Organisations providing support to those seeking asylum and refugees in Derby

and volunteering opportunities

(mapping coordinated by City of Sanctuary Derby)

There are already organisations in Derby providing support to asylum seekers and refugees. They include funded charities, faith groups, and a number of organisations solely supported by voluntary effort.

This is not an exhaustive list. If you are or know of an organisation that we should include please get in touch at https://derby.cityofsanctuary.org

Derby Refugee Forum and Advice Centre (DRAC) – a voluntary organisation with charitable status

home.btconnect.com /derby refugee forum

Open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10.00am to 4pm and Monday from 10.30am to 12.30pm.:

- Offers one to one advice sessions, with an interpreter if necessary, to asylum seekers and refugees on issues relating to: Immigration, health, (physical and mental), destitution, accommodation, Home Office support, NASS benefits, mainstream benefits, education, form filling, travel documents, employment, national insurance numbers, voluntary return, disability, social care and child care, family reunion, discrimination.
- Refers service users to appropriate legal support and statutory and voluntary support services ie solicitors, local councils, housing associations, GPs and dentists, Red Cross and local and national charities.
- Liaises with the Home Office to ensure change in circumstances and other issues are followed up.
- Liaises, usually by phone, with the DWP and local Jobcentres to support the transition from asylum seeker to refugee status and to ensure benefit entitlements are met.
- Provides free English classes on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday to sanctuary seekers.
- Provides basic food parcels for those who are destitute and general food for all when available.
- Offers classes and workshops on a variety of issues: eg creative writing, dance, first aid, flower arranging, fitness............
- Arranges trips and outings to museums, parks, historic towns, football, Cathedrals and places of worship......
- Distributes clothes, shoes, bed linen, kitchen equipment when available.
- Encourages asylum seekers and refugees to become part of the volunteering team.

Offers a warm welcome, cups of tea and coffee, TV and a place to chat

British Red Cross Refugee Support Derby  www.redcross.org.uk

“The British Red Cross helps people in crisis, whoever and wherever they are.” The BRC is part of a global voluntary network, responding to conflicts, natural disasters and individual emergencies.

It enables vulnerable people in the UK and abroad to prepare for and withstand emergencies in their own communities. And when the crisis is over, it helps them to recover and move on with their lives. As part of this, the British Red Cross has a long history of supporting people who are seeking sanctuary in UK and have provided support and advice to asylum seekers and refugees in Derby for over the past 5 years. We hold a drop-in advice session every Wednesday morning from 10am to 12noon at St. Peters Centre, Derby, DE1 1SN and hold appointments every day at our BRC office, excluding Fridays and weekends.
The Bosnia–Herzegovina Community Association
bihcommderby@hotmail.com

Our mission is to provide support and a confidential service to alleviate the effects of poverty and distress to refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and from the Former Yugoslavia, regardless of their ethnic origin and background. We believe that all refugees have the right to live in a just and equal society, and aim to achieve this by providing information, support, training and educational opportunity for all of them.

The Derby Bosnia-Herzegovina Community Association was established in January 1995 and was registered as a Charity in 1998. The Derby Refugee Forum and Advice Centre (DRAC) was established in 2000, registered as a Charity later, and has worked from premises of Bosnian Community ever since.

From the beginning the DBHCA has opened its services to the community, focusing its services on the people from the Former Yugoslavia. The Bosnia & Herzegovina Centre is run by the executive committee of the Derby Bosnia-Herzegovina Community Association. It is the only centre of this kind offering advice and information in the Bosnian/Serb/Croat language in the Derby City and East Midlands area. There are many services available to those seeking asylum and refugees via the Derby Refugee Forum and Advice Centre. We also give help to small new community ethnic groups, and offer many other services from our "One Stop Shop" volunteers. We are also members of the Bosnia-Herzegovina UK Network who operate nationally.

Upbeat Communities www.upbeatcommunities.org

Upbeat communities was established in 2005 and exists to help refugees settle and rebuild their lives in the UK. We want to see strangers become neighbours. We do this through three main areas of work:

Welcome: Providing friendship, support and community to refugees newly arrived in the UK
Empowerment: Helping refugees to rebuild their lives through skills training and education
Awareness: Building understanding about refugee issues with the wider community and training others to respond.

We are currently delivering the following programmes:

- Welcome Boxes. Trained volunteers deliver welcome boxes to newly arrived refugees and help them settle into the local community and access the services they need. We visits schools and community groups to raise awareness of the challenges faced by refugees.
- Free English lessons – we provide 6 free classes a week to refugees and asylum seekers
- Activities as part of the Survive and Thrive project (delivered with the British Red Cross and Multifaith Centre). These include volunteering and employment skills, sports and cooking activities. Visits to free facilities in the city, like museums and library. Many local Derby people are involved in volunteering eg cooking, transport, ESOL support etc.
- A creative group teaching sewing and jewellery for women to give them skills and confidence. These are sold at local craft markets.
- 2 houses for refugees when they have to move on from home office accommodation. We provide support to help them to move on with their lives.
- Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement. Outreach into Derbyshire to provide resettlement support to 50 vulnerable Syrian refugees in family groups.

