

# NEWSLETTER

MARCH '25

City of Sanctuary is a national organisation of support groups throughout the UK making their cities, towns, schools and organisations places of welcome and hospitality for people seeking safety from persecution and war. If you would like to volunteer with the Barnsley group, please email [info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org)



## Welcome

Welcome to the spring '25 edition of the Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary newsletter! Here you can find the latest information on services and support available for asylum seekers and refugees across Barnsley.

This time we have a bumper edition packed full of stories about those seeking sanctuary and the exciting developments in Barnsley. Our main theme is about the role of sports and the arts in helping to build understanding, connections and friendships across communities.

We also celebrate the first school in Barnsley to achieve a national School of Sanctuary Award, a major achievement.

And we hear from some of the volunteers who are helping the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project go from strength to strength, teaching and learning the skills of bike recycling.

Turn to the centre pages and you'll find a summary of highlights from recent months, illustrating the good will of people across Barnsley to ensure a warm welcome for newcomers. There is a sense of energy and momentum across the board.

Last but not least, we feature a range of events – from free exhibitions to the much loved Barnsley Book Festival – as well as a selection of volunteering opportunities – from the women's group, to the bike project to the food hub.

Please dip in, enjoy and share this newsletter with friends and colleagues. To get in touch with your feedback and any ideas for contributions, contact us at: [info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org)

Thank you!

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## Your Refugee Council in Barnsley, Here to Help!

Wellington House  
36 Wellington Street, Barnsley S70 1WA  
Open 10.00am - 2.00pm Monday to Thursday  
01226 320111

**Abdel Mohamed**

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# Celebrating Barnsley's First School of Sanctuary

St John the Baptist Primary School in Penistone has become the first school in Barnsley to gain a national School of Sanctuary Award. The award is given for good practice in fostering a culture of welcome and belonging at school for children seeking safety in the UK. It comes from the City of Sanctuary UK movement which coordinates and supports networks of welcome across the UK for those fleeing war and persecution.

Headteacher, Susie Arnold, said, "We are delighted to have achieved the School of Sanctuary award, which reflects the culture and ethos of our school. Our vision is to enable each and every child to become the best version of themselves, which starts with welcome and a sense of belonging. The application process affirmed what we were already doing and helped us to build on good practice."

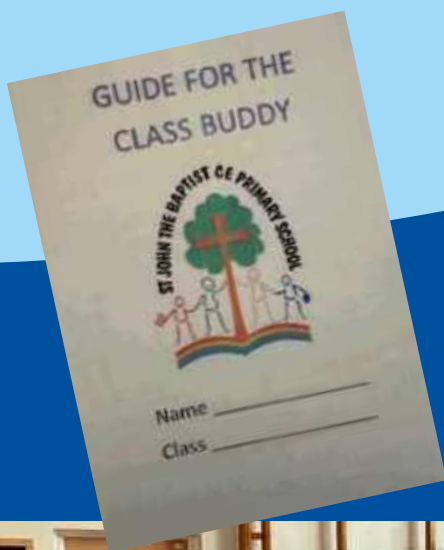
To become a School of Sanctuary, a school must review and demonstrate good practice in three key areas:

**Learning** - helping students, staff and the wider community to learn about what it means to seek sanctuary and the issues around migration.

**Embedding** - committing to create a safe and inclusive culture of welcome that will benefit everybody.

**Sharing** - going the extra mile to share values and activities with local communities and working collaboratively to build and promote a wider culture of welcome.

A lot of St John's existing practice already fitted with this model. For example, every school year begins with a Diversity week which includes an assembly in which asylum seekers share their stories and offer a question-and-answer session. Throughout the school year, pupils are taught about different cultures and religions, and displays on corridors reflect this. Diversity and inclusion are key considerations when choosing books for the curriculum and in the choice of topics and examples across the curriculum. Staff and governors are briefed and trained, and the school has a designated School of Sanctuary Lead, as well as strong links with the local Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group and the Barnsley City of Sanctuary Group.



The school has also introduced new practices, including an enhanced welcome and induction process for new starters, which has been shaped with input from the School Parliament. Deputy Head, Ann Nixon, explained, "When we have new starters, a child from the School Parliament greets them and shows them around the school. As part of a new buddy system, they then check in with the pupil after two weeks and every month after that. We have also introduced a welcome pack to give new starters everything they need to start feeling settled.

"We have two pupils who recently joined us at St John's from Afghanistan. They have quickly settled into their new school and new life and have expressed how welcome and happy they feel in our school."

St John's was supported in reviewing and developing their practice by Fran Postlethwaite, a Local Lead for Schools of Sanctuary in Barnsley who has been trained by the national organisation. Fran's role is to work with schools in the area free of charge to advise and guide on the audit and application process: "I am available to help other Barnsley schools through the School of Sanctuary application process, though most of the work needs to be done by a team within the school. The process typically takes a full academic year. Our aim is to create a network of Schools of Sanctuary across Barnsley who can share experiences, resources and ideas."

To contact the Local Lead for Schools of Sanctuary in Barnsley, email: [Fran.pos10@gmail.com](mailto:Fran.pos10@gmail.com)  
For information on the School of Sanctuary award, visit: <https://schools.cityofsanctuary.org>

*Ann Dixon (left) with Susie Arnold (right)  
with the School of Sanctuary Certificate*



# Sports & Performing Arts Feature

In this edition, we are focusing on the role of sports and the arts in helping asylum seekers and refugees to engage with the community, as well as to improve their health and wellbeing. It is often said that sports and arts can help people from different cultures to transcend barriers and forge connections. The stories that follow speak for themselves. Covering football, boxing and performing arts, they illustrate not only the talent of the individuals concerned but also relationships developed, friendships gained, and contributions made to the wider community. We start with an exciting new initiative by Barnsley Football Club which has been enthusiastically taken up by some of those seeking sanctuary...

