

Asylum Support Partnership



GUIDE TO THE ASYLUM SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP

This guide explains the aims and structure of the Asylum Support Partnership, and gives information on each of the agencies within that Partnership and the secretariat which facilitates the Partnership. It is intended as a communication tool for staff and stakeholders.

Further information is available about the Partnership on the Refugee Council website at: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/Partnership

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What is the Asylum Support Partnership?

The Asylum Support Partnership consists of five voluntary agencies which include:

- Refugee Council
- Refugee Action
- Scottish Refugee Council
- Welsh Refugee Council
- North of England Refugee Service

The Partnership also includes, the Multi-cultural Resource Centre which is subcontracted by the Refugee Council to deliver their grant funded One Stop Services in Northern Ireland respectively.

All of the agencies are membership organisations and have boards of trustees which include representatives of refugee communities and other local stakeholders.

Purpose:

The Asylum Support Partnership has 6 Objectives:

1. Given that the partnership works in three countries and across UKBA regions, to recognise differences in the legislative frameworks and political priorities as a result of devolution and to promote the exchange of good practice between countries and regions.
2. To support partner agencies in developing and improving their practice, service quality and operational policies.
3. To use Partnership agencies' experience to influence UKBA and other relevant agencies to adopt a humane asylum policy and process across the UK, to focus on refugees as well as migration and to develop and fund services to meet identified gaps.
4. To make the case to UKBA for voluntary sector service delivery including by refugee community organisations (RCOs).
5. To support partner agencies in their funding negotiations with UKBA, with individual negotiations taking place within a common framework.
6. To support the exchange of expertise between partner agencies and promote value for money through sharing costs and resources.

Services Provided by the Asylum Support Partnership:

The Asylum Support Partnership agencies services are funded by the Home Office through the UK Border Agency (UKBA), a department established by the Home Office to be responsible for support arrangements for asylum seekers.

The Asylum Support Partnership deliver services to asylum seekers and refugees under the UK Government's *1999 Immigration and Asylum Act*. This legislation provides the legal framework for the UK government's provision of support for people who are seeking asylum in accordance with the UK's legal and humanitarian obligations under the *1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees*.

The asylum support services provided are similar in each of the 5 agencies. These include:

- Reception Support and Services on arrival
- Initial Accommodation
- One Stop Advice Services.

1. Initial Accommodation Wrap Around Services

Initial accommodation wrap around services include the advice and assistance provided to newly new asylum applicants, or reception assistance, to help them understand and engage with the asylum system. It which includes:

- Welcoming new arrivals.
- Explaining immigration paperwork.
- Providing free advice and information on the asylum process and entitlements.
- Assisting with accessing support, including accommodation and financial support.
- Delivering information to clients such as the importance of obtaining correct legal advice.
- Assisting clients to contact any friends or family.
- Referring clients to specialist agencies such as the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture for support.
- Providing interpreters and translated materials to assist with the delivery of these services.
- Providing Initial Accommodation to newly arrived asylum seekers.

There are 5 Initial Accommodation Wrap Around Services run by the Partnership agencies. There are located in the following areas:

Liverpool - (Refugee Action)
Birmingham - (Refugee Council)
Wakefield - (Refugee Council)
Cardiff – (Welsh Refugee Council)
Glasgow – (Scottish Refugee Council)

2. One Stop Services

This service offers help and advice to asylum seekers and refugees while they are awaiting an asylum decision, once they have received a positive decision and are awaiting integration assistance or, once they have received a final negative decision and are considering their options. .

- Provide drop in advice, information and practical support for people seeking asylum or who have refugee status regarding the progress of their asylum application and their support needs.

- Advise and assist people who have been granted leave to remain in the U.K. to make the transition from asylum support to mainstream services such as local authority accommodation or income support.
- Advise and assist people who have exhausted their appeal rights to consider their support and protection options.

There are 30 One Stop Services across the United Kingdom, 25 run by the Asylum Support Partnership. The remaining 5 are run by Migrant Helpline.

