

## **Objectives and activities**

The object of the CIO is

1. to relieve financial hardship, advance education and promote social inclusion amongst those seeking asylum and those granted refugee status particularly by assisting with the resettlement and integration of families and by any other means as the trustees in their discretion shall determine;
2. to preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status and their dependants
3. to assist those granted refugee status in their search for employment
4. to promote community co-operation between individuals and organisations such as faith-based and voluntary bodies, university, schools and colleges, local authorities and businesses in pursuit of the above objects
5. to promote social cohesion through the education of the public about the issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum, and about the benefits of refugee community sponsorship for wider community.

## **Achievements**

The end of February 2022 marked the first anniversary of the arrival of the first family sponsored by Croeso Menai under the UK's Community Sponsorship scheme for resettling families with refugee status. A team of Croeso Menai volunteers had successfully supported the family through the first year of their residence in the UK. The review by the Home Office confirmed that the family were happy in their new home and were highly satisfied with the support they had received. The first few months were the most intensive in terms of support. Now that the family is entering their second year, and the two older children are well settled in school, the youngest child in daycare and the parents are completing their first year of college where they are learning English, the Croeso Menai support team has been reduced in size. A weekly review meeting with the family is held, with the support of the Croeso Menai interpreters, although the need for interpretation is reducing as the parents' – in particular, the mother's – communicative competence in English improves. Croeso Menai still helps with arranging appointments, providing help with translation, as well as advising the family on their future in the UK. Under the Community Sponsorship scheme, Croeso Menai is committed to providing support for the first two years of residence in our area.

In the autumn of 2021, the executive chair of Croeso Menai proposed

setting up a new team of volunteers to prepare to welcome a second family to our area. This proposal was accepted by the trustees. A public meeting was held to present our achievements to date and appeal for help in continuing and expanding the work of the Charity. An initial new team of over 20 volunteers was assembled for induction and training for the Community Sponsorship scheme. As before, the work was grouped under three headings: fundraising, housing and preparing the formal application. By the end of April 2022 excellent progress had been made on all three fronts. In particular, the fundraising had exceeded its targets and the team was beginning to consider the possibility of welcoming a third family. It appears that a house has been found for the second family, and the application is making good progress. It is hoped that Croeso Menai will welcome its second family before the end of 2022.

In February 2022 the invasion of Ukraine occurred and a new refugee crisis confronted Croeso Menai. Members of Croeso Menai joined in various local efforts to provide support for the new refugees. After some discussion with our volunteers, the trustees supported a new project to open a community hub to provide a meeting place for refugees and, in the case of the Ukrainians, their host families. The hub would also provide information and contacts with specialists for help with any legal, administrative, financial, educational or other problems or queries that the refugees (and host families) might have. Collaboration with other community organisations culminated in Croeso Menai forming a working partnership with the Society of Friends (Quaker), and the use of their Meeting House in Bangor for the hub to run two afternoons a week. As of the end of April 2022, the hub was due to open in May 2022.

Croeso Menai's community outreach has continued with participation of our volunteers in training and information-sharing sessions organised by Citizens UK (Sponsor Refugees) and other talks given to community groups. We continue to work closely with the local organisation Pobl i Bobl, which supports the wider refugee community as well as projects to support refugees in transit camps, and so on. The Charity's activities and achievements are publicised through a Facebook page, as well as via emails to our list of supporters/members.

*Gareth Hughes, Trustee*

## **Finance**

### **Croeso Menai accounts 1 May 2021 - 30 April 2022**

<b>Opening balance</b>		<b>£7923.88</b>
<b>Income</b>		

Donations	£13959.34	
Refunds	£1512.41	
Fund Raising Events	£1563.67	
Grants	£2239.45	
Loan Repayment	£963.33	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£20238.20</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>		
General expenses	£3520.87	
Utilities	£115.95	
Interpreting	£3584.15	
Child Care	£2253.25	
DBS Checks	£108	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£9582.22</b>	
Income - Expenditure	<b>£10655.98</b>	
<b>Closing Balance</b>		<b>£18579.86</b>