



ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18
Barnet Refugee Service

Our Major Funders For 2017/18

- **NHS Barnet**
- **The Big Lottery Fund**
- **Barnet Council**
- **The John Lyon's Charity**
- **The Hilden Charitable Trust**
- **The Clothworkers Foundation**
- **The Zakat Foundation**
- **AB Charitable Trust**
- **The Catholic Women's League**
- **Al-Mizan Charitable Trust**
- **The London Catalyst**
- **The Beatrice Laing Trust**
- **The Muslim Hands**
- **London Churches Refugee Fund**
- **London Sport**

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Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

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Charity Number: 1107965 Co Ltd by Guarantee: 5243595

Index

Foreword from the Chair	2	European Placement Network	15	Event to Welcome Syrian Refugees	28
Message From The Director	3	Case Study 1	15	Parenting Skills Workshops	29
Organisational Chart	4	Multilingual Wellbeing Service (MWS)	15	Accreditation Course in Catering	29
Our Staff	5	Sowing Seeds Gardening Project	16	Case Study 6	29
Director's Report	6	Promoting Education	17	Youth Activities	30
Introduction	6	Afterschool Homework Club	17	Weekly Social Club	30
Financial Statement	6	Sunday Tuition Classes	17	Natural History and Science Museum Trip	31
Current Funding	6	Mothers and Toddlers Group	18	Visit to RAF Museum	31
Our History	6	Barnet Unity Festival of Faith and Culture	18	Winter Wonderland Trip	31
Our Ethos	6	End of Year Gift Distribution	19	Recreational Summer Activities	32
Statement of Values	7	Case Study 2	19	Football Program	32
Our Vision	7	Celebrating World Mental Health Day	20	Tenpin Bowling	32
Our Objectives	7	Barnet Mental Health Festival	20	Canoeing and Kayaking	32
Fundraising Strategy	8	Mental Health Awareness Week	20	Music Therapy	33
Donations	8	Lush Oxford Street	20	Self Defence	33
Small Grants for Individuals	8	Psychosocial Therapeutic Activities	21	Camping Day Trip	33
Advice	9	Volunteering Project	22	BRS Football Clubs	34
Outreach Advice Clinics	9	Volunteers Training and Workshops	22	Jasmine Women's Group	35
Legal Advice Surgery	9	Our Volunteers	23	Men's Group	36
Advice for Unaccompanied Minors	9	Volunteers Party 2018	24	Job Club	36
Health and Wellbeing	10	Emotional Support Project	25	Refugee Awareness Talks	37
Our Achievements at a Glance	11	Counselling Service in a Local GP Surgery	25	Student Placements	37
Healthwatch Barnet Visit to BRS	11	Emotional Support Drop In	25	Celebrating Elsa's 91st Birthday	38
Customer Satisfaction Survey and Charts	12	Case Study 3	25	Case Study 7	38
ESOL Classes	13	London Legal Support Sponsored Walk	26	Financial Information	39
ESOL for Unaccompanied Minors	13	Case Study 4	26	Partnership Organisations	40
Trinity Exam	13	Case Study 5	27	Case Study 8	40
Citizenship Classes	14	Befriending and Peer Support	27		
Drop In for Destitute Asylum Seekers	14	Residential Retreat	28		

Foreword from the Chair



Reflecting on all that has happened in the world in the past year, ranging from natural disasters to wars, nevertheless immigration stayed constant! In 2018 BRS continued its excellent work in supporting newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers, as well as helping not-so-newcomers to integrate fully into their communities. It also substantially expanded the range of services provided, as well as supporting increasing number of people who sought help from us.

It is no mean feat that, with less than a handful of employed staff to make this work happen, BRS manages to deal with more than 1,700 clients. The staff's dedication and commitment know no bounds. The leadership of our Executive Director Dr Nazee Akbari is exemplary and her optimism and positive energy fuels our team, a team with unlimited ambitions for our client's life achievements.

I would like to extend my gratitude to our funders, both statutory and voluntary trusts as well as foundations, for their trust in our work and for their generous support which continues to make our work possible.