## Introducing Reds Unite

Barnsley FC Community Trust recently launched 'Reds Unite', a programme to promote participation in football by Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities in Barnsley. Funded through the Premier League Fans Fund, the programme seeks to break down barriers, promote diversity, and provide greater opportunities for under represented groups in the sport.

The initiative is offering a range of activities, including structured training sessions, community engagement workshops, and mentorship opportunities with experienced coaches and professionals. The aim is to:

- Encourage greater participation in football among Black, Asian, and ethnic minority groups.
- Provide a safe and inclusive space for individuals of all skill levels.
- Strengthen community cohesion through the power of sport.

"We are excited to launch 'Reds Unite' as part of our commitment to making football accessible to everyone," said Inclusion Officer, Jake Batty, at Barnsley FC Community Trust. "We believe that by breaking down barriers and creating opportunities, we can inspire more people to get involved in the sport and feel a sense of belonging within the football community."

The programme is being delivered in partnership with local community organisations, and football development initiatives to ensure it reaches as many people as possible. Sessions take place every Monday evening at Barnsley FC Community Trust (see next page).

"A great first kick around at Reds Unite yesterday"

"Yesterday was lively and the sessions were great. Thanks to everyone for putting this together for us"

Photo from the launch event



# Sports & Performing Arts Feature



**BARNSELY FC**  
COMMUNITY TRUST



Premier League  
Fans Fund

# REDS UNITE

Uniting Through Football: Empowering Black, Asian, and  
Minority Ethnic Communities

LOFTHOUSE

15

parliament

Monday's 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Ages 16+

Football session, socialising and refreshments

Indoor Training Centre, Grove Street, Barnsley, S71 1ET

Contact [Jake.Batty@barnsleyfc.co.uk](mailto:Jake.Batty@barnsleyfc.co.uk) for more information

## From Futsal in Afghanistan to First Team Football in Barnsley

**The footballing career of seventeen-year-old Behzad Hussaini has already come on leaps and bounds since arriving in the UK. Now he is in the Barnsley College FC Under 19s and the Penistone Church FC Under 18s and his prospects are good.**



Behzad has already been on a long journey to get to this point, and football has been the key to starting a new life. Born in Afghanistan, he started playing Futsal aged 12 because there are very few football pitches in Afghanistan. Futsal is an indoor version of football played on a hardcourt with five players a side. It was good training, learning the basics for two years, then he had to take a year out with Osgood-Schlatter disease – a painful swelling and inflammation of a tendon below the knee. His family moved to Pakistan where Behzad joined a football academy.

In January 2024, the family came to the UK and was sent to Barnsley. Initially, Behzad was unable to join a team, but he was determined to keep up his training in order to improve: “I said to myself, 'I don't have a team, what can I do to get into a team?' So, I decided to train. I found a football pitch near our house in Penistone and every morning, waking at five or six o'clock, I went to the pitch and trained on my own. In those six months training on my own I met people who said I was good, and they helped me with contacts.”

Behzad started playing for The Ship FC and was able to join a Barnsley College football team when he began studying there. He quickly progressed from the second to the first team, which is part of the Barnsley College Football Academy, and now relishes the opportunity to play away games at places like Newcastle and Leeds in the English Colleges FA (ECFA) Premier League.

The manager of the College team also linked Behzad up with Penistone Church FC Under 18s, a football club with a long history where it is said that the first rules of association football were invented.

Behzad has made many friends through football. He says: “Football has helped me to gain friends and confidence and I've been able to get out and about. It's been good just doing something, going somewhere, meeting new people and making connections.”

Now he is looking to progress even further. His current aim in the College team is to get more minutes and opportunities in games. There are a lot of good players, so it is very competitive. Behzad mainly plays centre midfield, winger and sometimes as a striker. His dream is to get into the Barnsley Football Academy full time.



## From Brazil to Barnsley with Stories & Song

Originally from Brazil, Ruth Mariana is a professional actor, singer and author now living in Barnsley with her three sons aged 15, 14 and nine. Ruth left Brazil in December 2022 to escape domestic violence and is seeking asylum in the UK, eager to contribute to her new community using her performing talents. She likes Barnsley very much: "It's just the right size and very quiet. I feel safe here and I'm happy that my sons are also safe and getting a good education."

For Ruth, singing is a wonderful way to connect with people. She has already contributed to several events in Barnsley involving other asylum seekers and refugees. Her ambition is to use music, storytelling and performance to raise awareness about the challenges that asylum seekers and refugees face:

"Through my performances, I want to shine a light on the struggles of adapting to life in a new country and the barriers to integration. I think storytelling, music and performance can foster understanding and compassion for asylum seekers and refugees, highlighting the obstacles they face and the resilience they have to demonstrate."

Full of ideas and enthusiasm, Ruth has plans to develop a performance that could go on tour. She also has a vision for a music school where asylum seekers and refugees can learn music and then perform in care homes and hospitals. For now, she leads a multicultural music band with members from Angola, Brazil, the UK, Congo and Iraq. Together, the band performs songs in a variety of languages from different cultures, aiming to celebrate diversity and bring communities closer.

