



Connecting refugees with host communities

HostNation Trustees' Report and Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022



FIVE YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

HostNation Annual Report 2021-22

The trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 30 September 2022.

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Letter from the Chair

As we pass our fifth anniversary milestone, I am very proud that the goodwill between our befrienders and their refugee friends brings light into a very dark landscape for asylum seekers and refugees.

Unfortunately, the prevailing policy and operational environment in the UK remains characterised by a lack of generosity, humanity and decency. Well over 150,000 asylum seekers are stuck in the Home Office backlog crisis. They are trapped in a cruel limbo, often in unfit accommodation, unable to work. The situation is intolerable.

Against this background, more and more of our fellow citizens are aware of the disconnect between public policy and the UK's proud tradition of welcoming people seeking asylum. This resonates with me personally since my mother arrived here as a child refugee in 1939 on the last Kindertransport out of Prague. She never forgot the generosity she received in those troubled times.

The political context around refugees has deteriorated to the point that UK citizens who are also Holocaust survivors were moved to publish an open letter to the Home Secretary:

"People seeking asylum simply want to rebuild their lives in safety, in a country that is committed to the rules introduced after the Holocaust to protect all of us if we flee torture, war or persecution.

The horrors we experienced began inch by inch, by taking away people's humanity, and casting them as threats, as others, as less than human. We've seen

where this path can go. But when we treat people with compassion and dignity, our communities, and our countries, are better for it."

The vital work of HostNation is based on timeless and universal principles of compassion, friendship and human rights. Friendly local people make new arrivals feel warmly welcomed into our communities and this integration is a huge public good. It builds on our national traditions of generosity and voluntary action, most recently seen in the surge of citizen support for Ukrainians displaced by war.

This is an antidote to the bitter rhetoric we hear so often, and it brings moments of warmth and joy into an increasingly desperate situation.

I want to thank our talented and passionate staff team and our trustees who have together established such an important platform on which we can build on our founding principle, that **every refugee deserves a friend.**



DANIEL SILVERSTONE
Chair



"As always, I massively recommend @HostNationUK if you want to do something pleasant and useful during all this awfulness."

FRANCES LEACH
Befriender, via Twitter

Letter from the Director

I am delighted that as we mark five years since our foundation, we have not only built a flourishing network of rewarding friendships in the capital, but are now offering our refugee befriending service in both Manchester and Newcastle.

We welcomed many of our wonderful friendship matches to our fifth anniversary celebration in September, including some who have stayed close friends since our early days. As one told us, "It was so wonderful to be amongst the HostNation family."

By September 2022 we had made over 600 matches between friendly locals and lonely refugees and asylum seekers. A large number of these introductions have resulted in transformative friendships, a testament to the effort that goes into careful matchmaking and safeguarding by our team, and to the generosity and warmth on both sides of the relationship.

Intense public sympathy around refugee crises including the exodus from Afghanistan and the war in Ukraine led to a surge of people signing up to befriend with us. To manage the flow we decided to close our online registration temporarily and create a waitlist, as you can read in these pages.

All this goes to show that our founding premise – that there are many good people willing to step up to help refugees but who just don't know how – was spot on. The feedback from our refugee friends is both heartwarming and encouraging, with 85% reporting improved wellbeing, and 75% saying they feel less lonely since they met their befriender. Creating intercultural relationships between locals and refugees

promotes integration and helps improve our refugee friends' English skills.

This is more important than ever, since nearly four in ten of our asylum seekers this year were stranded in temporary hotel accommodation. We are learning how to manage relationships under these precarious conditions.

Our success in London has given us the springboard we needed to launch in Manchester and Newcastle. We now have a great team in the north – Harley Kuyck-Cohen, Cara Dattani and Kim Gowland – building our presence and making matches in these two great cities. Early feedback has been inspiring, as you will see in this report.

We like to think of HostNation as a social movement, mobilising people to counter the hostile environment by welcoming new arrivals who have lost and suffered so much. Thank you to our incredible befrienders, our refugee friends who have placed their trust in us and our generous donors and funders who show continued faith in the importance of what we do.



ANNEKE ELWES
Founder & Director



"HostNation is amazing and it was really inspiring to see how many connections have been made across London and beyond."

CALUM
Befriender

Strategic report

Our vision

HostNation believes every refugee deserves a friend.

Our mission

We are a befriending service connecting refugees and asylum seekers to friendly locals.

As a digital introductory platform, we tackle the loneliness experienced by asylum-seekers and refugees by making it easier for those of us already at home in Britain to connect with those looking for a new home.

We aim to transform social relations in our communities by using technology to bring local people and refugees together, through small acts of hospitality, inclusion and friendship.

We wish HostNation to become the way to befriend refugees in our cities – online, easy, sustainable and scalable.

