

REFUGEES WELCOME CRAWLEY

Annual Report Nov 2019-March2021



Charity Name: REFUGEES WELCOME CRAWLEY

Charity Number: 1186127

Financial period: 4th November 2019 - 31 March 2021

**Registered Office: c/o CCA, The Orchard
1-2 Gleneagles Court,
Brighton Road,
Crawley
RH10 6AD**

Objects of the Charity:

The objects of the charity, as set out in our governing document, are:

1. For the public benefit to relieve poverty, sickness and distress amongst refugees and vulnerable migrants and their families in Crawley and the surrounding area, particularly but not exclusively by the provision of advice, advocacy, financial assistance, accessing appropriate training and employment opportunities and other such services as the charity shall decide.

2. To advance the education of the general public, statutory and voluntary organisations, and in particular the education of refugees and vulnerable migrants, in order to assist their social wellbeing,



Reg.Charity no: 1186127

The work of our Charity

Who did we help?

Who provided this support?

In this reporting period, the work of Refugees Welcome Crawley was carried out by 5 trustees, 8 Steering group members and 45 volunteers. We are most grateful to each and every one of our volunteers and thank them for giving their time, energy, empathy and commitment.

RWC enjoys good working relationships with statutory bodies and agencies including, primarily, the West Sussex County Council Refugee Resettlement Team as well as Crawley Borough Council, Jobcentre, Crawley Museum, Citizens Advice, Children and Family Centres, local churches including St. Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley United Reformed Church, the East Grinstead Justice and Peace Group, Gatwick Detainee Welfare group, Diverse Crawley and local schools including Worth School and Milton Mount school, Crawley.



How did we provide support?

1. Financial Support

Where did our funds come from?

Grants:

£485 Sussex Community Foundation Trust
 £3,500 Sussex Community Foundation Trust - Sussex Crisis Fund Grant
 £744 West Sussex County Council Community Initiative Fund

Donations:

£6894.00 including:
 £460 designated for Tinsley men
 £1200 1 x regular donor
 £500 donation designated for Days Out fund

Fundraising:

£1240 Quiz Night
 £400 Milton Mount School Yr 6 Apprentice Fair

Gift Aid:

£611.19 Gift Aid

Total:

£13874.99

RWC has registered with AmazonSmile and with Easyfundraising.com, enabling supporters who sign up with these organisations to donate to RWC when purchasing goods from these companies at no extra cost to the donor.

How did we spend our funds?

Expenses during this financial year were impacted by the **Covid pandemic**, especially during lockdown. A major expense, funded by the SCF grant (see above) was the purchase of new **laptops** and software for 12 refugee families



so that children and adults could access home learning during lockdown.

We also purchased 7 refurbished **bicycles** with cycling safety equipment for refugee adults and children from our WSCC CIF grant. Lockdown expenses included a new monthly **Zoom account** to host extended meetings for ESOL classes, trustee and steering group meetings and support meetings for volunteers and clients. Prior to the pandemic room hire costs included Homework Club bookings at Crawley library (funded by an earlier grant from The Longley Trust). Other pandemic expenses included **taxi fares** for hospital appointments where public transport was not appropriate and volunteers could not take passengers in their cars during lockdown. Groceries were also provided for families who were self-isolating.

For asylum seekers (who are not permitted to work or access UK benefits), we continued to provide limited cash support food, toiletries, phone top up or travel tickets.

Designated donations for the ex-Napier Barracks asylum seekers temporarily accommodated at Tinsley House were used to purchase shoes, toiletries, prayer beads, phone top ups and hair clippers.

Expenditure over the period included new home set up costs for the last two Syrian refugee families who arrived in Crawley in January 2020. RWC also paid towards **household repairs** and **replacement household white goods** for refugee families. Carpeting was purchased for a previously homeless client moving into long term accommodation. An Eaton Fund grant was awarded towards this cost after this financial year.

RWC paid **driving test costs** for 4 Syrian refugee learners from a £485 Sussex Community Foundation grant awarded in December 2019. This grant also paid the administration charge for 10 **DBS checks** for volunteers.