Ruth also wants to support those who've experienced domestic violence and to raise awareness in young people, in particular: "As a survivor of domestic violence, I am deeply committed to supporting women who face similar challenges. I hope to create opportunities for open conversations and provide a platform for victims to feel heard and supported."

## Sporting Chances for the Men's Support Group

Sport and sport-related activities have become an important part of the support and social group for men seeking sanctuary in Barnsley. The group, which is led by former teacher Andy Atkinson in collaboration with the Refugee Council, meets every Tuesday at the Quaker Buildings (2a Western Street, S70 2BP) from 12.30-2.00pm. Through the group, members have been introduced to cricket, football, boxing, and cycling, and it's made a huge difference, providing a catalyst for building bonds and networking, as well as exercise and wellbeing.

**Cricket** – Andy has linked members to the Barnsley Cricket Club at Shaw Lane. Saif, Haroon and Aimal are now using the indoor training facilities at Outwood Academy, Shafton, with the support of Barnsley and Woolley Cricket Club. The men get a lift from town and are made to feel warmly welcomed.

**Football** – members of the group have been training at Oakwell and have now joined the Reds Unite football programme featured above (see pages 4 and 5).



Session at Barnsley FC



The local Bike Works Team showing how to fix punctures, gears and safety check bikes.

**Boxing** – initial tuition in Barnsley facilitated through the group revealed to one member, a 24-year-old Afghan, that he had real talent and a passion for boxing. Now granted leave to remain and living in Sheffield, he is joining the Sheffield Boxing Centre to develop his skills.

**Cycling** – a lot of members have recycled bikes from the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project and have been learning how to maintain them. Some of the men have become regular contributors to the workshop where the pre-loved bikes are checked, repaired and cleaned before being issued to those who need them (see pages 18 & 19). Many are also joining in monthly bike rides organised by the project team (see page 20).

### In other news...

**English courses** – Andy has helped the men to access English courses around Barnsley, and the group meetings and activities have offered valuable opportunities to practise English, chatting over a cuppa.

## Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Men's Group

Come along to our men's group to make friends, take part in activities, improve your English, get support & advice.

Every Tuesday 12:30pm - 1:30pm  
The Quakers Building, 2a Western Street, Barnsley S70 2BP

To join, please contact Abdel Mohamed from the Refugee Council  
Mobile: 07917 135843  
or email [abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk](mailto:abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk)



# Sports & Performing Arts Feature



## Employability Success

Andy signposted members of the group to an Employability course at Fareshare Yorkshire, the charity that stops food from going to waste. As a result, Mohamed, a former bus and coach driver from Iran featured in our previous newsletter, has gained full-time employment as a fork lift truck driver.

**'Mo has been a great addition to the Leeds Operations Team.**

**His flexibility has been invaluable over the last 6 weeks. Mo has embraced the frequent change of priorities.**

**This has included working across the 3 sites driving vans picking up produce from suppliers etc.'**

Extract from Mohamed's first formal review



## Visits...

the group has been on a wide range of trips to Elsecar Heritage, Barnsley Archives and Library, Cooper Art Gallery and Yorkshire Sculpture Park.



## An Enthusiasm for Boxing that Started in Iraq

Boxing enthusiast, Evar, is studying Business Management at York St John University after progressing from Barnsley College. His love of boxing started whilst at school in Iraq and developed in Barnsley with support from Jonny's Gym. During the Covid pandemic, he trained every day, inspired by watching videos of Muhammad Ali. Now, he fights competitively at middle weight and has already won two fights.

Evar believes boxing has made him resilient and helped him to build relationships in his new home in the UK: "You need discipline. Boxing has helped me to stand on my own feet and made me mentally stronger. My journey from Iraq to the UK was awful, disastrous, stressful and sad. I was only 15 when I moved here. People at the gym appreciated what I'd been through, and they respected me for being resilient."

Evar and his older brother Aland were put onto a lorry in Iraq by their political-activist parents to keep them safe from violence. Eventually they emerged from the lorry at the Trowell Service station on the M1, knowing nothing of where they were. Evar says, "When I trained in the gym, people would ask me about my life, and I'd tell them about my story. They'd be amazed and they'd want to help me. I made many friends at the gym. I also developed my English. Boxing is a very communicative sport, so I had to learn a lot of words and I had to speak to people."

Determination and a commitment to volunteering have been the hallmarks of Evar's approach. So much so that he was a finalist for a national award as Young Student of the Year 2020/21 whilst studying at Barnsley College. In addition to gaining the results and skills he needed to progress to university, he also volunteered as a translator in a local community group and led a weekly fitness class to help refugees meet each other, make friends and gain confidence

Looking ahead, Evar is hoping for a career in business and boxing: "I think I can do both. One will motivate me to do the other. I've always been interested in business because it's such a creative subject. You can have your own ideas and you can make a living from it. But boxing is also something I enjoy and I'm good at, so I want to continue as far as I can."



*"Chasing Two Hares"  
(Badoma Bayriany)"*



March 2025

St Andrew's Church, Penistone

2pm to 6pm

This presentation by the  
Ukrainian British Friendship  
Group  
encourages us to see and feel,  
to taste and understand, the  
Culture of this amazing  
country. Come and get involved  
and join the fun.  
**FREE ENTRANCE**

Penistone Arts Week  
and  
the Penistone Refugee Group  
are proud to support this event

# Sports & Performing Arts Feature

## From War-torn Ukraine to Life-Enhancing Performances in Yorkshire

On 22 March 2025 the Ukrainian British Friendship Group and the Ukrainian Scouting Organisation PLAST from Huddersfield will perform 'Chasing Two Hares' at the Penistone Arts Week. The play is translated into English from a very famous Ukrainian play.

