



Revive provides free integrated support and services, run by skilled leaders, which help bring about lasting change in the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum, enabling them to integrate and participate in the life of their new community.

Our vision is to provide high quality services to help refugee and people seeking asylum on their journey of recovery and growth.

We are delighted to share with you the inspiring stories and exciting activities at Revive. This Spring newsletter bares it all. From the launch of the Greater Manchester Refugee Support Partnership to the Refugee Response Conference jointly led by Revive, Boaz Trust and Caritas Salford, and of course Bishop John Arnold's visit to Revive.

It has been a busy period, but we have enjoyed every bit of it because we loved and believed in the difference Revive and yourself are capable of making. Please enjoy and share our stories.

- Uchenna Odenigbo

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

A 'Welcoming Communities - Churches responding to Refugees and Asylum Seekers' Conference was held on Wednesday 10th February at Salford Cathedral Centre.

The conference was organised jointly by Revive, Caritas Diocese of Salford and the Boaz Trust.

People from a range of backgrounds, faiths and ages gathered at the conference looked at how we can mobilise to make



our Parish communities a more welcoming environment for refugees and people seeking asylum.

Workshops on the day included an interfaith response entitled 'Understanding Muslims'.

'Being a Welcoming Church' workshop offered rich insights how to welcome refugees as a parish.

Boaz Trust ran a workshop on 'Hosting Asylum Seekers', in which she explored some of the issues and what to expect when accommodating asylum seekers and refugees in spare rooms.

Revive ran two workshops, *Refugee Status: the Journey to Sanctuary* and *Helping people with their asylum case*.



We considered how best parish communities could act as advocates for Refugees and campaigns to improve their welfare benefits systems by communication with their MP's, with the local councils and with the Job Centre.

Other key elements include parishes writing strong letters of support, accompaniment to tribunal hearings for those who are unrepresented and Parishes being aware of services to signpost to for those who have immigration difficulties.



Revive team at the Welcoming Communities Conference

There were 90 participants, delegates and service providers present. There was an overwhelming positive appreciation that the conference had taken place and very positive feedback on the quality of the information and workshops offered. Comments included: "I came away with ideas to take back to my Parish." "The conference has encouraged me in my work."

“...LEARN ENGLISH TO INTEGRATE,” BISHOP OF SALFORD TELLS REFUGEES AT REVIVE:

“I want you to be easily accepted and to find work, so I would encourage you to learn English - here we are terrible with language, so to learn our language will really help you,” Bishop John tells refugees and people seeking asylum he met at Revive Drop-in centre at the Spiritan Centre, Salford.

He encouraged them further to “Always hold on to hope. Life has been difficult and you’re looking for a better life with us. I wish my country was a little bit more welcoming, but I say you are welcome here.”

The service users present were mostly Arabic and Farsi speakers. A volunteer Interpreter, Alaeddin Nawat Musa, translated the Bishop’s words into Arabic.

Bishop John Arnold, Salford Diocese, visited Revive on the 17th February 2016.

He met with the staff and volunteers at both Revive’s drop in centre in Salford and the Revive offices in Beswick.

Anna Turner, the Social Work Co-ordinator at Revive, told Bishop Arnold about the daily reality of running the service, as well as some of the challenges it faces.

“Accommodation is a real problem, especially with Housing Benefit stopping for those aged under 23 years,” she explained.

“Refugees and asylum seekers find it hard to integrate here,” she went on. “There is a real culture shock when educated solicitors and doctors are placed in night shelters with people addicted to drugs or alcohol.”

Bishop Arnold was struck by the variety of nationalities and people from different religious backgrounds working together to help those most in need.

He observed that: “This is a truly cosmopolitan response to a cosmopolitan problem - this is what’s so great about Manchester. What you’re doing here is so important for the integration and empowerment of refugees. This is how I see the Church being missionary - it’s very impressive.”



Bishop Arnold addresses refugees at Revive’s drop-in centre



ENRICHMENT PROJECTS

REVIVE ACTION GROUP (RAG) - In November, RAG visited St Joseph’s RC High School in Bolton and presented a song, drama and quiz on refugees and asylum seekers in order to help students understand their experiences. The students enjoyed the experience and found it useful.