Designated donations included kind donations of £540 from Worth School parents for Christmas presents for refugee children as well as a supermarket voucher for each family at Eid. Crawley Seventh Day Adventist Church gift of £70 kindly funded Easter Eggs for the children at Easter time. The



fundraising by Milton Mount schoolchildren enabled children to attend after school clubs and sports activities and other activities in the subsequent financial year.

2. Learning Support

Men's English group

The Men's English group for Syrian refugee men moved online from June 2020 to the Zoom meeting platform. Led by volunteer ESOL teachers and an Arabic interpreter, the focus of the class was on practical English in daily living and basic communication skills.

Women's English Group

Similarly, the Women's English group also transferred to Zoom from face-to-face learning. Online learning together has helped to combat isolation for the women during the pandemic with the attendees gaining confidence in using their English. Interpreter support from Arabic speaking volunteers was phased out during the year as the women's level of understanding increased.

Homework and Adult learning support (one-to-one)

RWC volunteers provided learning support for 8 adults and 20 children during lockdown and beyond, with some volunteers helping both adults and children with their learning. We were most grateful to all these volunteers for providing continuity of learning during this difficult time.

Driving Theory Course

One volunteer also ran an online course on passing the **Driving Theory Test**, which is a significant challenge for many of our resettled families because of the level of English language needed.

3. Befriending Support

Whilst all refugee families and individuals supported by RWC receive practical support and guidance from the Chair and



other volunteers, 11 families and individuals had a designated support volunteer as a befriender. This is particularly valued by those individuals who are living here alone without any support from family or friends.

Day to day support for our clients is provided mainly by RWC Chair, often with the help of interpreters, and includes making medical appointments, requesting prescriptions, explaining medical letters and Covid test instructions; helping people manage their benefit claims including Universal Credit online; understanding their rent and council tax and also helping families to access school and college communications and meetings. We have also supported families who have had to isolate with food shopping.

We are particularly grateful to our 6 volunteer interpreters who provided vital communication support for our refugee families during this year, enabling them to communicate with volunteers and outside agencies and to understand and manage many aspects of daily living as outlined above.

4. Social support

Meeting in person was much curtailed from March 2020 but RWC has endeavoured to maintain a sense of community within the group through the learning activities above and regular communication through the WhatsApp group chat including translated Covid guidance and birthday greetings for all the children. Eid vouchers, Christmas presents, Easter eggs, seeds and summer bedding plants were delivered to refugee families at the appropriate times of year.

One volunteer initiated a weekly online **story time** for children which enabled them to enjoy a story and link up with other families online.

Gardening Club restarted in the Spring, with one family growing vegetables in the garden of the Worth Parish Office, supported by volunteer gardeners.



DIY volunteers helped to prepare new homes for two refugee families, painting all rooms, constructing flatpack furniture, fixing curtain rails and making curtains.

RWC Newsletters were circulated to supporters of the charity in Winter, Spring and Summer from November 2019 to Spring 2021.

Financial review

With expenditure this financial period totalling £11,970.29 and income £13874.99, surplus income above expenditure was £1904.70. RWC bank account balance stood at £3281.83 in credit with £126.42 cash in hand. In considering the financial sustainability of the charity, the Chair and Trustees have taken into account the extraordinary nature of the past year, in which fundraising events could not be staged as in previous years and some expenses increased due to the pandemic. RWC therefore considers the financial position of the charity to be sound and likely to recover from the impact of Covid-19 in the coming months.

Future Plans

Looking ahead from April 2021 onwards, RWC plans to continue all its current activities and to meet the continuing needs of the refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants who approach RWC for assistance and support. A 'Step into Spring' fundraiser by the Milton Mount schoolchildren was set up shortly after the AGM in April 2021.

RWC will continue to observe government and local council guidance on Covid-related issues, all of which clearly have a direct impact on the ways we can work together with our clients.

As we gradually emerge out of lockdown restrictions, we will carefully consider which of our pre-pandemic activities we can resume and in which ways we will need to adapt these. It is likely that our activities in the year ahead will consist of a blend of virtual and face-to-face support, assessing and managing risk to maintain volunteer and client safety as best we can at each step.