Once a year we hold an event to thank our volunteers who now number over one hundred - without them we would not have been able to operate! I am continually astonished that despite the diversity of their demographic and background they are united by their empathy for our clients, their dedication to improving their lives and to helping them to integrate into our communities.

These traits are also shared by our Trustees the majority of whom have first-hand experience of adopting the UK as their country and a good understanding of our clients journey! I am proud to report that in the Board of Trustees and Management Committee, we have an excellent mix of talents, working together to provide the support, good governance and strategic leadership that is needed for our organisation. I would like to express my immense gratitude to all the members of the Management Committee and in particular to our Treasurer, Ponusamy Karunaharan, for his ongoing dedication and support.

As the Chair I would like to thank everyone who supports BRS in different shapes and forms. I would also like to assure our clients that BRS Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers are here and ready to support you in any way they can help you to thrive and achieve your goals in life!

This annual report is a celebration of all that has been achieved through us for our clients! We look forward with confidence to another year of success and prosperity for our organisation. Most importantly, we look forward to being able to continue to offer our clients the space and freedom to explore the meaning of some of their experiences in safety and with respect through the expansion of our mental health support projects.

Zoe Aslanpour
Chair

Message from the Director



I am both proud and excited to report that the last year has been one of the most successful years for Barnet Refugee Service with further developments and expansions.

The past year has been a challenging time for those working with refugees and asylum seekers. Hysteria generated by the tabloid press has created an atmosphere of aggression and fear, and the issues surrounding asylum have been increasingly confused with other frequently-covered issues such as terrorism and economic migrants. Despite all that we remained vibrant, robust and focussed on delivering our strategic priorities and continuing to work with our valued partners.

Our aim to respectfully and appropriately serve all those who seek our help following experiences of extreme adversity, including torture and other human rights violations, continues to be our guiding principle. Despite the unstable current economic climate we persevered with our work, expanded our services and reached growing numbers of those in need. Inside these pages, you will find examples of the volume and diversity of work carried out by our dedicated team of staff, trustees and volunteers through our Integrated Holistic Model of Support.

I am proud to say that we were selected by the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) and were recommended to be included in BLF's evidence pack submitted to the Lords Select Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement. In this pack BLF was trying to capture the positive impact of some of the community cohesion programmes that they funded, as well as contributing to the wider debate on embedding citizenship and combating exclusion.

Our Holistic Model of Support was selected as one of the most effective

methods in supporting refugees and asylum seekers through their integration process. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all those who make our work possible throughout the year. Our very special gratitude goes first to our charitable funders and commissioners who recognise and share our assessment of needs enabling BRS to grow and fulfil its aims. Amongst many, I thank the Big Lottery Fund, NHS Barnet, the John Lyon's Charity, the AB Charitable Trust, the Hilden Charitable Trust, Barnet Council, the Clothworkers Foundation, the Muslim Hands, the London Catalyst and London Sports and many others. I would also like to thank all supporters and friends of the BRS who give donations and help us in achieving our aims. I particularly would like to express my gratitude to those who have asked their friends and family to donate to BRS for birthdays or other occasions.

I would like to thank the Board of Trustees and the Management Committee for their commitment to furthering the work of the Barnet Refugee Service and guiding the policy and practice of all we do. I am grateful for their continued insight and expertise that enables us to rise from each challenge we encounter onto the solution. I would like to express unwavering esteem and gratitude to all our staff and volunteers who continue to provide the highest quality services to all those who walk through our door. In particular I would like to thank our Operations Manager, Farida Stanikzai, who ensures the day-to-day operation of BRS continues smoothly as well as helping to innovate and develop new projects for the future.

By unceasingly putting the needs of people we are serving first, we continue to strengthen the reputation of the organisation and ensure we do not deviate from our objectives. I am so very appreciative and grateful to all who take the extra effort to reflect with me on our work to help BRS continue to be a place of hope for the many who have lost their homes and had to flee their homelands.