The Partnership does not:

- Provide legal advice or representation, but are able to advise asylum seekers and refugees on entitlements and the meaning of laws. They are also able to provide a list of qualified legal representatives.
- Change decisions made by the Home Office or National Asylum Support Service (NASS) about someone's case.

In addition to the asylum support services, each agency runs other projects which provide practical assistance to asylum seekers and refugees. These projects enable the PARTNERSHIP agencies to add value to their UKBA-funded services and are funded from other sources such as trusts.

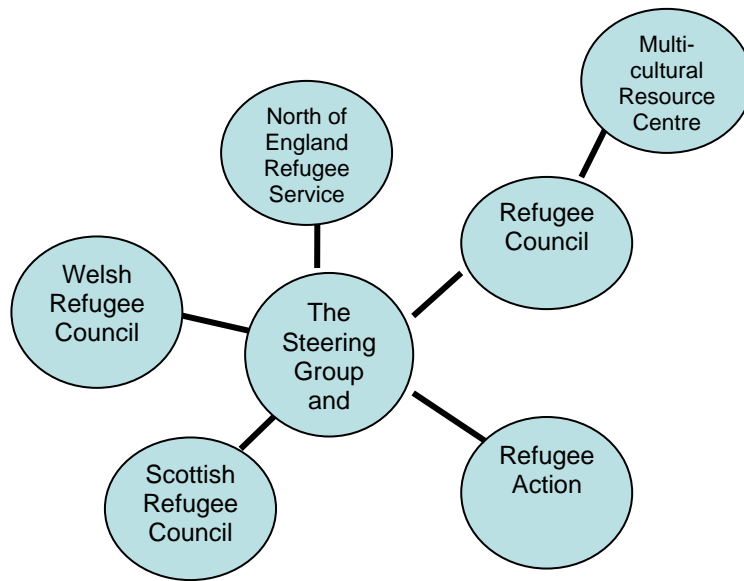
Projects include:

- Refugee Integration and Employment Services
- English classes and training opportunities
- Family Reunion
- Women's groups
- Raising awareness, influencing policy, and campaigning for refugee rights
- Promoting the development of Refugee Community Organisations.

For more information on the different types of projects being run please go to page 21.

Structure of the Asylum Support Partnership

Whilst the Asylum Support Partnership Team is hosted by Refugee Council it works on behalf of all of the agencies equally.



Steering Group

The Asylum Support Partnership is led by a steering group which includes the Chief Executives and Operations Directors of the five agencies and is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Refugee Council. The steering group meets quarterly.

The Steering Group provides strategic direction to the partnership and maintains oversight of activities in order to ensure services are delivered as planned. This includes:

- Shaping operational policy
- Providing direction and guidance
- Reviewing and approving documentation
- Monitoring progress
- Authorising major changes to programme development
- Ensuring effective communication with Refugee Community Organisations and other stakeholders
- Managing risks
- Resolving conflict.

Current Members of the Steering Group

Refugee Council – Chief Executive, Operations Director, Resources Director

Scottish Refugee Council – Chief Executive

Welsh Refugee Council – Chief Executive

Refugee Action – Chief Executive, Strategic Director

North England Refugee Service – Chief Executive

The Asylum Support Partnership Team

The Asylum Support Partnership Team is the secretariat body for the Asylum Support Partnership and a focal point for joint working across the 5 agencies. The Team is hosted by the Refugee Council at the head office in Brixton, London.

Purpose:

The Partnership exists to provide advice and support to the Partnership agencies and their sub-contractors, to set common standards, promote best practice, minimise duplication and act as a conduit for communications between the UKBA and the Partnership agencies.

Key Activities:

- Works with Partnership agencies, UKBA Asylum Support and other agencies of the UKBA, and other stakeholders to co-ordinate the Partnership's work and provide the best support for asylum seekers.
- Provides information and policy advice to Partnership agencies and other stakeholders on emerging issues in UKBA policy, Home Office and Local Authority Legislation as it relates to asylum seekers rights and entitlements to support.
- Co-ordinates and publishes information from across the agencies to present a national picture of the impact of asylum policies and the needs of asylum seekers.
- Facilitates communication between staff of the agencies at all levels, through hosting a variety of meetings and workshops and disseminating internal papers.
- Facilitates the Partnership's joint working by supporting the steering group and its sub groups and convening time limited working groups.
- Provides regular information updates to other organisations, both specialist and generalist, statutory and voluntary, who assist asylum seekers and refugees across the UK.
- Liaises with central and local government services to promote accessible and equitable service delivery to asylum seekers and refugees, or new refugee-specific projects.