After the performance, there will be Ukrainian-themed food and drink, followed by crafts for children and adults, then a masterclass in song and dance focused on Stefania, the Ukrainian song that won the Eurovision Song Contest in 2023.

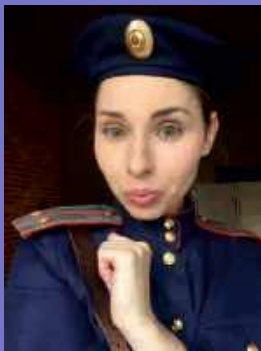
Natalia Mirkun, the professional singer, dancer and actress from Ukraine, who has led the production of 'Chasing Two Hares', believes that the arts can help to build relationships across cultural divides: "Music and art break down all barriers because all art is about our soul. It touches very deep inside us."

Natalia comes from the town of Slavutych in northern Ukraine. The town was built shortly after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986 to provide a safe place for those who had been forced to abandon their homes. Slavutych was invaded by Russian soldiers in March 2022, causing great hardships. Eventually the Russians were driven back and Natalia was freed, but because of the war there were no jobs in Ukraine for those in performing arts.

On stage with musician and record producer Dr Alban



A film career spanning 14 movies



Happy times with daughter Emilia



Scenes from the Russian invasion of Slavutych



BEFORE THE WAR

DURING THE WAR

# Sports & Performing Arts Feature

Natalia had a friend in England with a contact, Sarah Woods, who found sponsors for creative people from Ukraine to find sanctuary. Sarah found sponsors for Natalia, Leanne and Ian Cook, who lived in Slaithwaite, Huddersfield, so Natalia arrived in the UK with her five-year-old daughter Emilia on 8th August 2022: "The family were very kind and relaxed. It was a new experience for me as I'd never lived abroad before. They became my real new family.

Not long after I arrived here, we heard that Russia was invading again in the same position. I was asked to find a place for another mother with three children, so we moved to live together in a rented house. I have since become a sponsor for a Ukrainian soldier who arrived here after suffering severe injuries and we now live together."

To connect with other Ukrainians, Natalia started offering classes to bring children and adults together and overcome isolation. That was the beginning of the Ukrainian British Friendship Group: "We started with dance, drama, Ukrainian and English language classes. My sponsor, Leanne, introduced me to her friend Rebecca Winwood from Lawrence Batley Theatre and she offered me space to run classes every Saturday. We now have around 40 participants. For children, we offer drama, dance, drawing, vocal, IT, language skills and the Ukrainian Scouting Organisation PLAST. For parents, we provide Pilates, dance, drama, singing and women's wellbeing. We also run lots of events and festivals.

"It's so nice to see people form new friendships and start to feel differently about themselves. To see people working together and connecting who were depressed and feeling alone."



Cooking in the streets



Distributing aid



Drawing by candlelight without electricity



The Ukrainian British Friendship Group and Ukrainian Scouts from PLAST



SANCTUARY IN THE UK

## Official opening of the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project



Enver Solomon (L) with Ed Clancy (R)



Founder Alex Simon (R) with Ed, Enver & volunteers

In November, the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project workshop was officially launched by Enver Solomon, Chief Executive of the Refugee Council, and Ed Clancy OBE, Olympic champion and Active Travel Commissioner for South Yorkshire. The workshop is funded by a National Lottery Community Fund Grant and is now home to a growing team of volunteers who collect and repair pre-loved bikes to pass on to asylum seekers and refugees who need affordable transport. The celebration of the workshop was an opportunity to thank Alex Simon, volunteer founder of the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project, for his vision, skills and commitment in getting the project to the point where it has gained national recognition.



## Christmas

### fun at the Women's Refugee and Asylum Seekers Support Group

The annual Christmas Party at the Barnsley Women's Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group attracted a big turnout. The group is managed by the Refugee Council. Once again, David Hawkins, Chair of the Penistone Support Group, and John Lister provided music, accompanied by professional singer, Ruth Mariana, from Brazil. Volunteer Steve Harrison turned into Father Christmas for the morning and was a huge hit with the children, gaining the most selfie requests of the day. Abdel Mohamed, Barnsley Refugee Advice Project Manager, said, "I want to thank all the volunteers for their wonderful support and efforts, including Anna Blair, Genna Prior and Carol Burkinshaw, who helped to organise the party. It was a great occasion with fantastic music and wonderful performances."



### Carol singing at Tesco raised more than a smile

A big thank you to those who turned out for carol singing at Tesco's store in Penistone. The festive singers raised £123.48, donating £62 to the Penistone Refugee and Asylum Seeker Group and £62 for starter packs.

## New fans for Paddington

In December, a group of 30 parents and children from families seeking sanctuary in Barnsley enjoyed a trip to see Paddington in Peru at the Paramount Cinema in Penistone. The group was supported by volunteers from the Penistone Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group. Great fun was had by all, as David Hawkins, Chair of the Penistone Group, explained: "It was a lovely occasion in every sense, with lots of laughter and conversation, and the joy of Paddington Bear. A big thank you to our volunteers who supported the trip and especially to Penistone Paramount and the Penistone Town Council for supporting the event."



