

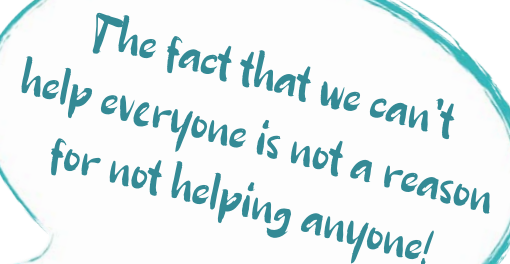
# WRP NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2024

## Refugees Welcome in Wycombe

Thank you for engaging with Wycombe Refugee Partnership. The world today seems more frightening than it has for many, many years. Our political leaders seek to deflect the blame onto scapegoats, as though it was refugees' desire to stay alive which should be castigated, rather than the greed and inhumanity of governments, billionaires and arms dealers. This newsletter normally focusses only on the local, but, for once, we are going to include some of the wider issues, to provide some context for what we do.

We all feel powerless when faced with the immensity of the horrors we see day after day on the news. The only constructive response is to do what we can rather than being stunned into doing nothing.



The fact that we can't help everyone is not a reason for not helping anyone!

## Growing, being agile and adaptable!

Our work as WRP started out with a vision to support people seeking asylum in the UK who had been awarded refugee status, having provided enough evidence for the Home Office scrutiny and thereby being granted the right to stay in the UK. Many times, we accommodated husbands as they applied for and subsequently welcomed their wives and children to the UK. Sometimes, we provided immediate housing to refugee families or individuals facing immediate homelessness.

During Covid-19, we became aware of people still in the asylum process being housed in Wycombe and we started to support them too.

A couple of London Borough Councils have started placing refugees that they are unable to support with housing into Wycombe whilst they wait for properties that match their needs. We are supporting them too. In the first three months of 2024, we had six applications (representing seven adults and five children), living in Wycombe, asking for various kinds of support and advice. Some of these people were



If you are part of a church that is going to the Love Wycombe event on the Rye on Sunday 9 June, please come and find our stand and say hello! You'll be able to meet some of our volunteers, ask questions about our work and find out how to support our work. See you there!



still in the asylum process and some of them had recently been granted refugee status.. We are supporting them too. Women's Aid, various Councils, British Red Cross and Wycombe Homeless Connection have all referred people to us for support and advice.

Working in the refugee sector is certainly challenging as the regulations and Home Office practices change and evolve. At WRP we are constantly reviewing how to work with best practice, to make sure we can offer robust support to those that need it – and to respond to the ever-changing environment for refugees and people seeking asylum.

As our work grows, please consider supporting us with a one-off gift or a regular donation so that we can continue our support of people in Wycombe, both in the asylum process and those with refugee status.

## Seeking asylum - the basics

### An asylum seeker can:

- Apply for help with housing
- Apply for help with living costs (currently £49.18 per person per week, or around £8 pp per week if you are accommodated in a hotel)
- Volunteer – as long as it is not a job someone would usually be paid for
- Study English via ESOL courses
- Send their children to school
- Access GP and healthcare

### A refugee can:

- Work (paying tax and national insurance)
- Study (and apply for a Student Loan)
- Rent or buy a house
- Get a driving licence
- Apply for Universal Credit and Housing Benefit
- Access public funds
- Send their children to school
- Access GP and healthcare

### Why do people like you and me seek asylum?

Here are some of the reasons given by people WRP has helped:

- Our flat was destroyed by a bomb.
- My parents were murdered by the regime.
- Several of my family members are in prison camps.
- I was tortured in prison – they deliberately broke my leg.
- I wanted to avoid conscription and being forced to kill people.
- The Taliban tried to kidnap my sons.
- As a female journalist, I was an obvious target for the Taliban.
- A mortar fell on my children's school.
- I was born in a refugee camp – and so were my parents.  
We had no future there.
- I wanted to save my daughter from female genital mutilation.

If any of those things happened to us, would we think it fair for the British government to send us to Rwanda without even considering our case?

### Donate

You can set up a bank standing order online or send a single gift using these details:

Account name:  
Wycombe Refugee Partnership  
Sort code: 23 05 80  
Account number: 20380055

When you make a donation by bank transfer or standing order please also contact us on [accounts@wycombe-refugees.org](mailto:accounts@wycombe-refugees.org) so that we can keep good records. Please let us know the amount transferred and the date. Please also mention your name and address and if you are donating on behalf of a group, their name, so that we can make proper acknowledgement.

Everything we are today  
goes back to you and how  
you helped us!

Dana, age 20

Image by Jan Vašek from Pixabay

Skateboarding is building  
my confidence. It makes  
me happy.

Abdul, age 12

# WRP is looking for volunteer support workers!

Would you like to help refugees and people seeking asylum in High Wycombe lead independent and healthy lives by offering a helping hand where it is needed? Everyday tasks can look very difficult to people who cannot navigate in a new place, or maybe do not have sufficient language skills. Often, having someone just to be with them, accompany them or listen to them can be a milestone in how they feel and move on with their everyday lives. To keep expectations to a realistic level, we are now calling these volunteers "support workers" rather than "befrienders". Here is what one of them said recently: "I am very happy that I was able to ease the stress and anxiety of a mum with a baby attending her GP and Job Centre appointments. Just having me there with them made her feel more confident."

If you are interested to know more about how to volunteer as a support worker for our charity and provide emotional and social support to our beneficiaries, please get in touch via [contactus@wycombe-refugees.org](mailto:contactus@wycombe-refugees.org).

## What Jesus never said:

*Feed the hungry only if they have papers*

*Clothe the naked only if they're from your country*

*Welcome the stranger only if there's zero risk*

*Help the poor only if it's convenient*

*Love your neighbour only if they look like you*

James MartinSJ

**I was forced to leave my country; they said it is for safety.  
I went quickly to pick a flower of jasmine.  
Collected soil as much as a bottle of water,  
And hid olive tree leaf in my little pocket**

**I went out of my sweet house and forget to take  
My memories and hopes, instead of that  
I took a song named "All Arab countries are my home."**

**I walked confidently and sang, "All Arab countries are my home."  
I was surprised by my new identity.  
They called me a damned Syrian refugee**

**They violated my rights and stole my childhood  
In addition, put me in a small tent far away from the worlds**

**My heart has broke and my soul was in pain  
I treat myself with the smell of Jasmine**

**Yesterday I was a happy child cheering, "All Arab countries are my home."  
However, today I have become a refugee who was expelled from places.**

*A poem by Abdullah Kasem Al Yatim of Syria, junior (under 12) winner of Malaysia Migrant and Refugee Poetry Competition 2019*



Image by hartono subagio from Pixabay



Community Board  
High Wycombe



Community Board  
North West  
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**B&Q**



**PARTNERSHIP**

Rebuilding lives  
Renewing hope

Contact us

@ [contactus@wycombe-refugees.org](mailto:contactus@wycombe-refugees.org)



[www.wycombe-refugees.org](http://www.wycombe-refugees.org)



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