Our objectives

Our objectives as defined in our constitution are:

1. The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit among those who are refugees, asylum seekers or migrants by providing:
 - A local 1:1 befriending service that offers friendship, social opportunities, community connection and support in order to address social isolation amongst asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.
 - A service that facilitates intercultural relationships to help prevent the self-exclusion of migrant communities from the wider community.
 - Increased opportunities for social integration and engagement in the local community to enable asylum seekers, refugees and migrants to positively participate in society.
 - Increased opportunities to practice and improve the English skills of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in communities in the UK through friendship with native English speakers in order to promote greater social integration.

- Opportunities for positive action by citizens to change the circumstances that have led to social exclusion amongst asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

2. The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit amongst those who are asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with a view to tackling discrimination, inequality and social disadvantage by providing:

- Connection and relationships with UK citizens and residents who can treat them equally, identify opportunities for them and help build their sense of self-worth.
- Meaningful social interaction and inter-cultural relationships between British citizens and asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in order to encourage greater social cohesion and cultural diversity in communities in the UK.
- A means by which the public can engage with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants as individuals and people with needs, not simply statistics.

To achieve these objectives, we recruit volunteers via an online database, then screen and train them before matching them with refugees. The latter are referred by refugee service providers and other agencies. We aim to make meaningful matches based on geography, gender, age and interests. We then introduce the new friends and provide guidance and relationship support.

Matt spent many weekends helping Hade study English to get into university. His brilliant refugee friend is now in his third year of an aeronautical engineering degree. **“It was so great that we were matched,”** says Matt.



Outcomes and impact

1. EXPANSION INTO NEW REGIONS

The headline news of our year is the opening of new HostNation hubs in Tyne & Wear and Greater Manchester, bringing our tried and tested befriending model to the north of the UK.

Our objective of expanding beyond London was delayed by the pandemic, but is now fully underway.

The need in the north of the UK was clear, with the demand for refugee services in both the north-east and north-west becoming ever more urgent. There are many new arrivals of dispersed refugees and asylum seekers, and insufficient integration projects.

As we reported last year, we first tested the water with a 12-month pilot scheme in Teesside, where we partnered with IPC, a community-led refugee support

organisation. After this trial, they advised that there was greater potential for our service in the larger metropolitan area of Tyne & Wear. We also made the strategic decision to replicate our successful London model by running hubs directly, rather than in partnership. Our Teesside operation was taken in house by IPC and rebranded Friends Without Borders and we now work closely with IPC Tyneside.

The process of recruiting, screening, and training befrienders began in Tyne & Wear in December 2021 and in Greater Manchester in March 2022. Our programme of awareness-raising also reached out to the refugee sector to establish our credentials.

We have been rewarded with a steady build of befrienders, and in April and May we received our first refugee referrals. Our reported outcomes include data from these new hubs, but with less than six months of active matching, it is a little early to assess their full impact.



“I’m so excited about this opportunity for our community. I know lots of volunteers will be passionate about welcoming those seeking safety and dignity on Tyneside.”

HARLEY KUYCK-COHEN
HostNation North East



CASE STUDY NEWCASTLE

A wonderful highlight of my year

“It’s a genuine friendship,” says Mike, who befriended Hamid through our Newcastle hub in summer 2022. “It’s unconditional. It’s a two-way thing and we are equals. We both get a lot out of it.”

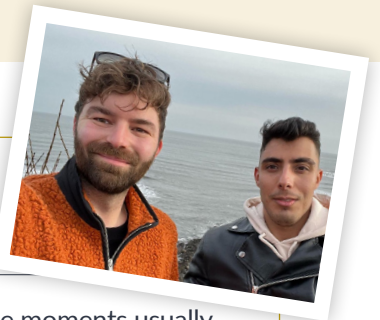
“It’s not easy being an asylum seeker leaving my country,” says Hamid. “I share with Mike my worries and he reassures me that

everything will be OK. He is like my brother.”

Mike has shown Hamid all round the Tyne & Wear area, with long walks down by the River Tyne, along the beach at King Edward’s Bay, or over to Leazes Park.

“The best thing about it is to meet somebody as a blank canvas, as a human first and foremost,” reflects Mike. “It’s hard

to have those moments usually, to learn from somebody new, who you’d never meet normally. It’s a rare experience.” Hamid in turn has taught Mike about Iranian music, and guided him on a six-month search for the best Persian restaurant in Newcastle. As Mike says: “HostNation is pretty transformative. It’s been a wonderful highlight of my year.”



2. BEFRIENDER RECRUITMENT

We now have the largest online resource of refugee befrienders in the UK, a testament to the goodwill of local people and the appeal of our model. In the last year we accepted 225 new befriender registrations: 106 across Greater London, 61 in Greater Manchester and 47 in Tyne & Wear.