ALLOTMENT PROJECT - The therapeutic project continues to attract refugees and asylum seekers. The opportunity for fresh air, home grown produce, healthy lifestyle and meeting like-minded people is great. We have procured the necessary gardening tools and an all-weather picnic table as the Spring comes along.

WOMEN’S GROUP - Meeting every Monday afternoon, the women’s group continues to be popular, doing activities such as card making, knitting, origami, crochet and socialising.

DROP-IN CENTRE COMMUNAL ACTIVITIES' FUNDING APPEAL

We would like to put more emphasis on community-oriented communal activities at our Beswick drop-in centre in Manchester. It is essential for wellbeing that refugees and asylum seekers are able to successfully integrate into the community. Currently, we are appealing for funding for the development of community activities. This could take many forms. Games are a good example: a ping-pong or pool table, and a play area for children. Arts & crafts equipment, IT suite, tea & coffee are other ways that could enable socialising. We want the community to benefit and be part of this project. Activities such as these will help refugees and asylum seekers integrate into the community, and will help existing members of the community to better understand some of the issues that refugees and asylum seekers have experienced or are experiencing. At the moment, the centre is not able to facilitate this valuable social bonding.

GREATER MANCHESTER REFUGEE SUPPORT PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH

Refugees and people seeking asylum in the Greater Manchester will be offered more coordinated and sustained support and services through a new support partnership from the major refugee's service providers in the area.

The Greater Manchester Refugee Support Partnership (GMRSP) is a joint partnership between Refugee Action, Rainbow Haven, Revive, and the British Red Cross funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

The partnership commenced in May 2015 and it was launched on Friday 15 January 2016 at the Imperial War Museum North, Manchester.

GMRSP aims to:

- support 9,000 refugees and asylum seekers (RAS) over five years and will operate across Manchester, Oldham, Salford, Rochdale and Bolton.
- Improve positive attitudes and better understanding of RAS in the media and local communities.

The aim of the event was to raise awareness of the partnership and the opportunity to be part of the steering group and to generate positive media coverage of the many issues faced by RAS.

Highlights of the day included a performance by the Revive Action Group, an advocacy group set up in Manchester 2012, to champion the cause of refugees and people seeking asylum.



Revive Action Group performing at the Greater Manchester Refugee Support Partnership launch



The panel debate at the Partnership Launch

A personal testimony by drama group member Chenai Mudzamiri was so moving that it became the most successful tweet of the event. 134 guests attended the event including the panel debate chaired by Allan Beswick and drama group.

The event was "Informative and interesting." A guest said: "Chenai's testimony/experiences exceptionally good - making the issue real" "Great event" "Well- thought out theme for the panel" "Excellent Day" "Good panel of speakers and service user voice" "Jonathan and Rebecca spoke very well on the panel" " Dr Darling very interesting on re-framing and communities issues - would be good to learn more from him"

EMPLOYABILITY AND WELLBEING COURSES

Revive ran a six week course on employability for refugees and asylum seekers. The course took place every Thursday, with 15 service users attending. The course explored topics such as: Presentation skills, Volunteering and Community Activities in the area, Basic IT skills, CV writing and Job Applications, Job Hunting tips and Motivational sessions.

To enhance the integration goal, the course complemented group activities with one-to-one support for refugees who want to engage with their local community by volunteering, considering their interests, experience and aspirations.

Simultaneously, Revive ran a six week wellbeing course. The course took place on Tuesday mornings and 12 students attended.



Wellbeing course training at Revive

The course focused on self-care, healthy lifestyle, improving sleep, tips to improve mood and reduce anxiety, tips to improve confidence and acceptance of self, help to recognise helpful and unhelpful thoughts, techniques to be more assertive and to improve relationships, help with recognising own emotional early warning signs and a plan for managing difficult days.

The feedbacks from the course have been phenomenal. One of the beneficiaries said: “this has encouraged me and given me hope.” Many have noted how the techniques they learned is helping them live a better life, improve their mood and overall wellbeing.



Employability course training at Revive

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GOOD NEWS

- The Bishop has approved the refurbishment of St Brigid's Parish hall in order to maximise its use for the services provided to the community by both Revive and the Parish.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Most of Revive's excellent work with the asylum and refugee community is done by our outstanding army of volunteers. They come from a diverse background, serving and living Revive dream in many different areas from interpreters and enrichment projects to social work and drop-in services. We cannot express how indispensable their support is here at Revive. We are very much grateful to them!



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