## A great celebration of communities

Over 100 people attended the Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary family event 'Celebrating Our Communities' on Saturday 30th November 2024 at St George's Church Hall, with food, live music, craft activities, stalls and workshops. Opened by Cllr Wendy Cain, Barnsley Council's Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities, the fun afternoon was organised in partnership with Barnsley Stand Up to Racism and the Refugee Council to support refugees and asylum seekers and bring people together to overcome barriers.



## WayFinders Project for new arrivals

In Autumn 2024, two groups of local newcomers to Barnsley and Penistone participated in the Wayfinders Project, commissioned by Barnsley Libraries as part of the government's Know Your Neighbourhood scheme. Wayfinding is a creative practice that utilises walking trails, artistic maps, and creative text and audio to help people to explore their surroundings. The groups in Barnsley and Penistone were invited to explore trails, encounter architectural and other landmarks and their histories, and to find and record their own emerging 'sense of place'. They were then invited to 'map' those places for themselves using their own creative tools such as photography and collage, deepening their engagement with their new locality, and forging new connections and relationships.



# DIGITAL SUPPORT AT YOUR LOCAL CITIZENS ADVICE



**Are you struggling to get online due to lack of skills, equipment or data, or do you know someone who is? Could you do with some help with your smart phone or tablet, how to set up an email, completing online application forms or using the NHS app? Citizens Advice Barnsley can help!**

## DIGITAL ADVICE APPOINTMENTS

Book a one-to-one appointment with our Digital Skills Coach! We can help you get online, and learn how to get the most from your device.



## GET CONNECTED

Getting online can be expensive. Speak to us about reducing your internet costs and get help accessing free mobile data and technology\*

\*eligibility criteria applies

1



## CONNECT AND LEARN DIGITAL SKILLS COURSES

Whether you're at the start of your online journey or looking to enhance your digital skills and confidence, these back-to-basics sessions will help you to achieve your online goals.

2

3

**To book, scan the QR code or call us on: 01226 664482**



## Multi-Agency Drop-in for Barnsley's Migrant Communities

**Every Wednesday 12.30pm - 2.30pm**

**Hope House, Blucher Street, Barnsley S70 1AP**

**Information, Support and advice on:** migration, housing, work and benefits, health and wellbeing, education, volunteering, social activities, community groups, safety, children and youth services, Barnsley information, council services and more.

**Free Hairdressing, Drinks & Snacks, Foodbank Referrals & Children's Activities  
Everyone Welcome!**





## EAT GOOD FEEL GOOD

### **Eat Good Feel Good Barnsley**

If you're looking for affordable food close to you, there are 8 Good Food Pantries located around Barnsley, each designed to serve the local community. They provide sustainable and affordable food and are open to all people who live in the local area. You simply pay a small weekly fee (between £3 and £5 per shop) and in exchange you get to choose up to 4 times that value of food.



### **Royston provided by Royston Friends Association**

- Address: Manor Court Community Centre, West End Avenue, Royston, S71 4LN.
- Opening times: Friday 10.30am to 12pm.

### **Education, Learning Support Hub (ELSH)**

Serving Barnsley's migrant community.

- Address: First Floor, 29 Wellington Street, Barnsley, S70 1SW.
- Opening times: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am - 3pm and Wednesdays 9am - 12pm.

### **Crossroads**

- Address: Crossroads Cafe, 18 Barugh Green Road, Higham, Barnsley, S75 1JT.
- Opening times: Wednesdays 10.30am to 3.30pm and Thursdays 11am to 3pm.

### **St George's Church**

- Address: St Georges Church, York Street, Barnsley S70 1BD.
- Opening times: Thursdays 12pm to 2pm.

### **Priory Centre provided by BetaLives Priory Centre**

- Address: Priory Campus, Pontefract Road, Barnsley S71 5PN.
- Opening times: Fridays 10.30am to 12.30pm.

### **Darfield Community Centre provided by BetaLives**

- Address: 157 Darfield Rd, Cudworth, Barnsley S72 8RX.
- Opening times: Mondays 1pm to 3pm.

### **Barnsley Recovery Connections in partnership with Barnsley Recovery Steps**

Supporting the recovery community and those affected by alcohol or drug related issues:

- Address: McLintocks Recovery Hub (Crookes Street entrance), off Summer Lane, Barnsley, S70 2NZ.
- Opening times: Tuesday and Wednesday 12.30pm to 3.30pm.

### **Honeywell Community Centre provided by North Area Council**

- Address: Honeywell Community Centre, 59 Honeywell Street, Barnsley, S71 1PZ.
- Opening times: Wednesday 12pm to 2pm.

### **Community Shop on the Go**

This is our fantastic mobile food provision, run in partnership with the Community Shop. It takes great fresh fruit and veg to locations where it's needed and sells it at a fraction of the usual cost.

You can mix and match:

Small bag - six items for £3

Large bag - 12 items for £5

Visit [Community Shop on the Go on Facebook](#) for updates on the dates, times and venues.


More details on how to find local, low cost, good quality food in your area can be found at <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/healthy-living/eat-good-feel-good/>

# Barnsley Refugee Bike Project Gains New Recruits

New volunteers have been joining the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project, which has expanded into a fully-equipped town centre workshop. Led by volunteer cycling enthusiast Alex Simon, the project recycles pre-loved bikes from all over Barnsley and repurposes them for asylum seekers and refugees. Now the recipients of the bikes are also helping to recycle them and learn new skills in the process.