Subgroups of the Asylum Support Partnership

The Partnership runs a number sub-groups of the Steering Group. These can change over time, but currently include the following 5 groups:

1. Information Workers Sub Group
 - To monitor information and production needs of the Partnership agencies in delivering NASS funded asylum support programme.
 - To agree any changes to information collection required to meeting NASS or Partnership objectives.
 - To provide a forum for Partnership agencies to discuss information collection and production relating to the delivery of the asylum support programme.
2. Asylum Support Managers Sub Group
 - To provide to provide a forum for Asylum Support Partnership agencies to discuss and develop the operational aspects of providing One Stop and Initial Accommodation Wrap Around services as part of the asylum support programme.
 - To facilitate the sharing of service delivery best practice.
 - To develop and review the link between operational and policy work.
 - To share knowledge of nationwide policy issues affecting operations, and
 - To work jointly to develop innovative methods of addressing them.
3. Operational Directors Sub Group
 - To provide strategic direction to the Asylum Support Program Steering Group to oversee all major activities and to ensure that the project is delivered according to approved plans.
 - To facilitate the sharing of operational expertise.
 - To identify opportunities to improve services for clients and value for money through efficient and effective service delivery.
 - To identify unmet client needs.
4. Finance Directors Sub Group
 - To monitor financial arrangements between the UK Border Agency (UKBA) and the Partnership agencies
 - To provide a forum for strategic issues about funding
 - To agree any changes to the financial reporting arrangements between UKBA and the Partnership agencies
 - To provide a forum for UKBA and the Partnership agencies to discuss financial management issues relating to the delivery of the asylum support programme
5. Policy Network
 - To strengthen collaborative policy work across the agencies
 - To improve the quality of the Partnership's policy outputs
 - To improve the Partnership's effectiveness in influencing policy

The Asylum Support Partnership Team

The team consists of four members of staff.

Manager – Renae Mann

- Coordinates the work of the Partnership agencies and develops the agencies relationships with UKBA and other statutory and voluntary bodies at a senior level.

Policy and Development Advisor – Kate Smart

- Provides specialist expertise, helping to develop policy and practice in the delivery of services for refugees across the Partnership agencies.

Information Officer – Helen Curry

- Provides asylum support information to member agencies, including statistics and training materials. Develops methods of monitoring the impact on refugees of policies and legislation relating to UKBA asylum support.

Administrative Officer – Catheryn Cheetham

- Provides administrative support to the ASPT, the Partnership agencies, and the UKBA. Ensures effective administrative arrangements are in place and disseminating information to Partnership staff, UKBA and stakeholders.

Contact Information:

Web: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/ASP

Manager: 0207 346 1148, renae.mann@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Policy Advisor: 0207346 1036, kate.smart@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Information Officer: 0207 346 1154, helen.curry@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Administrative Officer: 0207 346 1156, catheryn.cheetham@refugeecouncil.org.uk

Address:

240 – 250 Ferndale Road

Brixton

London

SW9 8BB

Resources

ASPT resources available to Partnership staff:

Email updates on policy

Background papers on policy developments

Lists of contact details for Partnership staff and UKBA asylum support staff

Initial Accommodation statistics

ASPT resources available to the general public:

The bi-monthly Asylum Support Partnership newsletter

Policy and research publications

Asylum statistics from the Home Office

Asylum Support Partnership Services across the UK





Refugee Council

CEO – Donna Covey

Website - <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk>

The British Refugee Council (commonly called the Refugee Council) is the largest refugee organisation in the UK. It provides asylum support services from offices in various locations around the UK, including London, the East of England, West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside. Currently British Refugee Council employs over 300 staff in 5 offices across the country.