Over our five years of operations we have had well over 1,000 befriending enquiries. Such has been the interest in the simple, practical way people can support refugees with us, that at times we have had to create waiting lists or even temporarily halt recruitment, while waiting for the flow of referrals to catch up with befriender registrations.

Last year we reported the surge in interest following the Afghan evacuation; this year it was the war in Ukraine that led to a spike in volunteering. We do our best to manage these peaks carefully, to avoid disappointing expectations. In London we like to have 150 checked and trained befrienders available to be matched, to give us a good range of people across the city's boroughs as refugees are referred to us.

We have developed a rigorous screening process for befrienders, which includes checking visual ID, obtaining independent references and having an in-depth conversation to ascertain motivation, empathy, understanding and experience. This process is detailed in our HostNation Handbook, a guide to best practice for all our teams.

learn about the hardships that refugees face in the UK. They explore how traumatic events may impact someone's ability to develop relationships, and learn how to create a safe and empowering environment to allow friendship to flourish. We outline the potential challenges of befriending a refugee and consider safeguarding and boundaries.

Befrienders are also provided with written resources to guide them in their journey. Our monthly newsletter lists ideas for free activities and opportunities for refugees in all three cities where we operate. We provide comprehensive signposting resources and alert our befrienders to local refugee support agencies. We also supply guides to effective befriending and safeguarding, a HostNation lead contact person and links to local safeguarding teams should befrienders have any cause for concern.

3. REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER REFERRALS

We have been reaching more and more refugees every year, with our expansion into Greater Manchester and Tyne & Wear bringing greater potential for outreach.

In 2021-22 we made 180 friendship matches across all hubs, this includes 20 matches made in Tyne & Wear and 12 matches in Greater Manchester. This brings the total number of refugees and asylum seekers we have matched to 600 over five years.



"HostNation is very welcoming and informative. It's left up to you how you want to spend your time, but at the same time HostNation is so supportive."

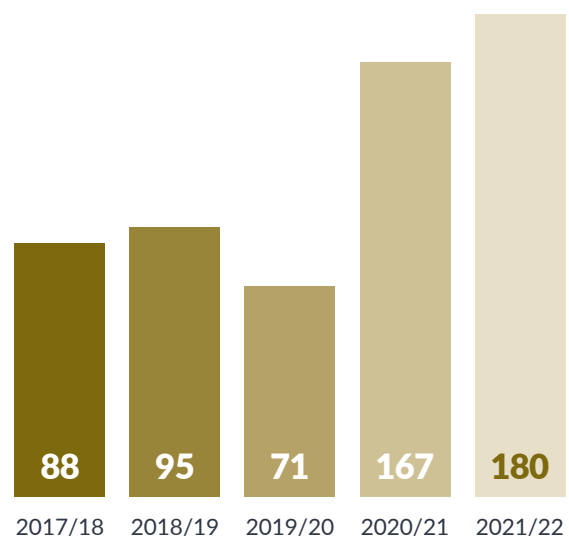
SONJA Befriender

Training and support

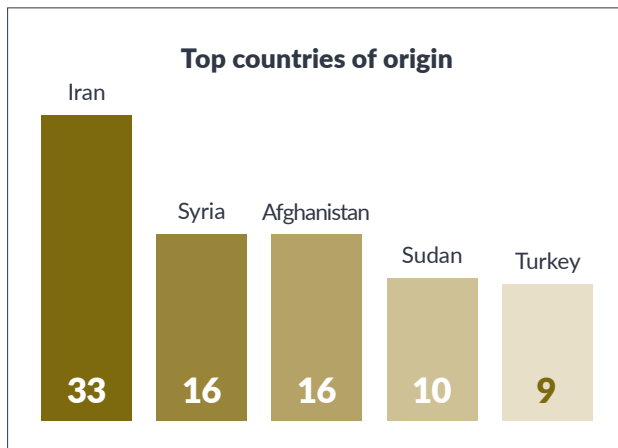
As our befrienders are volunteers who may have no prior experience of the reality of asylum seekers and refugees, we offer them a solid foundation of support services.

