

## Summary of Chairman's report for AGM, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023

1. Over the past few months there have been a number of changes in the board of trustees. After a bout of ill-health John Harris took the decision to stand down as Chair and I took over. Happily John is once again a picture of health.
2. We were also sorry to receive the resignation of Margaret Smith who has played a stalwart role keeping us in touch with, and involved in, national issues. We are pleased that Margaret continues to work on a number of projects for us.
3. Most recently, Issy Mercer, our secretary, has submitted her resignation with effect from this evening. We are really sorry to lose her but understand that pressure of work and family commitments make it difficult to undertake what is quite a taxing role in addition to those responsibilities.
4. During the year we have been pleased to welcome two new trustees, Hilary Gardner who comes to us with a wealth of experience befriending, and hosting, and Tamanna Krami, who is herself from one of our resettlement families. It is a real bonus to have Tamanna on board as she is a valuable liaison between the families and us, and a font of much knowledge.
5. As from the AGM we also welcome to the Trustees Derek Gibson. Derek is a newcomer to the district having moved from Louth in Lincolnshire where he worked with Syrian refugees welcomed under the Community Sponsorship scheme and so he comes to us with valuable experience. For the past few months he has been acting as our Volunteer Coordinator whilst deciding whether to commit to becoming a trustee. We are pleased that he has taken the decision to do so.
6. One more significant change that has taken place over the past few months is the close working relationship we now have established between Harrogate District of Sanctuary and Chain Lane Community Hub in Knaresborough. We are working closely with Sue Vasey and Charlotte McEvoy on some projects and they are dealing with a number of administrative matters on our behalf, funded by a grant which Sue managed to secure.
7. The final change to report is that sadly Ripon City of Sanctuary has recently folded. Nina Jolly has formed a support group to compensate for this, and we at Harrogate will be offering to involve the Ripon families in our future social events.

Now to move on to sum up what we have been doing during the past year for our refugees.

1. Resettlement Families: there are now 30 families in the Harrogate and Knaresborough district. There have been three new Afghan households established here in the last three months and we know of another that will be joining imminently. Who knows how many more will be coming our way once the Government carries out its threats to close down all

the hotel accommodation currently in use. I'm pleased to say that we have strengthened our links with the Refugee Council which has enabled the sharing of more information to help the families as they move into our district.

2.

Many of our families who have been here for a number of years are self sufficient but others are still to a greater or lesser degree dependent on their befrienders. Between us, we do what we can to sort out their problems. For example we have recently managed to facilitate transport to and from school for a disabled child with a disabled parent, and we helped an asylum seeker from Syria join his resettlement family in Harrogate.

3. An ongoing issue is the need for English lessons and ways of aiding integration. Currently there are classes at Harrogate College overseen by Nina Jolly and paid for by North Yorkshire. In addition Harrogate District of Sanctuary funds English at Home lessons.

On a less structured basis "Speak up" for women is underway in Knaresborough, run by Hilary Hughes and financed by HDS. Unfortunately, Time for Talk which had been running in Starbeck for quite some time has folded but we are currently looking into possibilities to reinstate something similar in Harrogate town centre.

4. We are also aware of the need for support for the resettlement children. Anne Morley and her team have set up a "homework club" in Knaresborough in a first move to tackle this issue. This has started on a small scale but is something that could well be developed.
5. Moving on to Social events for the resettlement families: last Christmas we partially funded tickets for the pantomime, an event organised by Pat Ki which will be repeated this year.

We hosted an Iftar during Ramadan; gave financial support for the Eid party, and in July we organised a picnic at Conyngham Hall which was enjoyed by all.

The snacks which we provided at the start of the AGM were made by Nahid Hamidi. We have been delighted to support Nahid financially in establishing her pop up restaurant, The Afghan Kitchen. So far there have been three such events, in Knaresborough and Harrogate and Nahid is now pretty much self-sufficient, with the help of Zoe Haggas who has been from the start a very hands-on, efficient manager.

We are very proud of Nahid for her enterprise, her skills and her determination. This venture serves many purposes. Clearly it's a great opportunity for us – the Harrogate general public - to learn about another culture and to savour the delights of a cuisine hitherto unknown to most of us, but much more than that, it is a great opportunity for Nahid to help her fellow Afghan ladies to integrate, to have a purpose outside the home and to develop their self-confidence in what is still an alien environment.