Head Office
240-250 Ferndale Road, Brixton, London, SW9 8BB
Refugee Council - West London Office
Units 4 & 5 Hounslow Business Park Alice Way Hounslow Middlesex TW3 3UD
Refugee Council - East of England Office
First Floor 4-8 Museum Street Ipswich IP1 1HT
Refugee Council - West Midlands Office
3 Lionel Street Birmingham B3 1AG
Refugee Council - Yorkshire and Humberside Office
Ground Floor Hurley House 1 Dewsbury Road Leeds LS11 5DQ



Refugee Action

Chief Executive Officer – Sandy Buchan
Website - <http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/>

Refugee Action is an independent national voluntary agency with more than 27 years of experience in reception, resettlement, development and integration. Refugee Action provides advice and support to asylum seekers and refugees in 10 regions across England.

Refugee Action's One Stop Service teams provide information, advice, and advocacy for asylum seekers. Refugee Action's RIES service offers assistance to those who have recently been given permission to remain in the UK. Refugee Action's Choices service provides independent advice to asylum seekers considering returning voluntarily to their country of origin. Refugee Action's Organisational Development Workers (BASIS) promote the development of refugee communities. Refugee Action also runs innovative regional projects to enhance opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers.

London - Head Office, Choices and Basis
The Old Fire Station 150 Waterloo Road London SE1 8SB
Bristol – One Stop Service, RIES and Basis
9 Hide Market West Street St Philip's Bristol BS2 0BH
Liverpool - One Stop Service , RIES, Choices, Basis, Wraparound Service
64 Mount Pleasant Liverpool LS3 5SD
Nottingham - One Stop Service , Choices, Basis
Castle Court 59 Castle Boulevard Nottingham NG7 1FD
Leeds - Basis and Choices
Suite 7, Floor C Josephs Well Hanover Walk Leeds LS3 1AB
Plymouth - One Stop Service , RIES, Basis
4 th Floor Prideaux Court

Palace Street Plymouth PL1 2AY
Bolton - Gateway Protection Programme
2 Deane Walk Bolton BL3 5DG
Leicester- One Stop Service, Choices, Basis
Chancery House 7 Millstone Lane Leicester LE1 5JN
Manchester - One Stop Service, RIES, Choices, Basis
1 Tariff Street Manchester M1 2HF
Portsmouth – One Stop Service, Choices, RIES
Floor 3 Venture Tower Fratton Road Portsmouth PO1 5DL



Scottish Refugee Council

Chief Executive Officer – John Wilkes

Website -<http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/>

Scottish Refugee Council is an independent charity dedicated to providing advice, information and assistance to asylum seekers and refugees living in Scotland.

Scottish Refugee Council also provide specialist services in areas such as housing and welfare, education and employment, family reunion, women's issues, community development, the media and the arts. They play a leading role in policy development and campaign on refugee issues to ensure that Scotland plays a full role in meeting the UK's legal and humanitarian obligations under the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees.

Scottish Refugee Council is a membership organisation and members are individuals or organisations with a personal or professional interest in refugee issues. They are governed by a Board of Directors which is a voluntary group comprising of individuals with a keen interest in the area of asylum and protection, as well as asylum seekers and refugees themselves.

Head Office
5 Cadogan Square 170 Blythswood Court, Glasgow G2 7PH
Edinburgh Refugee Centre
St. George's West, 58 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh EH2 4RT
Advice Service
Citizen's Advice Bureau 58 Dundas Street, Edinburgh EH3 6QZ



Welsh Refugee Council

Chief Executive Officer: Mike Lewis

Website: <http://www.welshrefugeecouncil.org/>

The Welsh Refugee Council is an independent charity that empowers refugees and asylum seekers to rebuild their lives in Wales. They provide advice, information and support for asylum seekers and refugees in four offices in Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham. The Welsh Refugee Council offers specialist services in areas such as housing, health and employment. They are also actively involved in policy development and campaign for refugee rights.