Our online training programme is mandatory for all befrienders. In our 90-minute interactive session they

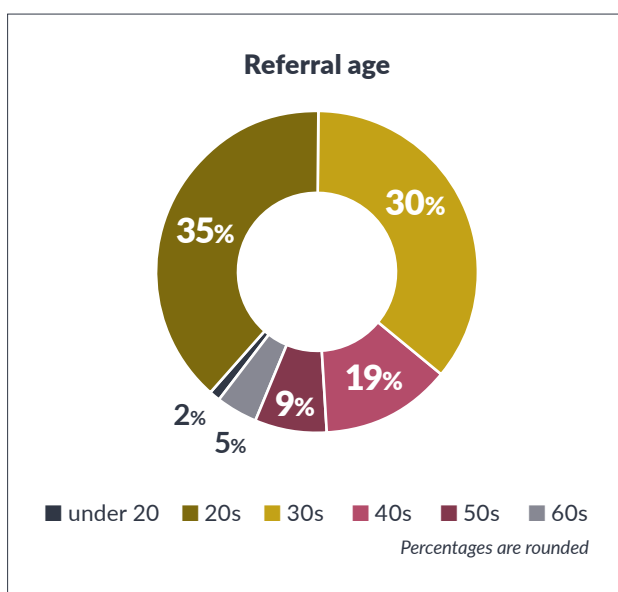
HostNation matches 2017-2022



Our refugee friends this year came from 40 different countries, with the top countries of origin substantially the same as the previous year. Iran leads across each of our hubs; we receive twice as many referrals from there as we do from Syria, with Afghanistan having moved up to joint second place. This year we saw further referrals from Ukraine, China, Albania and El Salvador.



Whilst the majority of our refugee friends are in their 20s and 30s, we have seen an increase amongst those in their 40s, often here with their families on resettlement schemes. Overall, men slightly outnumber women; in Tyne & Wear more women have been referred to us but in Manchester the reverse is true.



People referred to us were evenly split between those with refugee status and those still in the asylum process, awaiting a decision.

We have seen much evidence in the last year of the impact of the hostile political environment for refugees and asylum seekers. Our referral partners are dealing with clients whose lives are in crisis, due to the huge Home Office backlog in dealing with asylum cases, the deficiencies of the housing system and many other factors. This can mean referrers are too busy to refer people for friendship, or that they may on occasion make inappropriate referrals due to a lack of time for screening.

Our service has also been negatively impacted by the instability caused by new arrivals being placed in temporary, often unfit accommodation and then moved without warning. A full 37% of our referrals in the last year were housed in 'temporary' hotels, adding to the difficulty of forming local friendships.

Referral partnerships

Every year there are more refugee support organisations finding out about HostNation and referring their clients to us for friendship. This includes refugee service providers, NHS social prescribers, ESOL colleges and community organisations.

Over the last five years we have built strong relationships with major referrers such as the Refugee Council, Breaking Barriers and Care4Calais and in this financial year we had a further 17 agencies entrust their clients to us. Hestia, who work with victims of modern day slavery and trafficking, have become one of our most regular referral partners.

Leading referral partners 2021-22

Breaking Barriers
IPC (North East)
Hestia
Groundwork
Care4Calais
Refugee Council



“The friendships our clients have made have been pivotal in their recovery journey and in building confidence and connection. It has been wonderful to witness!”

HANNAH RAE

Former referral partner, Helen Bamber Foundation

In total, 214 asylum seekers and refugees were referred to us in 2021-22. Of these, over 30 were deemed inappropriate for matching with our volunteers. Criteria for this decision rest on factors such as complete lack of English, unstable mental health, or referrals being too busy and not in fact looking for friendship.

We pay a lot of attention to keeping referrers up to date about the outcomes for their refugee clients. This is not only aimed at encouraging future referrals but also to help them better understand our criteria.

We receive consistently positive feedback from our partners over the excellent outcomes for their clients, and the ease of our referral process. There are few other schemes that give refugees a chance just to relax and be themselves.

4. FRIENDSHIP MATCH OUTCOMES

Positive outcomes and meaningful relationships remain our priority, rather than quantity. The aim we gave ourselves at the outset was: *“Improving the lived experience of refugees and asylum seekers in our cities”*.

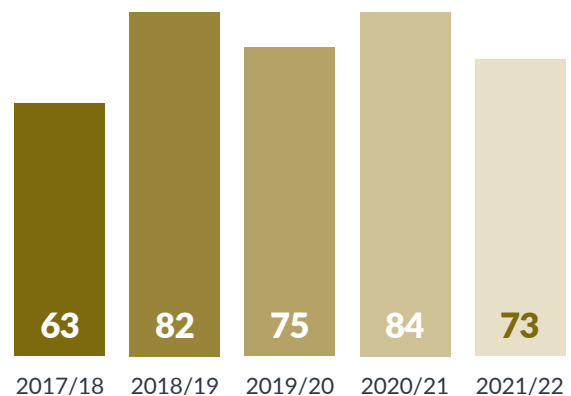
Our more specific outcomes are:

- reduced isolation and feelings of loneliness
- improved spoken/conversational English
- increased sense of inclusion and participation.

