

# The Bulletin

OUR BIENNIAL NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 2019 • ISSUE 1

## Welcome Note

Welcome to our first newsletter. It is a great honour to be leading on Building Bridges Project and working with partners to make a difference to migrant communities. I hope that with this newsletter we can share the aims of the project and the actions that have been taken in the last 6 months. Enjoy it!

*Mandy Sanghera,  
Manager of Building Bridges Project*

## Meet the team

The Building Bridges project is a two-year initiative which is being delivered with partner organisations across Coventry - including Positive Youth Foundation, St Francis Church of Assisi, Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, Foleshill Women's Training and West Midlands Police.



## OUR PROJECT GOALS



THE PRIORITY OF THE PROJECT IS TO BRING ALL COMMUNITIES TOGETHER BY SUPPORTING, PARTICIPATING AND INVESTING IN THE SKILLS, THE ASSETS AND THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL HAS.

**Developing and Improving Skills** by providing intensive ESOL classes for employability, creating volunteering opportunities, and implementing 'Information, Advice and Guidance Sessions'

**Youth Integration** by creating 'School Aid Hubs' and 'Community Aids Hubs'. Youth Forums will be generated from the aid hubs in order to promote community cohesion and integration of newly arrived young people.

**Giving back to Communities** by creating a new volunteer programme and building a network for long-term volunteer placements.

**Supporting Independence** by launching a letting agency to work with local landlords and help migrants and refugees find private accommodation that can enable them to build a home for the future.

# Giving back to communities

by creating a new volunteer programme and building a network for long-term volunteer placements.

ESOL employability is a good start for those who are getting ready to find work within the UK. Some of our clients have really benefited from taking part in the course, and have improved their English, learnt new skills and integrated into the community.

## VITA

Vita is from Latvia and she volunteered at the Herbert Art Gallery exhibition in a "meet and greet" role. In Latvia, Vita was a trainee physiotherapist and would like to continue working as a physiotherapist in the UK. Currently, she is volunteering on NHS services, and gaining skills that make her more prepared for her next job. Vita feels grateful for the opportunities that were given to her until now.



"Over the last 6 months, **32 clients** have signed up to participate in the **employability course**. Some of our outcomes over the last six months are that **4 of those clients are now employed**, **3 have gone on to study**, and **14 have continued to volunteer**."

Some of our clients have stated that the course has "really helped them", and that it "has been very useful". We hope to hear many more success stories over the next few months"

*Selina Read -  
St Francis Employability Support*

## Improve & Develop skills

"We are currently running 9 ESOL classes through out the week, with over 30 volunteers with 7 different nationalities.

On average we have **300 students** attending our classes on a monthly basis.

More than **a third of our participants** are women.

For mothers with young children we offer English with crèche facilities at Foleshill Women's training.

**Our classes range from complete beginners to intermediate level.**

We create pathways for our students once our course has ended, working in partnership with St. Francis Church of Assisi, Adult Education WEA and other ESOL providers, **helping them to progress and become independent.**"



Visiting Coventry Transport Museum



*Farida Butt, Project and ESOL coordinator, CRMC*

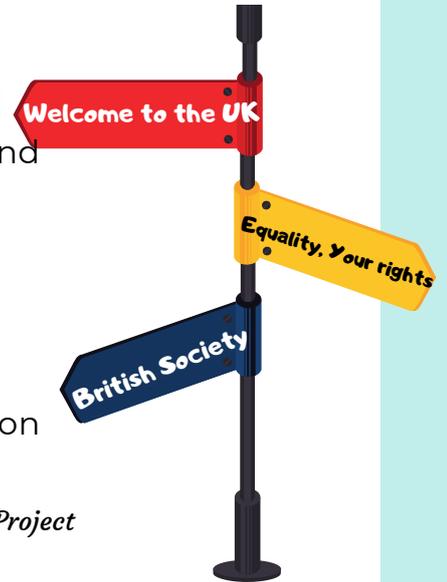
# Information, Advice & Guidance

"We are running a number of weekly drop in sessions across the city centre, with groups meeting together to learn about life in the UK and share information. We also provide 1-2-1 sessions, focusing on the participants' specific needs and addressing a general "how-to's" of daily life in the UK including targeted support with the goal of empowering clients knowledge and confidence .

Importantly, we are creating a specific housing course to prepare participants for the process of moving into private sector tenancy. The aim is to outline UK practices and legal rights alongside general day-to-day essential information and advice, particularly, when renting a property.

Finally, we work alongside local community organisations, such as Coventry Women's Haven, and public service organisations to promote local information and events that support the participants' personal confidence and integration into the UK."

*Farah Shahabuddin,  
Information, Advice and Guidance Officer for Building Bridges Project*



## Youth Integration

"Building Bridges is a unique opportunity for young people to socialise and discover about each others cultures whilst learning great British values.

At Positive Youth Foundation we have integration sessions which take place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and once a month on Sundays.

Most recently we've had young people from Coventry enter a team into the Birmingham sporting elite communities league which takes place once a month.



