



Boundless

The Newsletter for Refugees Welcome, Cheshire East July 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 of Boundless you can find out about the dynamic nature of our organisation. You can meet our new colleague from CVS, details of another Ukrainian event and news from all our different refugee groups.

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.



What's new?

In the last edition of Boundless we reported on our new relationship with Cheshire East, detailing changes that would have to be made.

I'm delighted to say that we have carried out the changes and we are continuing in our role.

Our Conversation café is now running on the first Saturday of each month at 10.00 at St Michael's Church. It has been very well attended and has been supported by "One Project Ukraine", so there are always clothes, toiletries and food available.

The Tuesday ESOL class has continued and is being run by our enthusiastic volunteers.

Our precious relationship with Cheshire East Communities team has continued. At present we are working together to support a new Syrian family who have recently moved to Macclesfield. What has pleased us most is that several of our existing Syrian families are also supporting the newcomers. This feels as if we are all working together as one very special team.

I would like to give special thanks to our local schools who have taken refugee children and cared for them. We hear such good reports of all the schools attended by our Syrian, Afghan and Ukrainian children. Thank you all.





Ukrainian Event 9.3.24

On the 9th March 2024 the Ukrainian group organized an event to celebrate the 210th Anniversary of the birth of their national poet Taras Hryhorovych Scevchenko (9.3.1814-10.3.1861)

The group led by Tamara Ihnatieva gave a presentation about the life and work of this poet, author, portrait painter, artist and architect.

He was born to a poor family and lost his parents in his early years after which he ended up a serf to a richer family. He eventually received training from another artist who recognized his potential, but it was many years (1838) before he was freed from serfdom to pursue his career.

He was also among other things a political activist who was imprisoned by Imperial Russia for his views on Ukrainian Independence, which is very interesting in the light of current events. History repeating itself.

He became famous and there are many statues in his honour in Ukraine and across the world.

His life was celebrated with musical performances and reading of his poems and of course this being a Ukrainian celebration there was wonderful food for the body as well as the soul.

One of his poems which has been set to music was played and sung by all, a powerful moment as it is said its strength and power represents the spirit and will of the Ukrainian people.

‘The mighty Dnieper River Roars and Bellows.’

The mighty Dnieper roars and bellows
The wind in anger howls and raves
Down to the ground it bends the willows
And mountain-high lifts up the waves

The pale faced moon picks out this moment
To peek from behind a cloud
Like a canoe upon the ocean
It first tips up and then tips down

The cocks don’t crow to wake the morning
There is not yet a sound of man
The owls in glades call out their warnings
And Ash trees creak and creak again.

In the book by Amber Poole (Sunflowers at my Table) which Nicky wrote about in the last edition of ‘Boundless’ there is another poem about exile. Taras was exiled from his homeland for many years as people are being

exiled by war now. If you haven't read this book, I would highly recommend it.



Congratulations and well done to all those Ukrainian people who produced this event, set it up and provided the refreshments.

Anne Towers



Important information for all Ukrainians.

This message has come from the Cheshire East communities Team. Government has announced the next phase of the Ukraine schemes. There are two main changes to Homes for Ukraine (HFU) that both took effect in respect of applications made to UKVI after 15:00 on 19 February 2024. First, there is a change to visa length. Visas will be granted for 18 months, rather than 36 months as before. The 'thank you payments' will continue for the duration of the guests HFU initial visa permission.

Second, there is a change to sponsor eligibility criteria. Those who sponsor new arrivals must themselves be British or must have settled status (which means have the right to live in the UK permanently). The Government has also announced the closure of the Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS) and the closure of the Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES) on 16 May 2023.

Additionally, the new Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) Scheme will allow Ukrainian citizens currently in the UK under any of the three Ukraine visa Schemes to extend their stay by 18 months. Ukrainians will be able to apply for UPE three months before the expiry of their existing visa.

For the full details please see the updated Government guidance: [Apply for a visa under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-visa-under-the-homes-for-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme) and [Paying sponsors: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/paying-sponsors-homes-for-ukraine)

Please email refugeeinfo@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any queries and we will endeavour to respond to the best of our abilities.

Message to Letting Agents and Landlords:

We would like to say special thanks to all the letting agents who have made it as easy and comfortable as possible for our refugee families in Cheshire East to rent your properties.

Special thanks to all the landlords who have kept rents low and have understood the trauma through which their tenants have lived.





We Welcome Estelle:

Refugees Welcome has a contract with CVS (Council of Voluntary Services Cheshire East) to support some of our core activities. CVS select, train and deploy our volunteers as well as securely holding all our data.

We would like to wish Alex Major from CVS all the very best with the new role she has been seconded to and welcome Estelle Worthington to the team. As part of her wider role as Sector Development Officer, Estelle will be delivering our support services from CVS over the coming months.

Estelle worked for many years in the refugee and asylum advocacy movement, first for Regional Asylum Activism and then for Asylum Matters, where her main role was to help people with direct experience of seeking safety, grassroots support groups, and wider partnerships to campaign for positive changes to the asylum system, particularly around asylum accommodation and access to healthcare.

More recently, Estelle has been a climate justice campaigner, mobilising communities and influencing regional and national decision makers to prioritise climate action. Drawing on her experience of community development and volunteer co-ordination, we are looking forward to working together to support the Refugees Welcome volunteer team, without whose myriad contributions we could not function.

If you would like to include something a bit more informal/ personal we could add: In her spare time Estelle loves gardening and walks in the Peak District with her family, and can often be found sculpting in her workshop in Bollington.

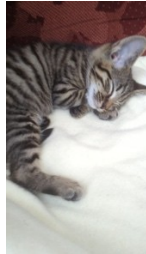
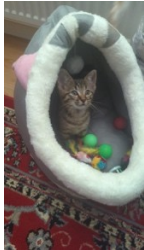




More News from our Families:

Syrian news 1. We have welcomed a new Syrian family to Macclesfield. We are delighted to say that many of our volunteers are helping them to settle in. This includes Syrians who have lived here for 7 years.

Syrian News 2. :



Welcome to Rosa and Socrates, who have come to live with one of our longstanding Syrian families.

Afghan News. Both husband and wife in the Macclesfield Afghan family have passed their driving tests. They now have four market stalls across Cheshire East selling Afghan goods.

Ukrainian News. This is one of the Ukrainians in her "Prom" dress.



What we like about Macclesfield.

Students in the Macclesfield Tuesday ESOL class have been writing about why they like living in Macclesfield.

I like Macclesfield because it is quiet, with nice people. It is safe. It is peaceful, accessible and convenient.



I like Macclesfield because it is quiet and it has nice people. It is safe and convenient and green. It is near the forest.
Ammar

I like Macclesfield, because it is a quiet small town. It is safe and it has friendly people.
Lulu

In Macclesfield there is lots to do. Hasnae

Things I like about Macclesfield – it is friendly: calm - small town. quiet. green. Beautiful. Safe.

Things I don't like about Macclesfield because it is has very much Coffee Shops

I like Macclesfield because it is has very much parks it is very big and clean it is very green. Mutton

Victor wrote that what he likes about Macclesfield is that it is safe, quiet, calm and friendly. He likes to see the old houses.

He likes to walk his dog and he likes to go running on a Saturday.

He specially likes to go walking on Teggs Nose.





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.*giftaid it*

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 nearly 9 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.

Almost three 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 and a half years 5 Afghan families 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?

7 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 operates

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 is a very experienced business man). We all work in a voluntary capacity. We work closely with a team from Cheshire East, although we no longer have a contract with them. 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 1169909