We made 180 friendship matches across our three regions over the year. When we interviewed our refugee friends, 85% said they were feeling better since having a befriender, and three quarters reported feeling less lonely. This is a real tribute to the warmth and commitment of our benders.

From our one-month and three-month interview feedback, over 7 out of 10 matches were positive, with 6 out of 10 intending to stay in touch after the initial three-month period. While the number of positive outcomes does fluctuate year on year, it remains high overall. Whilst still over 70%, our London activity this year has seen a 13% drop in successful match outcomes compared to 2020-21, so we have considered the reasons for this carefully.

All positive relationships 2017-2022



“Everything Rodger does for me is so helpful. The friendship is also really good for my English.”

DOST



“It’s a relationship of equals. I get as much out of it as Dost does. That’s important.”

RODGER Befriender



It is mainly due to an 8% increase in matches that never got off the ground, usually because the referral to us was inappropriate, for reasons stated above. We also made changes to our methodology to make our feedback process more robust and less prone to bias, which may have impacted the results.

Recently, we introduced an internal traffic light system to indicate how relationships are going. This helps us to keep a close eye on those friendships that might need a bit more support at an earlier stage, so we can make positive interventions.

Friendship match outcomes: 5-year round-up

To mark our five-year anniversary, we have reviewed our results across the entire period. We are proud to report that of the 600 matches we have made across all our hubs in the last five years, over three quarters (76%) have had a positive outcome.

Looking at the longer-term benefit for social integration and community wellbeing, 65% of friendships plan to continue seeing each other regularly after the initial three-month period, and 35% of matches are still friends a year later.

These five-year results are very encouraging, given the many uncertainties surrounding the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

Our most important measurements are those that relate to the positive impact that having a befriender makes to our refugee friends' health and wellbeing. Being included in local life by a friendly person means a huge amount to someone who may be stuck in a single hotel room for months or even years.

Over the last five years, eight in ten refugees have told us they felt better and less lonely after meeting up with their befriender for three months. Overall, 93% of refugees who were matched had a positive experience.

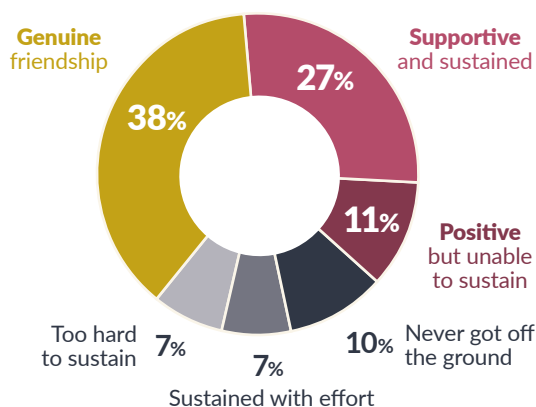
For those who had a positive relationship but were not able to continue, the leading reason was the sudden dispersal of their refugee friend to a different location.

Improving their spoken English is very high on the list of priorities for those who are referred to HostNation, and is a key outcome for us. Seven in ten felt that speaking to their befriender had improved their conversational language skills (around two in ten already spoke good English).

To help our refugee and asylum seeker friends connect with their befrienders, we give a limited amount of practical support in collaboration with other organisations and donors. We provided data packages and donated smartphones, wifi boxes, mini tablets and laptops. We also provided one-off travel cards and have successfully referred many friends to the excellent Bike Project for free bikes and training.

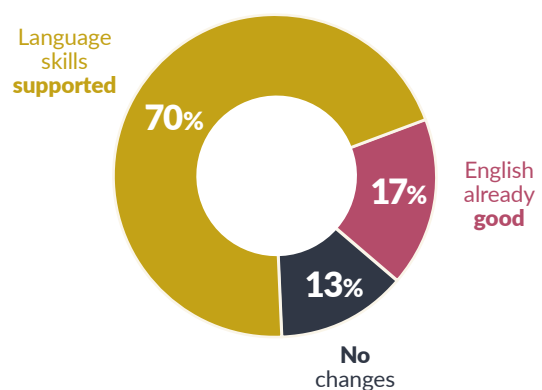
Match outcomes 2017-2022

Percentages are rounded



Impact of befriending on language skills 2017-2022

Percentages are rounded



CASE STUDY NORTH WEST

A miracle in my life

Sonja and Qadir are the first friendship match made by our new hub in Manchester. Qadir describes himself as quite shy, but Sonja gradually melted his fears.

"I try to emphasise the similarities between us, rather than the differences," as she says. "And with HostNation, a lot of thought goes into who

you are paired with. You feel very safe."

She and Qadir have done yoga together, gone dancing, eaten pizza, and visited the spectacular Derbyshire countryside. The friendship has powerfully impacted both of them. "I find him really inspiring," says Sonja.

