guide to Inclusive Practice for Welcoming and Supporting EAL Learners." This document, crafted by Alison Holland in collaboration with Darlington Schools, Darlington Borough Council, and DAR volunteers, is already being implemented by schools. To compliment this we are in the early stages of an interpreter scheme we are offering to schools and organisations in Darlington. Our Language team has worked with individuals through online lessons, face-to-face conversation classes which are becoming increasingly more popular, and our drop-in sessions.

Each year, the generosity of Carmel College students and parents overwhelms us. At Christmas, we received eighty wonderful hampers for distribution to our families. Thanks to generous donations from the people of Darlington, we were able to provide gift bags for every single sanctuary seeker in Darlington. The dedication of the Mentor and Fundraising teams in sorting, packing, and labelling the gift bags was truly impressive.

Our fundraising team continues to organise a wonderful Quiz night which is becoming a tradition. In addition to hosting enjoyable events, the team has successfully secured grants from the County Durham Community Fund and the Community Grant Fund and the New Arrivals Pathway Grant from the North East Migration Partnership (NEMP). These grants enable us to support new arrivals with basic foodstuffs, toiletries and information about living in Darlington.

Our collaboration with Darlington Borough Council's Refugee support and housing teams, MEARS welfare officers, the Job Centre, the British Red Cross, and Justice First has enhanced the clarity and usefulness of support and advice provided to sanctuary seekers and refugees.

It is heartening to witness the Ukrainian community growing and settling in Darlington, making valuable contributions to schools and other voluntary organizations. We are always pleased to see refugees flourishing in their lives here.

I would like to thank Sally Forth for her incredible work with DAR. Sally was one of the founder members of DAR. She made a point of getting to know all of the Syrian families and quickly became their "go to" person. Sally's passion for cycling meant that she was able to collect donated bikes, fix them, store them in her cellar (along with a blind pheasant!) and distribute them to anyone who needed one. Sally is the sort of person who will do what is needed. She registered us a charity and when we needed a Treasurer Sally was there, albeit reluctantly. She was a mentor and part of the Language team, taking on several families at a time. Sally has been the most consistent person I



know, always dependable and honest but most of all full of optimism and humour. The last few years have been difficult and this makes me even more grateful for Sally's help. We bid her farewell from the Trustee Board so that she can do more of what she loves. Thank you Sally Forth.

Fran Wood

CEO

March 2024

Some interesting facts and figures to look at along with the following appendices which attempt to capture some of what we do in numbers.

1000	£ given to Justice First
971	hours of contact by 30 Mentors
960	hours of English language tuition
700	£ raised by the Fundraising team
500	£ raised by DAR Lottery
169	asylum seekers being supported
102	hours of drop in
100	volunteers
46	bicycles requested and distributed
34	asylum seekers given leave to remain
30	mentors
20	language tutors
18	average attendance at drop in
18	families receiving regular language teaching
18	bicycles donated from Sustrans
11	Drop in team
8	Executive team
7	Trustees
6	Fundraising team
1	Secretary

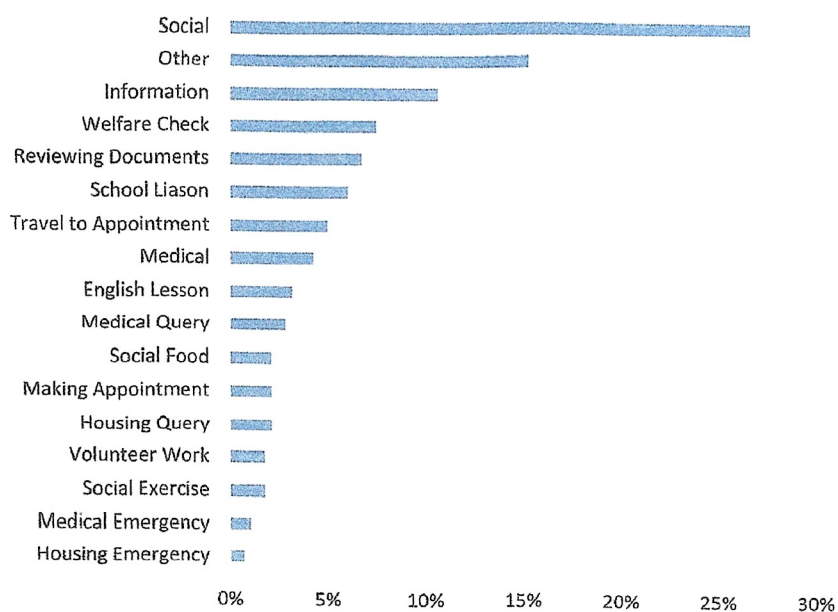
Appendix 1

Time spent with Refugee and Asylum Seeker Households 2023

	HH/Houses	Interactions	Average Interaction per Household	Average Time per Interaction (Hrs)	Total Interaction Time (Hrs)
Asylum Seekers	44	1041	24	0.7	729
Refugees	11	152	14	1.0	152
HMOs	9	225	25	0.4	90
TOTAL	64	1418	22	0.7	971