Nazee Akbari
Executive Director

Organisational Chart

Trustees Serving in 2017-2018

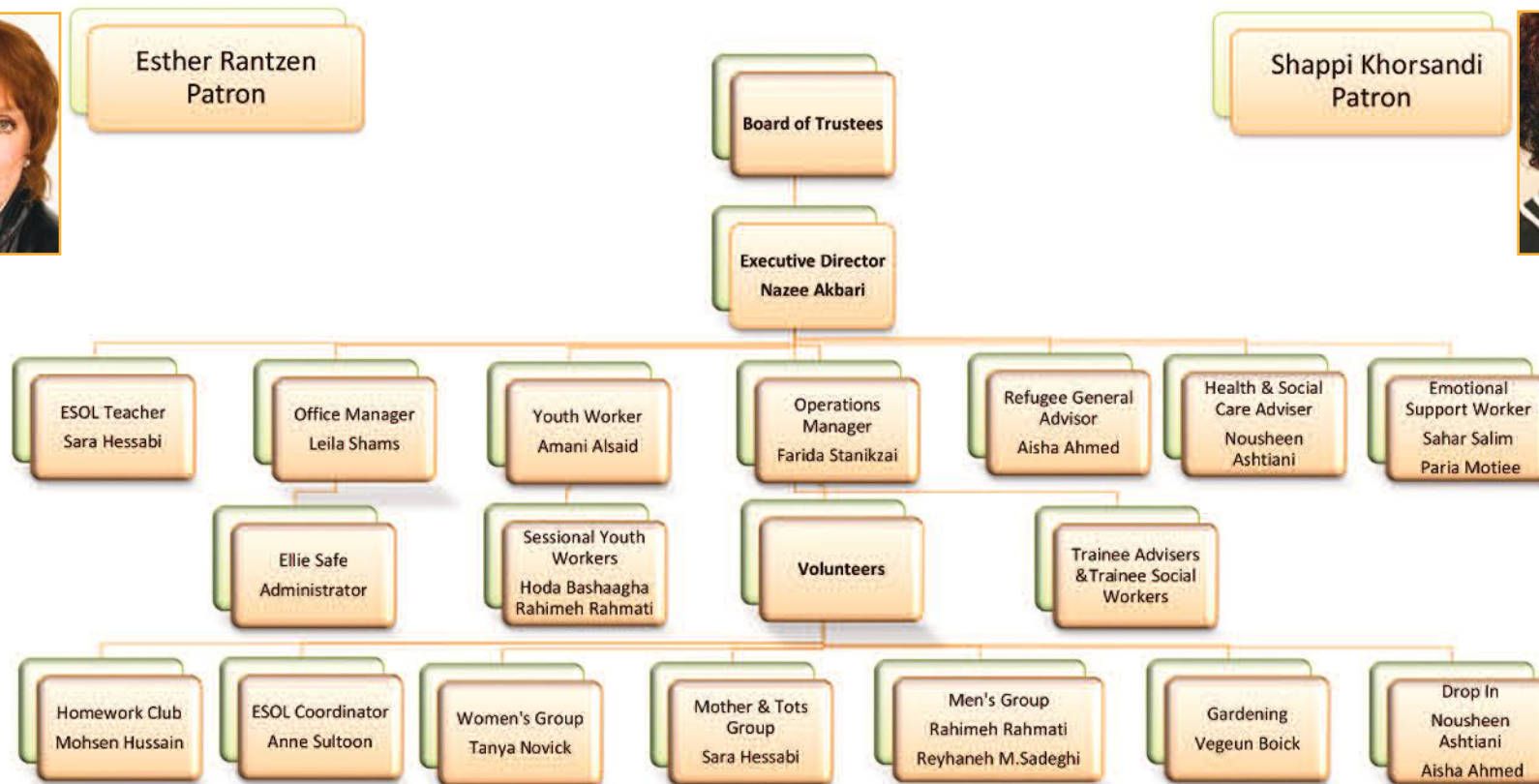
Zoe Aslanpour (Chair)
 Ponusamy Karunaharan (Treasurer)
 Roger Selby (Secretary)
 Shubhi Raymond (Resigned on 10th April 2018)
 Golnar Bokaei
 Miranda Levey (Resigned on 2nd October 2017)
 Helal Atayee
 Ammar Bajboj
 Ahmad Hashemi (Appointed on 15th November 2017)
 Conor Doyle (Appointed on 24th January 2018)