"She is a miracle in my life," exclaims Qadir. "When I feel

something inside, I share it with her. She makes me feel stronger."



"Transformative": the impact on our befrienders

We see time and again how befriending has a hugely positive impact not only on our refugee friends but on their befrienders too.

An overwhelming nine out of ten said they found befriending rewarding. On top of the positive feelings of making a real difference to someone's life, many tell us how the experience is full of new learning and fresh encounters.

They love getting to know someone from a different culture whom they would otherwise never have met.

They also find it a relief to have a practical way to show solidarity with refugees in such a negative political climate. As befriender Chloe told us, "So many of us want to help but just don't really know how."

5. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Although we are a small charity, we keep our voice raised for refugee advocacy. On social media, on our website and at our events we promote the values of welcome and compassion for refugees and asylum seekers, celebrating all that our HostNation friends bring to their new communities.



"I welcome the opportunity to show someone around our lovely city, to chat about common interests, and to offer friendship."

Befriender ANNIE appeared on ITV Tyne Tees with her refugee friend NABIHA



Throughout Refugee Week 2022 we promoted simple acts of kindness towards people seeking safety here. This led to one of our matches appearing on ITV Tyne Tees to explain the value of friendship, with retired lecturer Annie chatting to her new Syrian friend Nabiha in Gateshead.

Against a very negative narrative driven by the government and an alarming amount of public disinformation, we work to amplify the voices of the real people caught up in forced migration. Our HostNation friends have generously engaged with the media to tell their stories, including ITV, Whitehall's insider journal *The House* and the WorldWide Tribe podcast.

Through social media we support the campaigning efforts of our referral partners. Together with many refugee agencies including the Refugee Council and

Together With Refugees we pushed for amendments to the new Nationality and Borders Bill. We strongly voiced our support for the legal challenge by our referral partner Care4Calais against the government's plan to forcibly remove asylum seekers to Rwanda.

"We have all sacrificed so much to get here," one of our HostNation friends told us. "Many were lost along the way. The idea that we could be sent to Rwanda after all that is making people think of ending their lives."

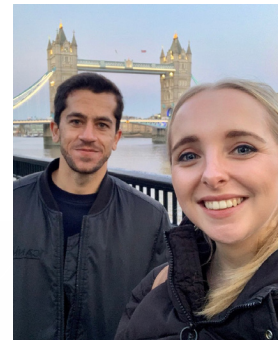
Together with 120 other refugee agencies we signed an open letter to the Home Office protesting against the asylum system collapse, which impacts our friends so seriously as they wait years for their cases to be heard, meanwhile living in the most precarious conditions.



"It's very hard to live here when you are all alone. I stayed in the hotel for weeks at a time without going out. I can't believe how much things have changed since I met Chloe."

SHOAIB

Asylum seeker, in our opinion piece for [The House](#) magazine



FIVE YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

Financial review

FUNDING PARTNERS

We feel we have achieved our financial objective of diversifying our funding base and securing a much larger proportion of unrestricted funding to increase our financial resilience in 2021-22.

We are immensely grateful to the following funders:

City Bridge Trust

Granted 3 years of restricted, core funding in October 2020 for our London programme, to run until 2023. This year we received £32,000.

Trust for London

Granted us a further £50,000 of continuation funding to run for two years from November 2020, restricted for London expenditure. This year we received the final £25,000.

Manchester SuppHer Club raised £939 for our new hub from a fundraising event.

The Garfield Weston Foundation granted us £15,000 in unrestricted funding.

The Headley Trust gave us a further £1,500, also unrestricted.

We received £33,000 unrestricted funding from major donors (corporate and individual).

Our donations platform raised a further £12,000 unrestricted funding from individual supporters along with Gift Aid.

RESERVES

The trustees continue to take a risk-based approach to reserves, as in previous years. Since we operate as a digital platform, fixed costs and forward financial commitments are minimal.

Based on a multiple of at least three times all forward financial commitments, our reserves are set at £15,000. This gives us a bridge should there be any discontinuities in funding and it is also an amount that we can reasonably expect to fund from unrestricted income.

We ended the financial year with £60,000 cash in the bank. This is 4 x our reserves and covers 7 months predicted running costs.

COSTS AND BUDGETING

As a charity we are governed by the Charity Commission's financial regulations.

Our costs are predominantly staff related, with 88% of our expenditure in 2021-22 relating to directly employed staff and freelance staff costs, including HMRC payments.

The remainder of in-year spend relates to hardship payments to our refugee friends, professional services, travel and hospitality expenses, digital costs, community events and other direct costs.

Expansion into the north

Our financial statements reflect the launch of two new hubs: Newcastle in November 2021 and Manchester in March 2022. Our managers in these cities are engaged on a self-employed basis and paid as freelancers, thus the increase in freelance costs reflects three new people working to establish our new hubs. London costs have come down as some staff time has been transferred from London to help manage this work.