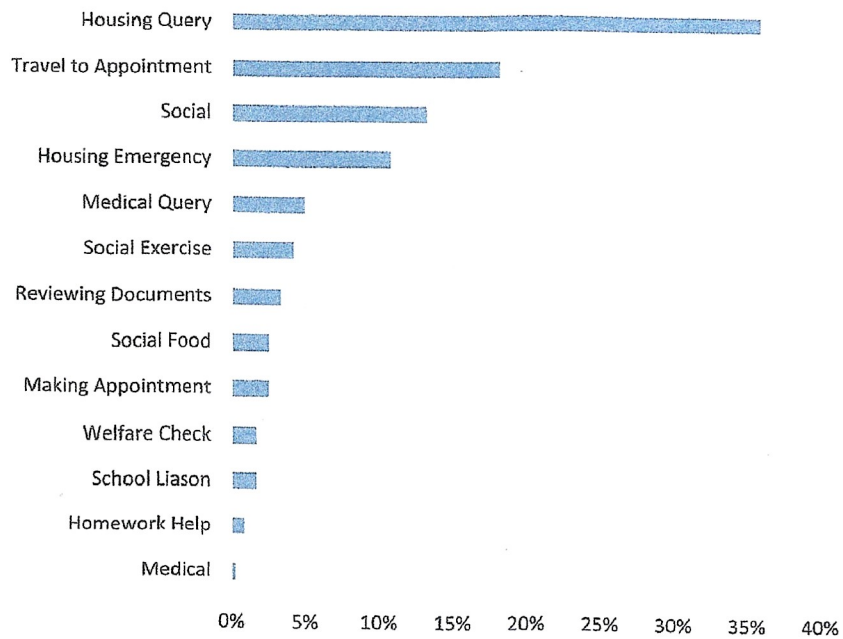
Appendix 2

Asylum Seekers: Reason for Interaction

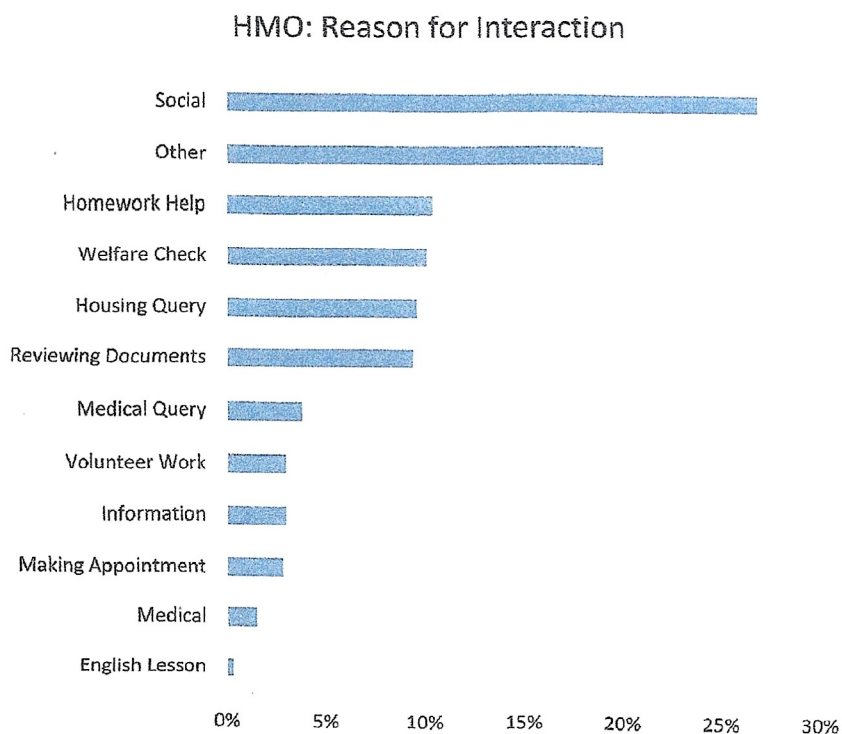


Appendix 3

Refugees: Reason for Interaction



Appendix 4



Appendix 5

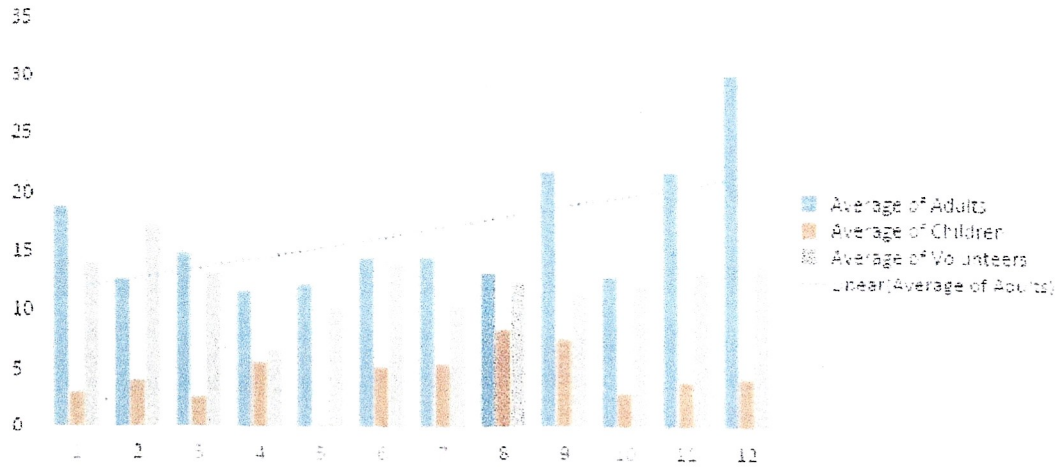
Drop in attendance

	Total attendance	Weekly Average
Adults	1466	18.1
Children	416	5.1
Volunteers	1002	12.4
Red cross	118	1.5
Mears	49	0.6
Justice first	51	0.6



DARLINGTON ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES

DBC	20	0.2
Triage	16	0.2





Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

1/12/2023

To

31/12/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	12,987	-	-	12,987	11,669
Fundraising	7,713	-	-	7,713	6,682
Donations bikes for Ukrainians	-	-	-	-	1,589
Interest	-	-	-	-	2
Other	-	-	-	-	700
Donations for use of Ukrainians	-	-	-	-	25
Grant from Roundtable - Ukrainian Hub	-	-	-	-	1,000
Christmas	-	300	-	300	-
Tesco football	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Global giving - running costs	3,998	-	-	3,998	-
Global Giving - Base	-	1,026	-	1,026	-
ESC Lottery Fund	-	14,872	-	14,872	-
Global Giving - cost of living	-	2,044	-	2,044	-
Football (County Durham Foundation)	-	5,000	-	5,000	-
Other activities project (Teesside University)	-	3,996	-	3,996	-
Trauma counselling project (DBC)	-	10,000	-	10,000	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	24,698	38,238	-	62,936	21,667
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	24,698	38,238	-	62,936	21,667
A3 Payments					
Conversation Club	-	-	-	-	80
Stationery, Printing, Office, Equipment and Postage/admin	361	-	-	361	68
Bus Hire	-	-	-	-	200
Insurance	108	-	-	108	108
Household Goods	1,154	-	-	1,154	1,024
Travel Costs	142	-	-	142	200
Fundraising Expenses	410	-	-	410	386
Donation - for Ukraine from Quiz	-	-	-	-	1,350
ICO fees	35	-	-	35	35
Rent - St Cuthbert's	2,183	-	-	2,183	1,335
NE Regional Employee DBS	79	-	-	79	124
