

Boundless



The Newsletter for Refugees Welcome, Cheshire East January 2024

A QUICK UPDATE

Refugees Welcome, Cheshire East, is continuing to support Syrian, Afghan and Ukrainian refugees, who live in our area. Our volunteers support Syrian, Afghan and Ukrainian families in their homes. It is thanks to the generosity of our donors to the Boundless fund that we have been able to establish and maintain our support networks for all three groups of refugees.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!

Current information as well as details about how you can help Ukrainians fleeing the war can be found on [the Cheshire East website](#). You can also register on the government website [here](#).

In this edition we have articles and pictures from our recent Cultural Event and how Ukrainians took part in the Congleton Remembrance Day parade. We also have contributions from our English class students.

**REFUGEES
WELCOME**

Registered Charity Number 116990

Refugees Welcome aims to support, integrate and empower refugees in every possible way, from sourcing furniture and equipment, to helping with access to medical care and education, interpreting and English learning. We acknowledge the huge contribution which newcomers - including displaced people - have always made to our society. We are committed to helping newly arrived people fulfil their potential as independent members of the community, enriching it with their skills, culture and unique perspective.

We did it

On Saturday November 18th we ran a Cultural Event in the Grosvenor Centre in Macclesfield. Thanks to all the hard work by trustees, volunteers and members of all three refugee groups the day was beyond any of my dreams or expectations.

We started to set up the space in the Grosvenor centre on November 17th. Tables were erected, our beautiful new Refugees Welcome banner was tied between convenient pipes, lines of international flags added to the décor and we borrowed easels from local art groups and a keyboard from All Hallows College. We were ready!

On Saturday 18th November Syrian Afghan and Ukrainian stallholders arrived to set up their wares. An expert Ukrainian stamp collector exhibited fascinating stamps, we had face painting by a Ukrainian, henna designs by an Afghan, superb, but heart-rending paintings and drawings by Ukrainian children, a tombola, a “treasure hunt/quiz” and a corner for children to draw and colour pictures. All through the day musicians were performing – Ukrainian singers, a Ukrainian violinist and a saxophonist and a Syrian family who played a traditional drum and sang.



All day we were blessed with many visitors. We were delighted to welcome David Rutley, MP for Macclesfield, Rod Fletcher, mayor of

Cheshire East and Chris Wilcock and his family, who are Macclesfield's mayoral family.



We would like to thank everyone who took part and everyone who came. We are also hoping to run similar events in other parts of Cheshire East.
Nicky Campbell

Congleton Remembrance Day Parade

Despite the extremely adverse weather conditions, on Sunday 12th November 2023, hundreds of Congleton onlookers lined the streets to watch and take part in, the annual Remembrance Parade marching from West Street carpark, through and around the town centre to the cenotaph. This service is to honour those who have sacrificed their lives not just for our country but over the past two years, remembering our refugee guests whose countries and families, are still living in conflicts of war. This year our Ukrainian Community had the honour of laying their own wreath on Congleton's cenotaph. Many volunteers who support our refugee community were equally proud to walk alongside them in the parade.

The parade was led by a single horse and uniformed rider, with bands, veterans, youth groups, emergency services, members of the armed forces, civic dignitaries and 50 wreath laying groups following on behind them. As the parade turned down the final leg of their march onto the main street, they were met by an immense public sea of faces under a canopy of umbrellas.



The outdoor service at the Cenotaph was conducted by Rev. Ian Enticott, All Saints Congleton and Master of Ceremonies and Gary Dolman, from the Congleton Branch of the Royal British Legion.

At 11:00am, after 'The Last Post' (bugled by Michael Whitehurst) the town fell silent. Representatives from almost 50 local groups were then called upon for the act of 'Laying Wreaths'. David Wootton, HM Deputy Lieutenant of Cheshire presented the first wreath followed by Fiona Bruce, MP for Congleton and Town Mayor, Cllr Rob Moreton and after a few more, our group of Ukraine families supported one another in laying their stunning sunflower-centred poppy wreath.

Congleton Town Mayor, Cllr Rob

Moreton said: "Once again, the people of Congleton turned out in force considering the terrible weather. Every year the event seems to get bigger and I can't tell you how proud it makes me, as the Town Mayor, to feel the strength of support for Remembrance in Congleton. It was also touching to see representatives of our new Ukrainian community attend today's service. It was great to see so many of Congleton's youth organisations involved, young people are our future and we need them to keep remembering. It is really important that the strong sense of tradition continues to flourish. Days like this prove that custom and community spirit is still strong in our town."





The whole parade was invited back to the Town Hall for refreshments alongside the Princes Irene Brigade. Short speeches were made including a very brave and special speech by nine-year-old Ukrainian, Kira. Kira, who currently lives in Congleton with her dad, mum and two sisters, passionately said: "We Will Remember Them." Well done Kira! We will remember all our Congleton Ukraine guests and their families remaining in Ukraine, as we pray with them for an end to conflict and new beginnings of reconciliation and permanent peace throughout their lives.



Our ESOL students have taken part in a Christmas Tree event at Christ Church in Macclesfield and have written about their home Christmas celebrations.