Indirect project costs

Running costs are kept close to 10% of total expenditure, which includes staff time on fundraising and communications, IT systems, maintenance, web hosting, insurance, payroll and accountancy. These have reduced over time as the start-up costs of our digital infrastructure tend to be front-loaded.

Direct project costs

Approximately 90% of our expenditure is on direct project delivery. These are 'volume-related' matching costs across our three hubs, ie. staff time spent sourcing referrals; recruiting; screening, checking and training befrienders; making matches; liaising with referrers; safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation; media and reporting.

Online matching, whilst enabling efficiency and scaling up, also requires careful safeguarding, monitoring and regular conversations with all parties concerned. It is a delicate process and each new match costs approximately £300 in labour and other volume-related costs.

Currently we make most matches in London and our project delivery expenditure in 2021-22 was split 61% London and 39% Manchester and Newcastle.

Plans for the future

Reviewing the plans we set out last year, we achieved the majority of what we set out to do and in our next financial year (2022-23) we will focus on consolidating these achievements.

- 500+ matches reached by Sept 2022.
- Two regional hubs opened with referral partnerships in place.

London

We foresee that our services will be needed more than ever in London, with thousands of refugees and asylum seekers stranded in temporary hotel accommodation, in dire need of support and friendship. Our expanding network of referral partners is opening access to these hard-to-reach groups.

Regional

Our new northern hubs are now in their development phase, having launched in spring 2022. It is too early to evaluate their outcomes but we strongly believe that HostNation has potential to meet a great need in these regions. We will continue to build refugee referral pathways and invest in communications and outreach to recruit befrienders.

Alliance Manchester Business School (AMBS) selected HostNation as their not-for-profit MBA module in September and are due to report back on growth strategy. We anticipate this will recommend we focus on our three current hubs for the next year and not open a fourth before 2024 at the earliest.

In 2020 our risks were amended to include public policy and we set out four risks we would review regularly.

Risk	Mitigation actions
Insufficient resources – human or financial – leading to an inability to achieve our objectives and outcomes.	• Regular review of budget, funding strategy, staffing levels and ability to meet demand for services. • Maintain close relations with existing funders.
Reputational damage caused by being seen to act unprofessionally or in a manner inappropriate to a charity.	• Regular review of our training procedures, financial and safeguarding policies.
Governance risks – failure by the trustees to carry out their functions in accordance with best governance practice & charity law.	• Regular review of our Board to ensure we have a balance of the skills required for effective governance. Mo Massoud and Lucy Gould have joined our board to enhance financial oversight.
Public policy and external environment risks – changing context and Home Office policy towards asylum and resettlement leading to an inability to achieve our objectives and outcomes.	• Close monitoring of the changing environment in which we operate. Trustee Jo Winterbottom has been tasked with reporting to the board on this.

Risk management

In 2019, our trustees devised a register of the risks we might face. A 3-stage traffic light system was adopted:

RED High risk (business critical)

AMBER Low risk (potentially constraining)

GREEN Negligible/low risk (no action)

“Insufficient resources” was turned to **amber** at the board meeting in May 2021, however sufficient new funds were secured between May and 30 September for this to be returned to **green**.

Because of the hostile environment and immigration policy, external environment risk was also placed on **amber** by the trustees in May 2021.

This risk remains on **amber** and is being closely monitored. All other risks are currently **green**.



“Thank you so much for all your amazing work and for making an important difference in people’s lives.”

COSKU FERTINGER

Referral partner at Breaking Barriers



Structure, governance & management

Organisational structure

HostNation incorporated as a charity (CIO) and registered with the Charity Commission in September 2018.

As of 30 September 2022 there were seven trustees, four women and three men, who work on a voluntary basis. Two of our trustees, Dina Nayeri and Emiljan Gega, are former child refugees. Our Chair, Daniel Silverstone, was CEO at both the Commission for Racial Equality and Interights. The board meets quarterly.

In 2021 we appointed two new trustees with financial experience – Mohamed Massoud and Lucy Gould – to help with accounting and funding strategy.

As Treasurer, Lucy comes to us from a background in charity sector finance, with expertise in developing financial strategy and organisational growth. She works with both grant-making and grant-receiving organisations and is currently in the healthcare field.

Mohamed befriended through us in 2020 and has expertise in banking, corporate finance and funding projects with social and development impact in the global south. He holds an MBA from Manchester Business School where he maintains contacts, making him a strong addition now we have expanded into the north west.