Head Office
Phoenix House 389 Newport Road Cardiff CF24 1TP
Swansea Office
Third Floor Grove House Grove Place Swansea SA1 5DF
Initial Accommodation Team
385 Newport Road Cardiff CF24 1RN
Wrexham Office
Trinity House Trinity Street Wrexham LL11 1NL
Newport Office
High Street Chambers 51 High Street Newport NP20 1GB

NERS (North England Refugee Service)

Chief Executive Officer: Daoud Zaaroura

Website - www.refugee.org.uk

The North of England Refugee Service was established in 1989. It is an independent charitable organisation which exists to meet the needs and promote the interests of asylum seekers and refugees who have arrived or have settled in the North of England. The North of England Refugee Service works in partnership with The Refugee Council and is contracted by the Refugee Council to provide One Stop Services services.

Contact Details

2 Jesmond Rd West
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE2 4PQ

Tel: 0191 245 7311

Fax: 0191 245 7320

MCRC (Multi Cultural Resource Centre)

Website - www.mcrc-ni.org/

Multi-Cultural Resource Centre is a regional organisation working as a conduit advocating and promoting human rights and equity through empowerment, collaboration and support of Black and Ethnic Minority communities and individuals. It is sub-contracted by the Refugee Council to provide asylum support reception and One Stop Services.

Contact Details

9 Lower Crescent
Belfast
BT7 1NR

Tel:(+44) 028 9024 4639

Fax:(+44) 028 9032 9581

Involvement in national and regional fora

The Asylum Support Partnership agencies attend the following national fora as well as ad hoc national stakeholder meetings run by the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA).

- National Asylum Stakeholder Forum
- Case Resolution Sub group
- Detention Users Group
- Voluntary Returns Steering group
- Gateway National Steering Group
- Migration Impact Forum
- National Migration Group

The Asylum Support Partnership agencies also attend the following regional meetings.

Midlands and East of England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Midlands Strategic Partnership • West Midlands Contract Delivery group • East of England Strategic Partnership for Migrants
North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional strategic stakeholder meeting • Regional operational stakeholder meeting • NAM stakeholder meeting.
North East, Yorkshire and Humberside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM Operational meeting • Regional Strategic Migration Partnership meeting, which has around 6 subgroups also (community cohesion & housing, refugee integration strategy, health, employment, children & young people, migration) • Case Resolution project meeting • Initial accommodation and wraparound operational meeting
Wales and South West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM stakeholder meeting • Initial accommodation meeting • Wales Strategic Migration Partnership
London and South East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAM meetings • London Regional Strategic Migration Partnership • UKBA contract management and fulfilment meetings
Scotland and Northern Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COSLA Migration Group • Initial accommodation meeting • Asylum Coordination meeting (Northern Ireland)

Projects

In addition to the asylum support services, each agency runs other projects which provide practical assistance to asylum seekers and refugees. These projects enable the Partnership agencies to add value to their UKBA-funded services and are often funded from other sources such as trusts.

See below for further information on each of the Projects

Category	Agency	Lead Contact & Project Name	Region
Women's Group	SRC	Women's Group	Scotland
	Refugee Council	Women's Group	London
Mentoring, Training & Integration	Refugee Action	Training and Awareness Raising Programme	Liverpool
	Refugee Action	Refugee Integration and Employment Service	South Central, North West, South West.
	Refugee Action	Gateway Protection programme	Bolton & Bury, Salford, Oldham, Trafford, Stockport
	Refugee Council	Training and Awareness	Peterborough
	Refugee Council	Mentoring	Ipswich Norwich
	Refugee Council	Orientation project	Birmingham
	Refugee Council	Refugee Integration and Employment Service	London, East of England, West Midlands
	North of England Refugee Service	Refugee Integration and Employment Service	North East
	Scottish Refugee Council	Housing and Welfare	Glasgow Edinburgh
	Scottish Refugee Council	Refugee Integration and Employment Service	Glasgow Edinburgh
	Welsh Refugee Council	Refugee Integration and Employment Service	Wales
Volunteering for Refugees	Refugee Action	Horizons	Greater Manchester