Most of these new recruits come from the Men's Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group coordinated by the Refugee Council. Group leader, volunteer Andy Atkinson, comments that the bike project has made a big difference: "It's good to see the guys making the Saturday morning bike workshop part of their routine and giving up their time to help Alex and the team. They have all learnt new skills, and the workshop has also helped them to improve their English speaking and listening skills, so their confidence has blossomed. They enjoy the friendly atmosphere and the kind people who teach them about the bikes."

The new recruits are learning from a volunteer team of top mechanics like Malcolm Morris (see next page) who joined Alex to set up and run the workshop, which is funded by a National Lottery Community Fund Grant. So far, over 500 bikes have been recycled.



"It's great to have the Saturday morning workshop as part of my routine. It's fun and I like to be a help. One day I will get a job and I can ask for a reference."  
Mohammed

"I have made new friends at the workshop."  
Mohamedkadar

"I learn more English talking with the guys at the workshop."  
Hared

"I can help others and be better organised. I can now look after my bike better."  
Raz

"I have learnt new skills that will help me in the future."  
Mohamed



Have a bike to donate? Contact:  
[Penistonebikedonations@outlook.com](mailto:Penistonebikedonations@outlook.com)

Need a bike? Contact:  
[Abdel.Mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk](mailto:Abdel.Mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk)

# Volunteer Profile: Malcolm Morris



*Malcolm has been cycling for over 50 years, including cycling to work in London traffic. During the Covid lockdown his motivation grew for cycling and its benefits for mental health. He went on to become a certified ride leader and a qualified bike technician to consolidate his experience and to start volunteering his time and skill to mend bikes and encourage people to be active on bikes in the Wakefield Area.*

*Malcolm moved to Barnsley in the summer of 2024 and, by chance, met Alex Simon, leader of the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project, on a bike ride. He was invited down to the bike repair workshop to “have a look” and has been recycling bikes there ever since. Malcolm comments:*

*“I’m very pleased to be part of the team that breathes some life into so many old bikes for their new recipients. Cycling is important not only as a means of transport but also for improving our physical and mental health. Recycling these bikes and sharing bike maintenance skills makes economic and environmental sense.”*



*Interested in volunteering for the bike recycling workshop?  
No prior bike skills needed, you can learn at the workshop. Everyone welcome.  
To find out more, contact project leader  
Alex Simon on: [Penistonebikedonations@outlook.com](mailto:Penistonebikedonations@outlook.com)*

# Welcome Ways

**Volunteer led rides on the Trans Pennine Trail for asylum seekers, refugees and others in need of support**

**Have you cycled along the Trans Pennine Trail lately?**

**If you have, you'll have noticed what a beautiful place it is to walk or cycle. All the more important, then, to enable as many people as possible to enjoy this local treasure, especially those who might struggle to get there.**

**As secretary of the Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary, Frank Parnham was aware that asylum seekers and refugees are often trapped by their situation – lack of money and lack of transport – so cannot access places like the Trans Pennine Trail. He contacted Alex Simon, founder of the Barnsley Refugee Bike Project, which recycles discarded bikes and distributes them to those in need. Together they had an ambition to take the recipients of the refurbished bikes out on traffic-free routes to increase their cycling confidence, help them explore Barnsley and build their social connections.**

**To realise their ambition, Frank and Alex approached Sustrans, the national charity that helps more people to walk, wheel and cycle. At the time, Sustrans had a year's funding for a project officer, Emma, to look at how to increase diversity of users and volunteers on their National Cycle Network, like the Trans Pennine Trail. Working with Liz, the Sustrans Volunteer Coordinator, Emma supported Frank and Alex to deliver led rides along the Trail for asylum seekers and refugees by helping to recce rides, do the paperwork, organise promotion and take referrals. Alex and Frank both had training from Sustrans to become ride leaders. Sustrans also established a pool of volunteers to assist with rides and two more have become ride leaders, helping to ensure the rides can continue beyond the project. The take-up by asylum seekers and refugees has been very good and the ultimate aim is to help them organise rides for themselves.**

**To find out more about Sustrans, visit: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/>**



# Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Women's Group

Come along to our women's group to meet new people, get help & advice, take part in activities. Children welcome too.

Every Wednesday 10:00am - 12:00pm  
Hope House Café, 2 Blucher Street, Barnsley S70 1AP

To join, please contact Abdel Mohamed from the Refugee Council  
Mobile: 07917 135843  
or email [abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk](mailto:abdel.mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk)



## Volunteers needed at the Women's Group

A chance to meet women from many cultures, have fun and help with activities.  
To find out more, contact Abdel Mohamed at the Refugee Council on: 07917 135843  
[Abdel.Mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk](mailto:Abdel.Mohamed@RefugeeCouncil.org.uk)

Our English classes in Barnsley continue to be extremely successful, and numbers are increasing every term. Last term, 54 women attended the class in total and we now regularly have approximately 20 learners in classes, which take place on Wednesday mornings during the Women's Refugee, Migrant and Asylum Seeker Support Group (see above). It is lovely to see how much those who have been attending over a longer period of time are improving their skills, to welcome new people every week and to see the building of social connections and friendships.

In September 2024, we started our English and digital skills course. This is held at the YMCA in Barnsley, and the women have the opportunity to learn about topics including keyboard basics, email, internet searches, creating documents and staying safe online. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and participants have improved their practical skills and increased their confidence. We hope to run this course again in the future.