We have a lean operational team, who work from home. Towards the end of 2021 we appointed three regional hub managers – Cara Dattani and Kim Gowland to run the Greater Manchester hub as a freelance job share and Harley Kuyck-Cohen to run our hub in Tyne & Wear. All staff and freelancers are paid an hourly rate above the London living wage. Three of the management team are on PAYE. We employ six freelancers on a self-employed basis: our three regional hub managers; a London operations manager; a design manager and a communications manager.

Public benefit

The trustees are aware of the Charity Commission's guidelines on public benefit and consider these measures when carrying out the charitable objectives of this charity.

Safeguarding

HostNation is committed to protecting all who come into contact with the organisation and its services from all forms of abuse.

Our safeguarding policy is updated annually and a safeguarding guide is sent out to all befrienders when they are matched along with the contact details of the safeguarding lead from our team for their match.

We implement sensible safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and volunteers. No female refugee or asylum seeker is ever matched with a male befriender. HostNation does not accept referrals of people with serious mental health needs, in need of care, or aged under 18.

Our full safeguarding policy is available on application.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statement of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. 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.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:



DANIEL SILVERSTONE

Chair of trustees

Date: 20th December 2022

Report of the independent examiner

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the period ended 30 September 2022, which are set out on pages 18-21.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND EXAMINER

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed by:



SAMUEL DAVID CLARKE FCA

Haines Watts (City) LLP

New Derwent House, 69-73 Theobolds Road,
London, WC1X 8TA

Date: 20 December 2022

Statement of financial activities

for the period ended 30 September 2022

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
INCOME					
Donations received	2	43,382	939	44,321	11,874
Grants	2	16,500	57,000	73,500	82,938
Total income		59,882	57,939	117,821	94,812
EXPENDITURE					
Charitable activities	3	33,871	65,215	99,086	74,529
Total expenditure		33,871	65,215	99,086	74,529
Net movement in funds	4	26,011	-7,276	18,735	20,283

Balance sheet

as at 30 September 2022

CURRENT ASSETS	Note	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Cash at bank		60,365	41,630
Net current assets		60,365	41,630

Unrestricted funds		50,273	24,262
Restricted funds		10,092	17,368
Total funds	4	60,365	41,630

Notes to the financial statement

Forming part of the financial statement for the period ended 30 September 2022

1. PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in preparing the financial statements the Charity follows best practice as laid down in the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (SORP 2015) issued in 2015.

(b) Income

Donation income is accounted for in the period in which the Charity is entitled to receipt and the amount can be quantified.

(c) Expenditure is included on an accruals basis

(d) Funds structure

Restricted funds are granted in accordance with the desires of the donors. Unrestricted funds are disbursed at the discretion of the trustees.

(e) Going concern

The accounts are prepared on the basis that the trustees have adequate resources to continue to operate.

(g) Financial instruments and critical accounting estimates and judgements

Basic financial instruments including basic financial liabilities – other payables – which are recognised at transaction price. Cash at bank includes cash held with banks. In the application of the 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 assumptions are based on experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates, which are reviewed on an ongoing basis and recognised when appropriate.

2. INCOME BY TYPE

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Grants	16,500	57,000	73,500	82,938
Individual giving	8,038	939	8,978	9,068
Gift aid	2,289	–	2,289	2,308
Major donors	33,055	–	33,054	–
Total income	59,882	57,939	117,821	94,812

3. CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE BY TYPE

	Staff costs	Freelance fees	Travel and subsistence	Workshops, events, training	Hardship fund	Digital and other direct costs	Total expenditure
2022 £	55,236	32,075	1,953	1,014	3,448	5,360	99,086
2021 £	49,991	11,156	729	70	4,917	7,666	74,529

4. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Paul Hamlyn Expansion	Trust for London	City Bridge Trust	Manchester SuppHer Club	Total
Brought forward	10,776	4,069	2,523	–	17,368
Income	–	25,000	32,000	939	57,939
Expenditure	6,200	26,069	32,457	489	65,215
Carried forward	4,576	3,000	2,066	450	10,092

Administrative details

HostNation is a registered charity no. 1180004.

Founder-Director:

Anneke Elwes

Director of London programme:

Rossana Horsley

Trustees:

- Daniel Silverstone (Chair)
- Lucy Gould (Treasurer)
- Olivia Petie
- Mohamed Massoud
- Joanna Winterbottom
- Dina Nayeri Viegutz
- Emiljan Gega

Independent Examiner:

S D Clarke FCA
Haines Watts (City) LLP
New Derwent House
69-73 Theobolds Road
London
WC1X 8TA

Registered Address:

23 Lawford Road
London
NW5 2LH

Bank:

Metro Bank
One Southampton Row
London
WC1B 5HA



"I feel so lucky and happy to have Mathilda, she is a very good friend. I'm really learning about this country and the culture here."

ALAN
HostNation friend

