



TAUNTON WELCOMES REFUGEES

Trustees' Annual Report July 2021 to June 2022

Trustee and Staff appointments

Taunton Welcomes Refugees (TWR) welcomed Eddie East as a new Trustee and accepted the resignation of Finbarr O'Mahoney from the board. Caroline Adams relinquished her post as Coordinator and we welcomed Louise Froud as her replacement. Our great thanks go to those leaving us for the work they have put in.

After the end of the reporting period, Simon Forrester stood down from the chair and Ali Bachelor and Lynne Mayers have taken over as joint chairs.

Achievements

It has been a time of unexpected turbulence and TWR has had to react adroitly to maximise the support we can give. In the period 2 Afghan families have been welcomed to the area and support circles have been put in place working closely with the resettlement team at Somerset County Council.

Our planned work in English has taken off. TWR now offers Coffee and Conversation on two days a week in Taunton and more recently a new project offering this once a week in Bridgwater has also started. Alongside this, there are some more formal classes of English where there is specific need. These sessions have been principally aimed at members of the Syrian, Afghan and Asylum Seeker communities. Additionally, as this group has become a community in itself, TWR has been able to offer sessions around IT skills and preparation for employment.

During this time some Asylum Seekers have been relocated to our area and we now support around 10 people in two houses. We will be reviewing how best we can support this group effectively during the next period.

We were all very shocked by the invasion of Ukraine and the sad necessity of relocation of Ukrainians all round Europe. In Somerset, many British families are hosting more than 1,000 evacuees from Ukraine. To assist with this TWR welcomed Sally Hawkes and then Chris Martens as project

managers to deal with this particular area. In partnership with Charis another local charity, TWR hosted on line seminars to help hosts prepare. Each was attended by over 120 people. These have been followed up by various face to face session. Much more recently it has become clear that extra provision of English tuition is needed and to help with this, TWR has offered a contract to a Ukrainian English teacher to provide classes from September 2022. A pilot of six successful classes was run in July 2022.

Against this backdrop, the normal work continues and we have been recruiting and training volunteers and Trustees.

Delightful Moments

During the course of the year so many wonderful things happened that it is difficult to pick out only a few. But these strike at the point of writing

- The father of one of our families was able to exhibit his art during the local 10 Parishes Festival. His story was reported locally in the press and he was well visited. He was subsequently asked to design some Christmas cards for TWR which sold out!
- The Chamber Orchestra of the West collaborated with us to put on a workshop for families near Christmas. What a happy occasion!
- The holidays offered to 5 families by the Quakers of Minehead were once again available and greatly appreciated.

The Future

In the next year, TWR will plan a more comprehensive plan for Asylum Seekers where it is expected that numbers will grow. The Bridgwater end of our operation needs to consolidate, and we can hope to have more volunteers there in the next 12 months. It is expected that across Somerset as a whole there will be some more families arriving under the various Afghan and other schemes for vulnerable persons' resettlement. Hopes that some of the Ukrainian guests will be able to go home seem a little optimistic at the moment, and so we are planning for another year that will be unpredictable.

Taunton Welcomes Refugees

Treasurer's Report

Year Ending 31st March 2022

	2021 - 2022	2020 - 2021
Opening Balance	£13,389.68	£2,723.04
Income		
Individual Donations	5,217.18	2,421.00
Institutional Donations	2,952.41	100.00
Grants	5,000.00	10,050.00
Gift Aid Claim	803.95	
Christmas Cards	1,122.00	
Total Income	15,095.54	12,571.00
Expenditure		
Grants To Families	963.94	345.69
Admin	1,147.44	1,351.62
Support Meetings	238.00	
Translation	633.61	182.05
Training	618.53	25.00
English Conversation	733.21	
Administrator	5,665.00	
Enterprise Loan	1,000.00	
Workshop	801.93	
W. Somerset Support	200.00	
Total Expenditure	12,001.66	1,904.36
Closing Balance	£16,483.56	£13,389.68