The Hope Centre Derby www.hopecentrederby.co.uk

The Hope Centre in Derby offers support to people in need including those seeking sanctuary in 4 areas –

- Food bank - 3 day food parcel via referrals, mainly from Red Cross, DRAC, Upbeat Communities
- Hope Store- Clothes, toiletries, household & electrical items via referrals and appointments only
- Moving Home – when someone gets right to remain we can support in accessing furniture and other items through schemes available
- Safe & friendly environment – place where they can get refreshments and have someone to talk to socially or about issues
The Derby City Mission Jubilee Project [http://www.derbycitymission.org.uk/#/projects/jubilee-project] offers FREE debt advice at walk-in, no appointment clinics held at various locations across the city. Food parcels are also available to those in particular financial need.

Clinic opening times All clinics are walk-in, no appointment needed

Tuesdays 10:15am-12:15pm St Peter’s Church, St Peter’s Street, City Centre
Wednesdays 10am-12 noon St Augustine’s Church, Upperdale Road
Thursdays 12 noon-1:30pm Davenport Rd Evangelical Church, Osmaston

Derby Churches Night Shelter [http://www.derbycitymission.org.uk/#/projects/night-shelter]

Working together to meet the urgent need for safe overnight accommodation for homeless people in Derby, seven church venues in or near the city centre open one night a week every day from December 1st to March 31st. Volunteers provide a warm welcome and substantial meal for 35 guests. Paid overnight staff then take over as guests sleep on camp beds in the different churches.

Derby Central library holds a weekly drop in reading group to provide informal support for reading, writing and conversation skills. All adults welcome. [http://www.derby.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/libraries/learning-in-libraries/]

City of Sanctuary Derby

City of Sanctuary Derby is part of the national City of Sanctuary network. It is a grass roots umbrella group supporting the network of refugee and asylum seeker organisations across the city to create a climate of hospitality and welcome for asylum seekers and refugees in Derby and around. It aims to make Derby a safe and welcoming city especially for those who seek sanctuary from war and persecution here. Wherever refugees go we want them to feel safe and find people who will welcome them.

Our aims are to
• develop a culture of welcome across the city by working with various voluntary and statutory groups, including community groups, schools, local politicians, health care organisations, the arts and faith communities.
• organize awareness raising activities in the community around the experience of those seeking asylum. In 2016 as an umbrella group we coordinated the events for Refugee Week in the city and are currently planning for 2017
• invite groups, organisations and individuals to pledge support for our aims in developing a culture of welcome in the city. For example, Derby museum and library have already pledged support and Derby Cathedral has become a Cathedral of Sanctuary.

The Multi-Faith Centre at the University of Derby (MFC) [www.multifaithcentre.org]

exists to promote mutual understanding between people of different faiths/beliefs and none and to build respect between people as fellow human beings across cultures.

The MFC is working in partnership with the British Red Cross and Upbeat Communities on a four year Big Lottery Fund funded project called ‘Survive and Thrive’. As part of this project the MFC is delivering awareness raising and advocacy around refugee and asylum seeker issues. This includes but is not limited to awareness raising events, organisational training and action planning, as well as engagement with local services, community groups and politicians. A core part of the work the MFC is undertaking is facilitating a forum - “Derby Voices Forum“- for refugees and asylum seekers with the aim of their voices being heard on various platforms. Overall the MFC is seeking to achieve an increase in opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to belong and find purpose within the community.

The Derby War and Refugees Forum

The Derby War and Refugees Forum emerged from a meeting in May 2016 organised “because the refugee crisis is probably the most pressing event of the moment”. Twenty-six people from 10 organisations attended; there was an
opportunity for information-sharing and expression of concern about the refugee crisis and its causes and the interlocking work of each organisation.

There have been a number of meetings since leading to a focus for the Derby War and Refugees forum: to run activities and events about asylum and refugee issues with input from local refugee support organisations and those seeking sanctuary in Derby, including wider political campaigning on the issues than is possible for each organisation, many of which have charitable status.

The War and Refugees forum organised an event at the Council House, Derby on Friday, 14th October which saw a distinguished panel of local and national politicians, a specialist on the impact of conflict on children, together with speakers for City of Sanctuary and the Derby Refugee Advice Centre discuss the issues of conflict, refugees and resettlement in response to questions from a capacity audience.

This will be followed up with a meeting with Purjinder Gill from Derby CC and Cllr Asaf Afzal to explore our desire for Derby to become an officially-recognised City of Sanctuary.

Derby Student Action for Refugees (STAR)  www.star-network.org.uk

Derby Student Action for Refugees has teamed up with the National STAR network to welcome refugees to the UK. The aims of the society are to

- coordinate students and local organisations for volunteering opportunities
- campaign to improve the lives of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK
- raise awareness and educate the community about the plight of refugees

Derbyshire Refugee Solidarity

Formed in 2015 as a practical response to the refugee humanitarian crisis, DRS organises local donations of appropriate clothing, footwear, sleeping bags, food etc to provide “vital humanitarian assistance and aid to refugees fleeing and living in the most appalling of conditions” in camps in Northern France, Syria and Greece