### ● Community Hubs ●

- Young people 11-23 years old
- A Level 3 Leadership qualification
- Volunteering and Work experience opportunities
- Experience in Sport and Creative Industries
- Information, Advice and Guidance sessions on education and employment, and health and wellbeing
- A safe space to practice English speaking
- A fun interactive environment to relax and build relationship

**Our team has won all its games  bar ONE losing out to Aston Villa FC **

We have also had young people from Sydney Stringer School who have come along and supported the youth consultation events at our Building Bridges youth club. We understand that learning should be informal as well as formal and it was great to hear that 2 of our School Aid Hub students have graduated into the mainstream school through the support they received via the Building Bridges School Aid Hub".

*Obayed Hussain, Involved Programme Coordinator, PUF*

# Supporting Independence

by creating a letting agency to help refugees and migrants access private accommodation in Coventry.



## How are we going to help?

- 1 "Clients will be given pre-tenancy training to understand their responsibilities as a tenant; this will cover looking after a property, money management & being a good neighbour.
- 2 Clients will be given support by The Refugee Centre for the duration of their tenancy.
- 3 Where the clients are in receipt of benefits, an arrangement will be made with the DWP or Housing Benefit for the rent to be paid directly to the landlord." *Lucinda Croft, Letting officer - Building Bridges Project*

## Local Authority Asylum Support Liason Officers



as part of migration team, Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officers (LAASLO's) aim to facilitate the smooth transition for those granted refugee status from government-supported accommodation into mainstream services during their 28-day 'move on' period.

The clients that we have seen so far are from around 18 countries. The majority of them are young men in their early 20s, from East African countries, with limited English language skills.



# Awareness days

05.12  
INTERNATIONAL  
VOLUNTEERS DAY

In order to mark **International Volunteer Day** we wanted to celebrate the contribution of our volunteers and promote and acknowledge the importance of giving back to society. With three short videos we presented the meaning of volunteering for each individual and what are they gaining from it. The message was 'We Build Bridges through volunteering'.



You can find the videos on the Building Bridges YouTube channel or click below:

*Fiona's story*  
*Advantages to volunteering*  
*What volunteering gives young people*



18.12

INTERNATIONAL  
MIGRANTS DAY

Teams from the **Refugee Resettlement programmes**, **Building Bridges** and **MiFriendly Cities** shared messages of unity and solidarity along with information on Council support for migrant communities at One Friargate.

**International Migrants Day** is a United Nations campaign aimed at celebrating open societies where all people have the same human rights and live with dignity and respect.

According to the UN, more than 258 million people are migrants around the world, equating to approximately **one in every 30 people being a migrant**.



Members of the Migration Team were on hand throughout the day to provide information and chat with people about the projects that the Council is implementing across the city with local charity agencies to support migrants and refugees. Many took the opportunity to be photographed with our message for the day, to show support for the online campaign (#IMD2018).

*If you need more information on our day per day activities please check our timetable or contact our partners*

## Timetable

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9.30 - 12.30 ESOL Employability @St Francis Employability	10.00 - 12.00 ESOL @Methodist Central Hall (CRMC)	10.00 - 12.00 ESOL @Methodist Central Hall (CRMC)	9.30 - 12.30 ESOL Employability @St Francis Employability	9.30 - 12.30 ESOL Ladies only @Methodist Central Hall CRMC
10.00 - 12.00 ESOL @Methodist Central Hall (CRMC)	09.00 - 12.00 ESOL Beginners @CRMC	12.30 - 11.30 Information & Advice Sessions @ CRMC	09.30 - 12.00 ESOL @Methodist Central Hall (CRMC)	11.00 - 15.00 School Aid Hub PYF
12.30 - 11.00 Information & Advice Sessions @Methodist Central Hall (CRMC)	18.30 - 20.00 Community Aid Hub @Yardley Street (PYF)	12.30 - 11.30 ESOL Conversation @FWT (CRMC)	12.30 - 11.30 Information & Advice Sessions @Central Library (CRMC)	
10.00 - 11.00 School Aid Hub PYF	09.00 - 17.00 Information & Advice sessions CRMC	17.00 - 19.00 Community Aid Hub Football Training @Sydney Stringer (PYF)	13.00 - 15.00 School Aid Hub PYF	

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

21.2  
International  
Mother  
Language Day

20.6  
World  
Refugee Day

8.3  
International  
Women's Day

23.4  
English  
Language Day

21.3  
International Day  
for the  
Elimination of Racial  
Discrimination

21.3  
World  
Poetry Day

Refugee  
Week



Refugee Week takes place every year across the world in the week around World Refugee Day on the 20th June. In the UK, Refugee Week is a nationwide programme of arts, cultural and educational events that celebrate the contribution of refugees to the UK, and encourages a better understanding between communities.

### CONTACT US:



@BuildingBridgesCoventry



@Bridges\_Cov



Building Bridges Coventry



buildingbridgesproject@coventry.gov.uk