We are so pleased that we are able to contribute to the great work of the Refugee Council with the Penistone Refugee and Asylum Seekers Support Group, and to work in partnership to provide vital language and digital support.



# FREE Exhibitions

## Stories of Childhood

Experience Barnsley Museum in the Town Hall

Saturday 8th February 2025 - Saturday 17th January 2026



Explore, reminisce and play! From christenings to cricket, samplers to school hats, toys and teddies, discover over a hundred years of growing up in Barnsley. We've been searching through Barnsley's museum and archive collections for stories of childhood and have uncovered all kinds of treasures and memories. On display will be classic board games, sports trophies, action figures and beautiful portraits. A great way to discover stories about the town and borough told by the people of Barnsley. Keep an eye on the Experience Barnsley Website for more announcements, events and activities around this exhibition.

## Four Seasons in One Day

Barnsley's Cooper Gallery welcomes all four seasons indoors

Co-curated with the Action for Autism Barnsley Group (AfAB)

Saturday 18th January 2025 - Saturday 19th April 2025



The exhibition will showcase a selection of artworks and objects from the collections of Barnsley Museums, including pieces from the Cooper Gallery, Cannon Hall Museum, and Experience Barnsley. Additionally, it will feature artworks by talented local artists, making it a diverse and rich display. The artworks take visitors through spring, summer, autumn, and winter, plus each phase of a day from morning to night.

Find out more in the press release  
Visit: <https://bit.ly/3CBdOgU>

# Volunteer Administrator at the Food Bank

**Barnsley Foodbank Partnership is looking for a volunteer administrator to join the wonderful team at the food bank hub. This is a flexible role, with your own choice of hours between 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday. Ideally you will have experience of using Microsoft Word/ Excel/ Outlook, as well as general computer and telephone skills.**



**For more information or to arrange an informal chat, please get in touch by emailing: [manager@barnsley.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@barnsley.foodbank.org.uk)**

*This page frame was designed by Zarbakht Saeed*



**South Yorkshire  
Refugee Law and  
Justice**



We give one-off immigration legal advice at the Sheffield City of Sanctuary drop-in and the Barnsley Hope House drop-in. Session dates are listed on our website.

South Yorkshire Refugee Law and Justice is a small charity based in Sheffield but providing free legal advice for people across South Yorkshire. We work with people who have been through the asylum system once and need help making further submissions to the Home Office. Our focus is on those who are destitute and need this help both to access Home Office accommodation and, hopefully, to help them obtain immigration status.

We provide full representation to anyone who becomes our client, ensuring that people understand all of the processes and are assisted in whatever way they need to make further representations. We accept referrals to our [info@syrlj.org.uk](mailto:info@syrlj.org.uk) email address. We can pay travel expenses for any of our clients in South Yorkshire to attend our office. We also provide professional independent interpreters at our appointments for those who need them.

For more information, visit: [www.syrlj.org.uk](http://www.syrlj.org.uk)



## Health integration team

### About the service

The health integration team aims to facilitate the integration of overseas arrivals into mainstream health services and address inequalities in health and wellbeing. The team has responsibility for newly arrived asylum seekers residing in Barnsley, asylum seekers under the age of 18 without family, refugees, migrant workers and immigrants within the local community.

### The team provides:

- Guidance on accessing health services appropriately
- Advice on interpreting services
- Welfare visits to gypsy/traveller roadside encampments
- Weekly new entrants screening with direct referral pathways
- Promotional education events on a local, regional and national level
- Health checks for GP registrations
- Daily drop-in sessions for advice and information
- Extensive partnership working and community engagement in appropriate groups
- In service mental health nursing support service

### Why would someone choose the service?

- As a team, we have extensive knowledge of how to appropriately use interpreting services for our service users to break the communication barriers between staff and the individual
- Our specialist nurses have extensive knowledge in different areas to ensure the right care and input is being initiated for the service user
- Our team offers advice and information on different health services to integrate vulnerable adults and children into the community

### Service available to people in: Barnsley

- Address: Health Integration Team, 170a Sheffield Road, Barnsley, S70 4NW
- Telephone: 01226 731686    Hours: Monday - Friday 9am-5pm





# BARNSELY LIBRARIES

## A New Chapter

a series of events and workshops for anyone experiencing, or soon to experience menopause or perimenopause, including yoga sessions and symptom chat workshops with a skilled menopause expert.

All events are free and bookable via: [www.barnsley.gov.uk/libraryevents](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/libraryevents)

# A New Chapter

# FREE!

### Perimenopause and Menopause Sessions

Royston Library and Roundhouse Library



BARNSELY LIBRARIES



Pick up the festival programme at any of Barnsley Libraries branches for a full list of events or access it online by scanning the QR code below.



Saturday 15 February –  
Saturday 8 March 2025



# BARNSELY LIBRARIES

## Barnsley Book Festival

Is back for its second year with a wide range of events for adults and for families too, including open mic poetry, a supportive session for new parents, a workshop with authors on how to become a writer and a children's World Book Day Party!