Esther Rantzen
Patron



Shappi Khorsandi
Patron



Our Staff



Nazee Akbari
Executive Director



Farida Stanikzai
Operations Manager



Leila Shams
Office Manager



Sara Hessabi
ESOL Teacher



Paria Motiee
Emotional Support Officer



Sahar Salim
Emotional Support Officer



Nousheen Ashtiani
Health & Social Care Advisor



Aisha Ahmed
Refugee General Advisor



Amany Alsaied
Refugee Youth Worker



Ellie Safe
Administrator



Syed Hussain
Home work Club Coordinator



Hoda Bashaagha
Sessional Youth Worker



Rahimeh Rahmati
Sessional Youth Worker



Reyhaneh M. Sadeghi
Men's Group Coordinator
(Volunteer)



Tanya Novick
Women's Group Coordinator
(Volunteer)



Anne Sultoon
ESOL Coordinator
(Volunteer)



Vegeun Boick
Gardening Coordinator
(Volunteer)



Elsa Roche
International Intern



Magnifique Mufabe
Trainee Social Worker



Nasir Ata
Visiting Solicitor
(Volunteer)

Director's Report

Annual Report for the year 2017-18

This document accompanies the Annual Accounts, copies of which are available on request.

Introduction

Barnet Refugee Service is situated at:

8th Floor

Hyde House

The Hyde

London NW9 6LH

Telephone 020 8905 9002

Fax 020 8905 9003

Email advice@b-r-s.org.uk

Website www.b-r-s.org.uk

Registered Charity: 1107965

Company Ltd by Guarantee: 5243595

Incorporated as company September 2004

Our Memorandum and Articles of Association are available for inspection at our office.

Financial Statement

A summary of our audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2016 can be found on page 39.

The Board of Trustees are satisfied with the performance of the charity during the year and the position at 31st March 2018 and consider that the charity is in a position to continue its activities during the coming year, and that the charity's assets are adequate to fulfil its obligations. It is the policy of the trustees that reserves to cover three months' operating costs plus potential redundancy liabilities be built as soon as is practically possible. The minimum reserves will be two months' operating costs.

Current Funding

Funds from the following funders were received during the year and have been utilised towards achieving our aims:

- **NHS Barnet**
- **The Big Lottery Fund**
- **Barnet Council**
- **The John Lyon's Charity**
- **The Hilden Charitable Trust**
- **The Clothworkers Foundation**
- **The Zakat Foundation**
- **AB Charitable Trust**
- **The Catholic Women's League**
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- **The London Catalyst**
- **The Beatrice Laing Trust**
- **The Muslim Hands**
- **London Churches Refugee Fund**
- **London Sport**

Our History

Barnet Refugee Service is a charitable organisation formed by the merging of two projects established in 1997; the Refugee Health Access Project and Homeless Action in Barnet - Asylum Seekers Project. Barnet Refugee Service has been an independent charity since April 2005.

Our Ethos

BRS, an independent charity since April 2005, works in partnership with individuals and agencies to improve the quality of life and promote the physical, social and mental well-being of asylum seekers and refugees who live, work or study in or near the London Borough of Barnet and neighbouring boroughs. At the core of service delivery is its belief in the positive contribution refugees and asylum seekers can make within a culturally and ethnically diverse society.

Director's Report

BRS is committed to involving asylum seekers and refugees in the planning, decision making and activities of the charity, believing this is the best way to achieve its aims.

Statement of Values

Barnet Refugee Service believes that everyone is born equal and that asylum is a fundamental human right. We recognise that many people in our society experience discrimination or lack of opportunity for reasons which are not fair. These include: race, religion, creed, colour, national and ethnic origin, immigration status, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability (including mental illness), HIV status, marital status, responsibility for dependants, appearance, geographical area, social class, income level or 'criminal' record. Barnet Refugee Service will challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity in its own policy and practice and will help other organisations and individuals to do the same.