Park meetings are planned for East Grinstead families in the summer and an outdoor park gathering is planned in Crawley after June 21st for all volunteers

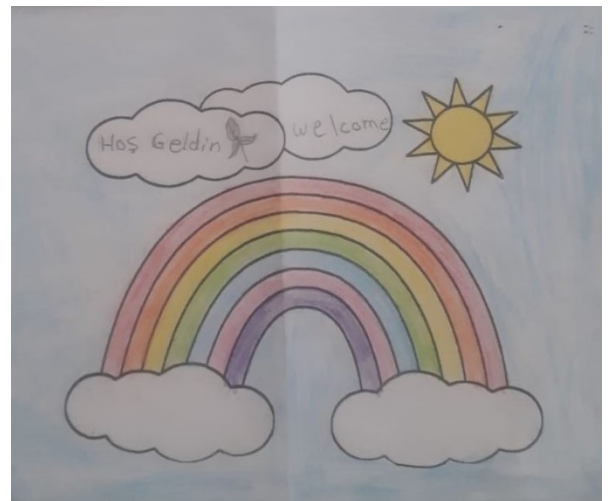
and refugee families to get together and celebrate all that is good about Refugees Welcome Crawley.

Recruitment

Recruitment of volunteers continues through potential volunteers searching and contacting us from the RWC website and also from recruitment portals on the Mid Sussex Voluntary Action and Crawley Community Action websites. Potential volunteers have an initial conversation with the Chair followed by a further informal virtual meeting with another volunteer and a refugee client to assess suitability for RWC volunteering. A reference is sought, volunteer agreement signed and DBS check carried out where needed. Volunteers are initially supported by the Chair or other experienced volunteer until they are comfortable working with clients one-to-one if appropriate

Risk Management

RWC has a Risk Management Policy in place and considers the risks of each situation and projected event case by case. Covid risks for volunteers and clients have been continually assessed in line with government guidance, and RWC Covid policy updated and circulated to all parties. RWC also has a Safeguarding Policy including Protection Policies for Children and Vulnerable Adults which is given to all new volunteers as part of the recruitment process.



Organisational structure



Reg.Charity no: 1186127

Refugees Welcome Crawley is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, 'CIO'.

It is managed by the Chair, Trustees and Steering Group. Trustee and Steering Group meetings are held every 6-8 weeks with minutes taken by the Secretary, an elected RWC volunteer. The RWC AGM is held in April/May each year when RWC officers for the financial year ahead are elected.

November 2019-March 2021



Steering Group: 8 volunteers elected annually at RWC AGM in April



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Statement of Financial Activities				
REFUGEES WELCOME CRAWLEY				
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT				
FROM 4TH NOVEMBER 2019 (CHARITY REGISTRATION) TO 31ST MARCH 2021				
INCOME 04/ 11/ 2019- 31/ 03/ 2021				£
Donations				6894.00
Grants				
Sussex Community Grant				485.00
Sussex Community Grant				3500.00
West Sussex CC Grant				744.00
Fundraising				
Milton Mount Primary				400.00
Quiz Night				1240.00
HMRC- Gift Aid				611.99
TOTAL INCOME 04/ 11/ 2019- 31/ 03/ 2021				13874.99
EXPENDITURE 04/ 11/ 2019- 31/ 03/ 2021				
Day to day expenditure for Refugees				4533.62
Bicycle costs				1119.90
Laptops				3509.99
Software				101.48
Driving test costs				284.59
Insurance				236.27
DBS				260.00
Room Hire				526.90
Tinsley men				424.36
New home set-up cost				922.32
Miscellaneous				50.86
TOTAL EXPENDITURE 4/ 11/ 2019- 31/ 03/ 2021				11970.29
SURPLUS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE 04/ 11/ 2019- 31/ 03/ 2021				1904.70
FUNDS 31/ 03/ 2021			BANK £3281.83	
			CASH £ 126.42	
Treasurer				
Refugees Welcome Crawley				