Young Asylum Seekers	Refugee Action	Get Connected	Liverpool
Raising Society's Awareness	Refugee Action	Prevention of Racial Harassment Project	Salford
	Refugee Action	Refugee Realities Training Project	Greater Manchester
	Refugee Council	Talks Team	Leeds
Empowering Refugees	Refugee Action	Wellbeing Project	Manchester
	Refugee Action	BASIS	East Midlands North West South West South East Yorkshire & Humberside
	Scottish Refugee Council	Community Development Project Work	Glasgow Edinburgh
Family Support	Refugee Action	Parenting Advocacy Project	Liverpool
	Scottish Refugee Council	Family Reunion	Scotland

1. Women's Group

Women's Group – Scottish Refugee Council

The Women's Group was set up in recognition that there are particular issues that affect female refugees and asylum seekers. In recent years the group has grown in popularity and has separated into two groups.

Women's Group - Refugee Council

This women's group is a drop in session held weekly in the Refugee Council's Day Centre.

2. Mentoring and Training

Training & Awareness Raising Programme – Refugee Action, Liverpool

The Liverpool Refugee Action office provides a range of training and awareness programmes to the voluntary, statutory and private sectors across the Merseyside area. Currently work is underway with Liverpool Hope University in the development of a core module on refugee and asylum issues for a Foundation Degree in Advice Studies. Basic training programmes include the introduction to and intermediate asylum advice courses delivered to a wide range of local organisations.

Refugee Integration and Employment Service – Refugee Action

UKBA has awarded contracts for delivery of the Refugee Integration and Employment Service (RIES) programme. RIES will support those who have demonstrated they are in need of international protection by providing assistance in the early stages of their integration into UK society. The service will focus particularly on employment as a key driver to successful integration outcomes but also provide practical advice on housing, education and English language. This focus on employment will enable refugees to contribute to our society both economically as well as culturally.

Gateway Protection Programme – Refugee Action

In 2004 the Home office agreed to accept up to 500 refugees a year under an international resettlement programme run by the UN's refugee agency. Under the scheme some of the world's most vulnerable refugees, including many who lived in refugee camps for years, are offered a safe route to a country where they are granted indefinite leave to remain. A small team of resettlement workers from Refugee Action support the refugees during their first year in the UK, giving support and assistance with everything from learning about their new community to accessing training, employment and education. The team works in partnership with local statutory and voluntary organisations to provide access to existing services and develop awareness of refugee and asylum seeker issues.

Training and Awareness Project - Refugee Council

The Training and Awareness Project works with asylum seekers and refugees in Peterborough. The aim of the project is to provide information and training for new arrivals to help them integrate into the city and access the full range of local services. In consultation with a variety of client groups, agencies and service providers in the local area, Refugee Council has developed a course entitled 'Living in Peterborough'. The course is run at the New Link Centre in Peterborough and has been embedded into ESOL courses across the city. Modules cover a range of topics including emergency services, rights, responsibilities, legal issues, services, health, housing, education and employment. Since the Project started in April 2004 over 900 people have benefited from the scheme.

Mentoring - Refugee Council

The Refugee Council in partnership with Time Together provides a mentoring service for refugees in Ipswich and Norwich. It's an exciting and effective project whereby mentors spend about 5 hours a month with a refugee over the period of a year. Mentors help their mentee integrate in the UK by sharing their knowledge and experience of the English language and the British system. This can vary from helping to write a CV and practising English to visiting a museum or going to a football match! It also gives mentors the opportunity to meet people from different cultures and develop their own personal skills.

Orientation Project - Refugee Council

Volunteers provide welcome orientation's for newly arrived asylum seekers to Birmingham. This involves informal interviews, collecting relevant information, a geographical tour and limited befriending.

Refugee Integration and Employment Service - Refugee Council

See earlier description of RIES for Refugee Action

Housing & Welfare – Scottish Refugee Council

Specialist Housing and Welfare staff provide advice on housing options and welfare benefits to ensure that people can make informed choices before the transition from asylum support to mainstream support.

Working in partnership with local authorities and housing providers these staff ensure that refugees understand the legal aspects of tenancy and tenant's rights and responsibilities. We conduct approximately 1500 Housing and Welfare client contacts a year.

Although Glasgow-based we conduct regular Housing and Welfare advice sessions in Edinburgh where refugees can seek advice.