Celebrations, Entertainment and Catering Costs	383	-	-	383	299
NACCOM Membership	30	-	-	30	30
The Well - Ukrainian Hub Rent	850	-	-	850	950
Afghan families	50	-	-	50	487
Storage Unit	715	-	-	715	-
Bikes for Ukrainians	-	100	-	100	918
Other	46	-	-	46	37
Various other activities (Teesside University Grant)	83	3,996	-	4,079	-
Bicycle/repairs/accessories	1,568	-	-	1,568	663

Emergency help e.g. food, phone top-up	1,000	-	-	1,000	130
Christmas gifts/hampers	470	300	-	770	826
Translation	242	-	-	242	124
AS ESOL Provision, Dictionaries etc.	94	-	-	94	448
Football	72	5,000	-	5,072	
CDCF Micro Grant Covid	-	-	-	-	820
Carnival sundries	468	-	-	468	27
IT and Media Costs	152	-	-	152	23
School Orientation Programme	-	-	-	-	727
Summer activities	490	-	-	490	946
Football Tournament	60	-	-	60	100
Other room hire	280	-	-	280	130
Sub total	11,525	9,396	-	20,921	12,595

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

Assets purchased from Food for Thought	-	-	-	-	200
Sub total	-	-	-	-	200

Total payments	11,525	9,396	-	20,921	12,795
-----------------------	---------------	--------------	----------	---------------	---------------

Net of receipts/(payments)	13,173	28,842	-	42,015	8,872
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	18,423	6,835	-	25,258	12,979
Cash funds this year end	31,596	35,677	-	67,273	21,851

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Petty Cash	50	-	-
	Bank Account - Darlington Credit Union	13,173	-	-
	Bank Account - Co-Operative	18,373	35,677	-
	Total cash funds	31,596	35,677	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

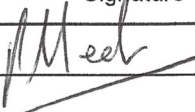
[illegible]

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

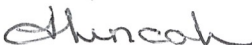
[illegible]

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	PETER MEEK	27/5/2025
	Chair of Trustees	(revised)

Accounts examined by

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	JANICE LINCOLN	29/5/25
		Revised.