

# Voluntary Action Arun and Chichester



# Sanctuary in Chichester - Who we are

Sanctuary in Chichester opened its doors in 2017, to **welcome** asylum seekers and refugees. It seeks to relieve suffering and poverty amongst those arriving here - from a wide variety of countries - Syria, Afghanistan, Iran and Bangladesh - to name a few. We work to promote their well-being, security, self-confidence and successful integration into local communities through four key activities:

- Befriending
- English tuition
- Sporting and cultural projects
- Pathways to Work programme.

Our values are based on equality, openness, understanding, kindness and collaboration.

# What do we do:

We have two staff who co-ordinate the work of 60+ volunteers who, with the six volunteer Trustees, run Sanctuary's support activities.

These include:

- Assisting clients with registering with schools and medical services, accessing supermarkets and furnishing living accommodation;
- Organising weekly drop-in sessions and spending regular friendship time with clients;
- Providing English tutoring and schools outreach, homework clubs and outings;
- Running a football team for unaccompanied asylum- seeking children and an art project for all the young.

# Sanctuary in Chichester - Who do we support?

84 (and ever growing) individuals (adults and children) from 11 refugee and 4 asylum seeking families

50 individuals from refugee families

9 individuals from asylum seeking families

25+ young people comprising unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, young asylum seekers and young refugees

# Why are we looking for opportunities for our members to volunteer?

- Improve their English
- Grow in cultural understanding
- Develop new friendships
- Get experience for job applications
- Improve social skills with English speakers
- Get a sense of contribution, and productivity
- Improved mental health and well-being
- A sense of structure and routine

# What do our members bring?

- ❖ Different perspectives
- ❖ Diversity to the workforce
- ❖ Diversity of cultural experiences
- ❖ Diversity of language
- ❖ Hard work and enthusiasm

# Case - British Red Cross

We have had two members of our community who have worked as volunteers with the British Red Cross shop in Chichester

They welcomed our refugees and were keen to emphasise what an asset they were to the team, many of their volunteers are facing barriers - learning difficulties need more job skills, so they found the refugees had much to offer and the language difficulties easily overcome - much of their material was already formatted in a way that is accessible to those with little English.

They also suggested that an initial 2 hour taster session can be a useful way to gauge good fit before launching into a commitment

Also they mentioned that it can be helpful to begin volunteers with poor english on roles that are initially involving less customer interaction. Eg at the moment British Red Cross shops are looking for volunteers to help in a daily slot from 4-5pm for the clean down of the shop - which also serves as a great intro to British Red Cross, with activities that are easily explained with little to no English.

Their experience has been that the sharing of cultures, recipes and experiences has been enriching in many more ways than one!

# Become a **Shop of Sanctuary**

City of Sanctuary (under whose umbrella we sit) has developed a recognition of shops that get involved supporting refugees and people seeking asylum in their communities.

Feedback from Oxfam shops.....

[We're All Oxfam Volunteers / Rydym ni gyd yn Wirfoddolwyr Oxfam - YouTube](#)

A resource pack for those wanting to become a Shop of Sanctuary is found [here](#)

And more information from the City of Sanctuary/ Shops of Sanctuary can be found [here](#)

# How we can help you.....

- Are there roles that you need help with?
- Would you like to get more perspectives and a richer more diverse workforce?
- Would you like to learn more about how to help refugees find work in our community?
- Do you need more volunteers for your shop...programmes... activities ?
- Do you like working with hard working, enthusiastic people?
- Would you like to be part of the movement to support marginalised groups and support diversity?
- If the answer to any of these questions is yes, let's get in touch!

# How can you help us?

We would love to be in touch with Volunteer Coordinators from other local charities to secure volunteer placements for our members.

If you would like to get involved in this exciting partnership: an enriching and rewarding journey of helping our members on their way to rebuild their lives:

**Please call me on 07956 938 133**

**Email me: [katydelaszlo@sanctuaryinchichester.org](mailto:katydelaszlo@sanctuaryinchichester.org)**