The Refugees Welcome tree at the Roe Street Naissance Tree Festival, which was held at Christ Church in December. Members of the ESOL group went to the church to decorate it with traditional decorations and messages. At their next ESOL session they wrote about traditions.



Tamara:

Traditions.

We send Christmas cards with wishes for health and prosperity. We like to stay in the house of friends. We eat a morning festive breakfast. You can eat meat on the first day after fasting. The most popular foods are aspic and sausage cake, pies with poppy seeds and cheese.

On this day we go to visit relatives – grandchildren go to grandparents and to uncles and aunts.

Sergii Gudetskyi:

Ukraine had Christmas on 7th January. Now we have changed the date of Christmas, so this year Ukraine is celebrating from 25th December to 6th January. Orthodox Christians don't eat every day. For evening, the family sits down to a festive table. The table has special dishes with vegetables. On 7th January Ukrainian people go and visit family and friends and give gifts.



And again, a heartfelt message of thanks to everyone!

You can support our work by setting up a standing order for a regular monthly donation - £5/10/20 or whatever you would like to give (see next page).

This will go directly towards:

- Supporting ESOL training for all the refugees who need it.
- Insurance for volunteers working with families
- Professional help to select, train, deploy and oversee volunteers.
- One-off needs – for example extra equipment required when a family sets up home.

Your payment should be made to:
ACCOUNT NAME: Refugees Welcome
SORT CODE: 01-05-41
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 45946426
REFERENCE: BOUNDLESS
Please make sure that your name is clearly written on your BACS payment.

Go to www.refugeeswelcome.co.uk for more details or email refugeescheshireeast@gmail.com

Please send donations / standing order mandates to:

Alan Brown (Treasurer), Refugees Welcome, 13 Lea Drive, NANTWICH CW5 5JS

Refugees Welcome, c/o Macclesfield Methodist Church, Westminster Road, Macclesfield, SK10 1BX

Many, many thanks for your support.

All the trustees of Refugees Welcome Cheshire East



Data Protection Refugees Welcome is committed to protecting your privacy and will process your personal data in accordance with current Data Protection legislation. Refugees Welcome collects information to keep in touch with you and supply you with information relating to our work. A full data privacy statement for financial donors is available from Refugees Welcome on request.



Standing Order Mandate

Registered Charity Number 1169909



Instructions to your Bank Manager

Name of your Bank _____
Branch Address _____
Town/City _____ Postcode _____

Please pay to Refugees Welcome

Sort Code 01 05 41 Account Number 45946426

The sum of £ (in figures) (in words)
On the __ / __ / ____ and each week month year

Until further notice and debit my account accordingly.

Name of account to be debited: _____
Sort Code -- - - - - Account Number - - - - -
Signature _____
Date _____

My Details

Title _____ First Name _____
Surname _____
Home Address _____
Postcode _____ Date _____
Email Address _____

Tick here to boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you give.



In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box

- I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past four years to Refugees Welcome.**


I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

Please notify Refugees Welcome if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.



Some more information about how we operate.

Refugees Welcome Cheshire East started more than 8 years ago, when the Syrian war was at its height. Syrian people were seeking refuge from their war and were living in camps in neighbouring Lebanon. The British government agreed to take a number of vulnerable families under the VPRS (Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme). 5 Syrian families were welcomed to Cheshire East early in 2017. Two further Syrian families have settled in Cheshire East more recently.

Two and a half years ago, the Taliban dramatically took over Afghanistan, making life extremely difficult and dangerous for people who had worked in any capacity with UK or US institutions. Many hundreds of people had to leave Afghanistan very quickly. Afghan refugees have been welcomed to the UK under schemes such as the ARAP (Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and the ACRS (Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme). For the past 2 years 5 Afghan have lived in permanent accommodation and many more have lived in temporary accommodation locally.

The invasion of Ukraine on 24th February 2022 meant that huge numbers of Ukrainians became refugees. Many Ukrainians are living in Cheshire East.

So... Who are the people who work for Refugees Welcome?

8 of us are trustees of the charity. That means we run the charity. We make the decisions about policy, activities, finance and how the whole charity is run. We have meetings, along with our treasurer (a very important person!) approximately every 6 weeks. All of us are retired (among us are a GP, a psychotherapist, a counsellor, two teachers, a Chartered Engineer, a person, who worked in banking and one who has played a number of roles in the NHS) .We all work in a voluntary capacity. We work closely with a team from Cheshire East, whom we meet every 2 weeks. We have to report on our activities to the Charity Commission every year.

There are about 50 volunteers who work directly with the refugee families in a wide range of supporting roles. The volunteers also help man the conversation cafés and assist at the ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes. Our website is run by one of our volunteers. We are pleased to welcome several of the Ukrainians as new volunteers.

The only people who are in paid jobs with our organisation are an employee of CVS (Council for Voluntary Services) and the people who are professional ESOL teachers, who lead the ESOL teaching.

We are fortunate enough to be able to work with other organisations in Cheshire East, who are supporting refugees.

We welcome more volunteers and trustees. Please contact us through our website, if you are interested in working with us. We would especially welcome someone who would like to work on the next edition of Boundless!

Nicky Campbell (Chair of trustees)

Registered Charity Number 1169909