All bookings via [www.barnsley.gov.uk/libraryevents](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/libraryevents)

and you can find out more including the full programme at

<https://visitbarnsley.co.uk/barnsleybookfestival>



Supported through public funding by  
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

BARNSELY LIBRARIES



# USEFUL CONTACTS

## Adult Learning Services

Floor 2, Wellington House, Market St, Barnsley, S70 1WA

Tel: 01226 775270/775271

Email: [adultlearning@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:adultlearning@barnsley.gov.uk)

Website: [www.barnsley.gov.uk/adultlearning](http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/adultlearning)

## Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary

Email: [info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org)

Website: <https://barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org>

## Barnsley Foodbank Partnership

Unit 14 Aldham Industrial Estate, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 8HA

Tel: 01226 235280

Email: [manager@barnsley.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:manager@barnsley.foodbank.org.uk)

Website: <https://barnsley.foodbank.org.uk>

## Health Integration Team Barnsley

Support for new asylum seekers and refugees and those not yet registered for health services

170a Sheffield Road, Barnsley S70 4NW

Tel: 01226 731686

Email: [healthintegrationteam@swyt.nhs.uk](mailto:healthintegrationteam@swyt.nhs.uk)

## 0-19 Public Nursing Service Barnsley

Support for children, young people and families of asylum seekers and refugees.

Tel: 01226 774411

Email: [0-19HealthTeam@bbarnsley.gov.uk](mailto:0-19HealthTeam@bbarnsley.gov.uk)

## Citizens Advice Barnsley

Guidance and advice on debt, employment, housing, benefits, tax credits and immigration issues

1 Wellington House, 36 Wellington Street, Barnsley S70 1WA

Call: Freephone 0800 144 88 48

Website: <https://barnsleycab.org.uk/>

## Education Learning Support Hub (ELSH)

First Floor, 29 Wellington Street, Barnsley, S70 1SW

Open: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am to 3pm, Wednesdays 9am to 12pm

Tel: 01226 249494

For details of courses visit: [www.elshub.org.uk](http://www.elshub.org.uk)

## Emergencies – Health

If you think you have a life-threatening illness or injury, phone 999 and ask for an ambulance.

In a non-emergency, phone 111.

## Emergencies – Crime

For emergencies, phone 999 and ask for the Police.

In a non-emergency, phone 101.

# USEFUL CONTACTS CONTINUED

## Feels Like Home

An opportunity to practise English with friends and discover Barnsley and the UK  
Barnsley Museums Learning Lab, Town Hall, S70 2TA

Call/text: Joanna: 07873 655035 Email: [feelslikehome@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:feelslikehome@barnsley.gov.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Feels-Like-Home-100877908934396](https://www.facebook.com/Feels-Like-Home-100877908934396)

## Hate Crime

To report hate crimes, call: 101 or 999 in an emergency

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired you can textphone 18001 101 or SMS 07786 220 022.

Visit: [southyorks.police.uk/hatehurts](https://southyorks.police.uk/hatehurts)

Lucy Ramsden, Hate Crime Coordinator Barnsley T: 01226 736372 M: 07464 985266

## IDAS

For those experiencing or affected by domestic violence or sexual abuse.

Tel: 03000 110 110 Email: [info@idas.org.uk](mailto:info@idas.org.uk) Website: [www.idas.org.uk](http://www.idas.org.uk)

## Live Well Barnsley

For information on health care and support services, Visit: [www.livewellbarnsley.co.uk](http://www.livewellbarnsley.co.uk)

## Migrant Help

Help with housing, accommodation, maintenance, ASPEN cards and relocation.

Tel: 08088 010503 - Website: [www.migranthelpuk.org](http://www.migranthelpuk.org)

## Migration Partnership Barnsley

Supporting collaborative and holistic service provision.

Email: [migrationpartnershipbarnsley@gmail.com](mailto:migrationpartnershipbarnsley@gmail.com)

Website: <https://migrantaction.org.uk/the-migration-partnership-barnsley-mpb/>

## Refugee Council

Address: Wellington House, 36 Wellington St. Barnsley S70 1WA (open Monday - Thursday 10am-2pm)

The Advice Workers can be contacted on 01226 320111 or 07917 135843

## Barnsley Refugee Integration Service (BRIS)

Tel: 01226 773439

Mobile: 07775 033443, 07392 277775

Email: [adviceservices@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:adviceservices@barnsley.gov.uk)

## Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Men's Group

Meets at: The Quaker Building, 2a Western Street, Barnsley S70 2BP

Every Tuesday 12:30pm – 1:30pm - Call Abdel: 07917 135843

## Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker Women's Group

Meets at: Hope House Community Café, 2 Blucher Street, Barnsley S70 1AP

Every Wednesday 10am – 12pm - Call Abdel: 07917 135843



# **MAKING BARNLSLEY A SAFE PLACE FOR THOSE FLEEING WAR AND PERSECUTION**

**OPEN MEETINGS**  
5PM on the First  
Wednesday of every  
month in Barnsley  
Town Hall  
(not August)  
Everyone **WELCOME**

## **OUR AIMS**

- Create a culture of welcome for asylum seekers and refugees, challenging hostility and discrimination in all its forms
- Publicise and celebrate the contribution of asylum seekers and refugees to their local communities and to UK society and culture
- Work with local communities and with other relevant organisations to support asylum seekers and refugees
- Campaign for the rights of asylum seekers and refugees and oppose anti-migrant legislation
- Encourage organisations and institutions in Barnsley (including BMBC) to become part of the City of Sanctuary national network
- Amplify the voices of people with lived experience to ensure they are central in our activities and decision making.

✉ [info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org](mailto:info@barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org)  
🌐 [www.barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org](http://www.barnsley.cityofsanctuary.org)