If you haven't experienced the Afghan kitchen yet, please look out for future dates.

6. One final point connected with the resettlement families: many of them are of course Muslim. For this reason as well as a desire to support multi-culturalism in our area, the Trustees recently took the decision to contribute £1000 to the appeal to fund the building

work for the Harrogate Mosque. Although the premises in Tower Street still need a lot of work and much more financing, they hope to have it in a usable state by early next year.

Moving on to our Ukrainian Refugees:

1.

We don't know exactly how many Ukrainian refugees there are in Harrogate. We believe that at one point there were approximately 350. We know that some have gone home, a few more have come and that many have now established themselves in private rentals and in work. The ability to find employment is determined to no small extent by their command of English and much of our efforts have been in the provision of language classes. In addition to those provided by North Yorkshire, we fund lessons here in this building several times a week, led by Melanie Soden and also by Elina who is herself a Ukrainian refugee, and also at Chain Lane. We have been able to fund these lessons through various donations and also by grants from North Yorkshire.

2. Since the first arrivals in Harrogate we have run a weekly drop-in on a Monday evening. This has served both as a social evening and also as an opportunity for problems to be shared and sorted. Adam Nicholas from Citizens' Advice is the designated support for the Ukrainians in North Yorkshire and he has paid regular visits to the drop-in which have been well-received and appreciated.

However as time has gone on we have found that attendance has dropped significantly which I think is good news as it means that things are going well and that people are now confident and settled in the district. We have therefore decided to reduce the meetings to monthly as from now.

3. We have funded several social events for the Ukrainians over the past year, in collaboration with Chain Lane. In January there was a Christmas celebration; in May there was a big celebration at the Majestic Hotel for Eurovision, and in the summer months there were a number of outings – to Fountains Abbey, to Whitby, and to Thorp Perrow.

That concludes my report on the Ukrainians. There just a couple more things to tell you about.

First: the Public Awareness Raising activities led by Margaret Smith. The aim of this committee is self-explanatory. They have been proactive in involving Harrogate International Festivals, Raworth Literature Festival and the Sunday Concert series, libraries and shops in promoting our literature and hence bringing our cause to a wider audience, and during Refugee Week in June there were displays at 18 multi-faith locations in Harrogate and Knaresborough.

Finally: we are very pleased that after discussions today the Federation of Schools comprising Ripley Endowed C of E, Primary School, Beckwithshaw Community Primary and Kettlesing Community Primary are committed to becoming a Federation of Schools of Sanctuary. We will keep you posted on their progress through their journey.

Margaret Bond

Chair of Trustees, Harrogate District of Sanctuary





## Harrogate District of Sanctuary

### Statement of Accounts Financial Year 2023

Balance brought forward from 2022	£19637
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Income during 2023 to November 1st

Subscriptions	£370
Donations	£6992
Grants	£17525
Fundraising	£2466
Afghan Kitchen	£7077
Loan repaid	£100
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£34530</b>

Expenditure during 2023 to November 1st

DBS, training, schools	£85
Insurance	£411
Accountant's Fee	£900
Family support	£1858
Stationery and equipment	£279
Room Hire/Meetings	£529
Publicity and campaigning	£1097
Afghan Kitchen	£8551
Language provision - Resettlement families	£2748
Language provision - Ukrainians	£16135
Social events - Resettlement families	£826
Social events - Ukrainians	£3437
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£36856</b>

In year net total

£-2325

Opening balance 1st January 2023	£19,637
Closing balance 31st December 2023	£17,312

Signed :

HBrihley (Treasurer, Trustee) Mband (Chair of Trustees)





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Harrogate District of Sanctuary

On accounts for the year  
ended

31<sup>st</sup> of December 2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1183095

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended **31/12/2023**.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:

A. Q. Khan.

Date:

3.5.2024

Name:

Abdul Qudeir Khan

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

FMAAT  
FCPA

Address:

Unit 27, Batley Enterprise Centre

513 Bradford Road, Batley

WF17 8LL