



Bradford Ecumenical Asylum CONCern

Registered Charity Number: 1119463

March has seen us say goodbye to our CHAT Development Worker, Fiona Bououden, we thank her for all the work and passion she has put into CHAT since she started with us in 2011 and wish her and her family well. Eleanor Wood will be taking over the role and we are sure she will be a great addition to the team. The time has come around again for us to start planning Refugee Week. Our annual **Walk for Justice** will be taking place on Wednesday 19th of June – it was a great day last year and we urge you to come along to help highlight the plight of those seeking sanctuary in Yorkshire. Sponsorship forms available from Kezia Rooke, BEACON Co-ordinator (contact details over leaf).



This Easter, let us pray for...

All those who are seeking sanctuary in Bradford and the organisations working to support them.

Those who are persecuted for their religious beliefs.

Those who find themselves refused asylum and unable to return to their country.

And all those who are in detention and remain uncertain about their future.



News and Current Issues

Accommodation Provision

(Kezia Rooke and Julie Cowdery, McKenzie Friends volunteer and CAMEO, Keighley)

In November 2012, BEACON was alerted to a situation at Ingrow Mill in Keighley. The Mill, which houses around twenty households of mainly women and children seeking sanctuary, had become an insanitary array of rubbish with limited lighting and a dangerous lack of repairs, resulting in severe health and safety issues and a significant failure by the housing provider to abide by the terms of their contract. Inter-agency work between BEACON, CAMEO and NoToG4S resulted in the situation being resolved in the short term; however, the momentum of improvement was not kept up, and indications at the time of writing (February/March 2013) are that maintenance issues are addressed only when complaints are raised, rather than as a matter of routine - an approach detrimental to the human rights and dignity of those accommodated. This situation is not the only one of its kind, and the campaign to maintain even adequate levels of accommodation for those seeking asylum in Yorkshire is ongoing.

Proving Nationality

(Thank you to Jackie Coutts, BEACON Exec. and McKenzie Friends volunteer, for help with this.)

Proving nationality is a significant issue for many asylum seekers and in light of this, several of our volunteers have accompanied clients from PAFRAS to the Ethiopian Embassy in London. McKenzie Friend Volunteer, Jackie Coutts, will be going to the Ethiopian Embassy again next week with two young men. Both claimed asylum in the UK but were refused and have had all support withdrawn. They have with them details of the names of their parents and schools they went to and an application for a passport. As is happening time and time again, their applications will be looked at and the men will be directed to the website which states that to obtain a passport you must have Ethiopian ID or a birth certificate. Like many in Ethiopia, they do not have these documents as their families became dispersed during the war with Eritrea. For both Ethiopians and Eritreans a lack of evidence to prove their nationality means they are refused asylum yet cannot be returned, the refusal of their passport applications ultimately forcing them into destitution.

BEACON Briefing Easter 2013: Project Updates

HOSTING Project

Do you have a spare room? Could you provide a safe space for a person seeking sanctuary in Bradford?

No Return No Asylum, the recent report by *Destitution Concern Bradford*, highlights the extent of destitution among refused asylum seekers in our city. BEACON's hosting project is working to provide accommodation for those who would otherwise be destitute, but we urgently need more volunteer hosts. . If you, or anyone you know, can help please get in touch. We are desperately seeking households that can accommodate men.



Contact: Will Sutcliffe, Hosting Project Co-ordinator: 07505 053149

McKenzie Friends

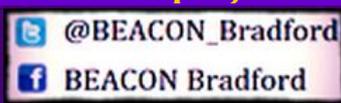
Our McKenzie Friends volunteers are working hard to provide support to those with no legal representation. We continue to receive referrals from a variety of organisations and our volunteers have recently been supporting clients from South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice in Sheffield whilst they attend their hearing in Bradford. Huddersfield based volunteer, Steve Hibbs, has been involved in organising a training day with NCADC in March and several of our volunteers will be attending. We have had interest from a lot of potential new volunteers and are hoping to hold the next training session in April (dates to be confirmed). If you would like to volunteer with us, please get in touch.

Contact: Eithne Dodwell, Chair of McKenzie Friends: eithne.dodwell@gmail.com



CHAT (Care & Hospitality At Thornbury) We have seen the welcome addition of new volunteers to CHAT's two projects. It is amazing that people are willing to give their time to the work and their support and efforts are greatly appreciated. The Monday court sessions are proving to be beneficial and appreciated and as one lady put it, "the presence of the CHAT volunteers immediately transforms the atmosphere in the waiting areas". The Spotlight English Club has seen some members having the confidence to move on to formal ESOL classes which is great to see but sad in another way as we miss them! Eleanor has now taken the helm as CHAT Worker and officially took up her post in early March, as Fiona is hoping to move to pastures new in the summer. Welcome to Eleanor! If anyone would like to volunteer please don't hesitate to get in touch with her.

**Keep up to date
with all the news
from our projects:**



**Contact: Eleanor Wood, CHAT Worker:
chat@beaconbradford.org**

We're raising funds so we can continue our work supporting some of the most vulnerable people in the UK. Check out our page to see how your contribution could help make a great difference:

www.localgiving.com/BEACON



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