Barnet Refugee Service aims to create a culture that respects and values each others' differences and sees these differences as an asset to our work as they improve our ability to meet the needs of the organisations and people we serve.

Our Vision:

Through its work BRS envisages:

1. A future where refugees and asylum seekers recognize themselves and are recognized by others as human beings of equal status in society.
2. A greater understanding and positive image in the wider community of the contribution made by refugees and asylum seekers and the issues which they have to deal with.
3. Quicker and greater integration of refugees and asylum seekers through access to improved services particularly in health, housing, education and employment.
4. Greater understanding among refugees and asylum seekers of their rights and responsibilities.
5. A well established and accessible Barnet Refugee Service, working impartially in partnership with other relevant organisations to identify and meet the changing needs of refugees and asylum seekers.
6. Enabling a fuller contribution of refugees to civic life through the promotion

of social cohesion.

7. Local policies and services which reflect the needs of diverse asylum seeker and refugee communities.
8. A more powerful voice for refugees and asylum seekers in Barnet and neighbouring boroughs.

Our Objectives

1. To provide information, advice and support services to asylum seekers and refugees
2. To help promote equality of access to health care, social care, housing, legal representation, education and training for asylum seekers and refugees.
3. To provide and enhance educational and employment opportunities available for asylum seekers and refugees.
4. To increase awareness of the needs, rights and entitlements of asylum seekers and refugees in relation to health, social care, housing, training, education and employment.
5. To act as an information resource for statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and the wider community.
6. To ensure that service providers deliver culturally sensitive and appropriate services to asylum seekers and refugees.
7. To assist destitute and/or homeless refugees and asylum seekers to access emergency food and support.
8. To help refugees and asylum seekers overcome isolation and regain their confidence and self-esteem through emotional support, eco-therapy, social activities and structured projects thus enabling them to integrate into society.
9. To significantly influence local and national strategies and policies with regard to refugees and asylum seekers.
10. To provide volunteering opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers (including young people) to develop their skills and help them to access higher education and employment.
11. To provide emotional and social activities to young refugees and asylum seekers to develop their confidence and skills.
12. To provide emotional support, counselling and eco-therapy with the aim of improving the mental and physical wellbeing of our clients through doing outdoor activities in nature.

Director's Report

Fundraising Strategy

The Board of Trustees have established a Funding and Finance Strategy Committee who develop and monitor the progress of their fundraising strategy. It is the aim of BRS to meet its funding needs through several funding bodies.

Our community fundraising committee works hard to maintain the funding stream through donations from members, local businesses and organizations and the general public.

Donations

We received around £30000 donations from many individuals, organisations and faith groups. Our special thanks go to one of our supporters who made a generous anonymous donation of £12000 towards the costs of a part time advisor. A cash donation of £10000 was received from Mr & Mrs. Demashkieh's to support our newly arrived Syrian refugees and on behalf of our clients we are thankful for their generous donation.

We must also thank our dedicated volunteer walkers who raised over £1500 through the LLST Sponsored Walk.

We cannot name the countless individuals and organisations who have given their generous support in so many ways. Without their goodwill we would be unable to provide our vital emergency support. We would particularly like to thank all schools and faith groups for their ongoing support.

During the year food was donated from numerous churches, temples and synagogues and schools for Harvest Collections which enabled us to give out food parcels to destitute asylum seekers. In particular we would like to thank Mrs. Jodi Mishcon, who set up the Big Shop Appeal for BRS and managed to get 52 sponsors to spend £100 each for a weekly shop for our destitute clients. Jodi also accepted the responsibility to do the shopping on a regular basis and get the groceries delivered to our office. For our end of year party we were

donated many gifts from various sources including faith groups and local schools and members of the public and we thank them all.

