



## NEWS

### What is Home?

a Being a refugee shouldn't be a fixed label – despite what some politicians and media would like us to think! – refugees have very different experiences and stories. However, the loss of a home is the only condition all refugees have in common, and the one thing all our clients at BEACON share.

We use the idea of 'home' all the time: 'to feel at home', 'There's no place like home'. A good home is a wonderful thing and the experience of having a home (either good or bad) is fundamental to being human: it is so basic we are normally unaware of it unless it is disturbed. Losing this is not just a conscious loss of a family home with its material, sentimental & psychological values but can also be a deeper 'disturbance' which may make it difficult to cope and build a new homes.

Whilst our work supporting people through the asylum system will not make up for the loss of their home, we can hope that it goes some way to alleviating the practical difficulties and the pain this can cause. If we consider our understanding of home, as well as what it might mean for those we are supporting, this can provide a building block by which to show solidarity and offer compassionate support.



## NEWS

### Outpouring of support for BEACON

At BEACON we have been overjoyed at the generosity of Churches and individuals over the last few months. The refugee crisis has sparked an increased interest in our work and many Churches and groups have been in touch to see how they help and make generous financial contributions. We were particularly excited by this donation of materials for our CHAT English club from Cleckheaton Methodist Church which will keep us busy all year long! Many thanks to all those who have given generously or signed up to volunteer with us – we wouldn't be able to offer vital support to asylum seekers without you!



THE CHURCH IN THE CALAIS REFUGEE CAMP, FEATURED IN SONGS OF PRAISE, AUGUST 2015.

## The Refugee Crisis: a global issue in Bradford

The UNHCR has warned that refugee numbers globally are at an historical high (the greatest number since WWII), that the situation will get worse, and that Syria is the principal cause of displacement (followed by Afghanistan and Somalia).

Under the new Syrian Refugee resettlement scheme about 1,400 are likely to come to Yorkshire and Humberside and 156 have arrived in Bradford since March 2014.

Figures from the end of 2015 show there are 713 asylum seekers on Home Office support in Bradford. This has gone up by just over 250 since a year ago, a higher than average increase, with Bradford taking almost half of all the new asylum seekers in Yorkshire and Humberside.

*Figures from Migration Yorkshire & Horton Housing.*





## NEWS

### Dates for your diary

10th February:

SPEAKING UP FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

Ash Wednesday Event, Huddersfield.

Contact: [clivebarrett@wyec.co.uk](mailto:clivebarrett@wyec.co.uk)

22nd February:

BEACON Information session and workshop:

Want to know more about the asylum system?

contact: [beacon@beaconbradford.org](mailto:beacon@beaconbradford.org)

31st March:

deadline to apply for next McKenzie friends volunteering opportunity.

22nd June:

Walk for Justice. Join BEACON's annual sponsored walk for 2016 Refugee Week



## Support BEACON

Donate **theBigGive.org.uk**  
*helping your donations go further*

### Volunteer

Excited by our project updates? get involved!

### Become a Friend of BEACON

[beaconbradford.org/FriendsOfBeacon](http://beaconbradford.org/FriendsOfBeacon)



## The Hosting Project

A large number of enquiries came in during the autumn from potential host households, prompted by the refugee crisis. Due to his other commitments, Will does not have the capacity to expand the project himself, but has had very encouraging discussions with some others who have offered time and expertise to enable this to happen. Watch this space!

## McKenzie Friends

We currently have 13 volunteers supporting 30 asylum seekers who would otherwise face the asylum system alone and without the guidance of a legal representative. We receive regular referrals and continue to strengthen our strong partnership working with agencies such as the Red Cross and Bradford Action for Refugees. We are always looking for new volunteers and will recruiting again in March this year to train in May – so do get in touch if you are interested in taking part!



## CHAT

CHAT Phoenix continues to do well with a strong group of new & experienced volunteers. we are still concerned about the quiet waiting room at the Tribunal, meaning many asylum seekers are waiting months before their full hearing.

CHAT English Club is thriving, each week we welcome 10-15 students and we're enjoying talking about the New Year: revising vocabulary on the months, seasons and festivals to come, as well as planning what the group will do in 2016. Brilliant new volunteers add energy and enthusiasm to the group. After Easter we will move the English class to our office building near the city centre, so as to be more accessible to asylum seekers who are housed nearby. Thanks to Thornbury Methodist Church for hosting the last 4 years of the class!