Refugee Integration and Employment Service - Scottish Refugee Council

See earlier description of RIES for Refugee Action

Refugee Integration and Employment Service – Welsh Refugee Council

See earlier description of RIES for Refugee Action

3. Volunteering Opportunities for Refugees

Horizons - Refugee Action

Horizons is a supported volunteer service for adult refugees and asylum seekers who want to do voluntary work. Although they want to make a contribution to life in the UK, asylum seekers are not allowed to work, and even those with refugee status face many barriers to employment. Horizons staff match employers' needs and refugees' skills in this unique volunteering scheme in Manchester and Salford.

4. Assistance for Young Asylum Seekers

Get Connected - Refugee Action

Get Connected is a Refugee Action project for young unaccompanied asylum seekers aged 15 to 18 in Liverpool. Young asylum seekers arriving in Liverpool alone are placed in shared or single accommodation by Liverpool City Council with private agencies and are given a weekly living allowance. Some are placed in foster care. Our approach is informal, young person-led, and sensitive to the specific needs of unaccompanied young asylum seekers in the UK.

5. Raising Societies Awareness of Refugees

Prevention of Racial Harassment Project - Refugee Action

Asylum seekers and refugees are increasingly becoming a target for racist abuse. Misinformation and hostility towards asylum seekers in sections of the national media and within some communities has led to increased hostility. The Prevention of Racial Harassment Project, based in Oldham in Greater Manchester, is unique in the UK. It works in partnership with the local authority and statutory, charitable and community organisations to promote a better understanding of the issues facing asylum seekers and refugees to prevent harassment. The racial harassment officer provides support to agencies that work within the community to reach out to asylum seekers and develop policies and practices that will enhance integration.

Talks Team Leeds - Refugee Council

The Talks Team raises awareness about the reality of seeking asylum. The session gives recipients some insight into the asylum process by focussing on the personal impact of seeking asylum in Britain. The courage of the person who is seeking asylum is highlighted alongside the benefits that this country gains from the refugees who have settled in Britain. Peoples' personal stories are always most highly evaluated by recipients. Sessions are done in a variety of settings. These include schools, statutory services (health and social services), children's and youth services and community groups.

6. Empowering Refugees

Wellbeing Project - Refugee Action

The Wellbeing Project, based in Greater Manchester, empowers asylum seekers and refugees through arts and sports-based activities. Refugees are vulnerable to mental health problems due to

the difficulties they may experience overcoming traumatic experiences and settling into a new way of life. They are often separated from family and friends and feel lonely and apprehensive about going out into their local communities.

BASIS - Refugee Action

The Basis Project is a new, England-wide service giving one-to-one support to hundreds of refugee community organisations (RCOs) to help them manage, develop and sustain their work. A partnership project led by Refugee Council and Refugee Action, the Basis Project is funded by the Big Lottery Fund. We are also working closely with funders and other mainstream bodies to increase their understanding of RCOs.

Community Development Project work - Scottish Refugee Council

Scottish Refugee Council's community development work supports all residents in communities wherever they come from. Promoting dialogue between all those who have a stake in the future of Scotland's diverse communities is a fundamental principle of our work. We do this by:

- Helping refugees form independent RCOs and to become directly involved in their local communities.
- Helping refugee women to identify the specific issues that affect their lives and develop solutions.
- Helping local Scottish communities respond to refugee needs by involvement in refugee support and integration networks which provide drop-ins, translate information and improve access to services.
- Helping new and existing residents collectively influence the political policies and practice which affect the lives of refugees and asylum seekers.

7. Family Support

Parenting Advocacy Project - Refugee Action

Staff work with vulnerable refugee and asylum seeking families by supporting them to access services available to them and orientating them within the local community.

Family Reunion – Scottish Refugee Council

Often, when people are forced to flee their country in fear of their lives they become separated from their children, husbands or wives. The family reunion service works with agencies such as the Red Cross and UNHCR to organise for separated family members to travel legally to the UK and be reunited with their loved ones. Due to the complexities and long time-scales involved in family reunion work we can only provide this service to a limited number of people each year.