In addition to the above, our special thanks go to the following faith groups, local businesses, and individuals who supported us either by cash or donation in kind: Harrow Food Bank, Khavatin Muslim Ladies, The Catholic Women's League, National Zakat Foundation, the Yummies-Deli-Meal hill, Sufra NW London, London Churches Refugee Fund, The Sacred Heart Church, The Lush Shop (Oxford Street), St. Michael and All Angels in Mill Hill, St Mary at Finchley Parish Church, Trinity Church in Colindale, Pakistan Ladies Group, Goods for Good, Friends in Need- Happy Knitters, Trinity Church in North Finchley, London Catalyst Samaritan Grant, Gail's Artisan Bakery, Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue, Daniel's Bakery, Kew Gardens Community Membership Scheme the Pret a Manger and Lola's Cake at Brent Cross, Sainsbury's and Tesco in Hendon.

It was not practical to value these vital in kind donations but we believe the retail value to be in excess of £25000.

Small Grants for Individuals

Refugees and asylum seekers and in particular destitute asylum seekers are the most vulnerable members of society. Some of them are not entitled to any support and for those who are, they might be living below the poverty line. We are delighted that we managed to raise around £20000 (13K in cash) and £6600 (in vouchers) of financial support for desperate individuals and their families who had nowhere to go and had given up hope. This was only possible with the support of The National Zakat Foundation, Almizan Charitable Trust, The Catholic Women's League, Khavatin Muslim Ladies, Pakistan Ladies Group, Churches Together and many individual donors. On behalf of our clients we thank them all for their on-going support. The small grants covered the costs of education and training, household items, emergency shelter for DV victims, medical and mobility aids, IT equipment and subsistence.

Director's Report

Advice

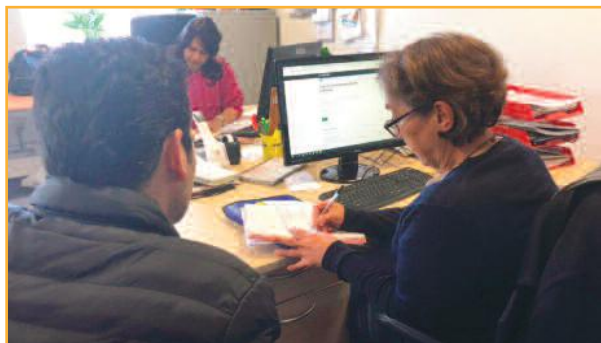
We provide advice, information and support to refugees and asylum seekers on a variety of issues, promoting equal access to services, particularly health. During the past year we have seen 710 clients for advice (278 of whom were new clients), and have handled 3,078 cases and over 7,300 enquiries. (Please see charts on page 12).

Outreach Advice Clinics

Our team of advice workers offered outreach clinics at the Advice and Information Centre, Edgware Community Hospital on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, and served over 600 clients with various issues.

Legal Advice Surgery

Free legal services as part of the UK legal aid system used to be available for refugees pursuing their rights under UK and international law to seek asylum or to be reunited with their families. The rights of refugees to access legal aid was, however, scrapped in April of 2013, leaving many of those seeking



refuge or humanitarian protection in the UK with the prospect of permanent or, at the very least, prolonged separation from their loved ones. Without expert help, refugees are often unable to navigate the long and complex process they are required to follow to be in with a chance of being reunited with their families, a scenario that has become increasingly common since their access to legal aid was scrapped. The provision of legal advice and support to those who need it the most, yet who are often least able to afford it, is at the very heart of our visiting solicitors pro bono philosophy. They believe that they can use their legal expertise to 'give something back' to their local communities.

For the past few years we have had the privilege of having a team of pro bono solicitors from different firms of solicitors who provide legal advice every fortnight at our main office.

Our special thanks must go to Ata & Co Solicitors who provided 163 of our clients free legal immigration advice during the past year, seeing them every other Wednesday of the month at Hyde House.

Advice for Unaccompanied Minors

Young refugees and asylum seekers and in particular unaccompanied minors are one of the most disadvantaged groups in society. Their needs are largely unmet by existing services. These young refugees and asylum seekers need support with a number of issues. Most are new arrivals who arrived here alone with few resources and do not understand the system in the UK. Some are in care; others are living with an elder sibling or relatives who are themselves traumatised.

In partnership with the Refugee Council, we started a weekly drop-in advice project December in 2016, where an advisor from the Refugee Council visits our office to provide advice to unaccompanied asylum seekers.

The adviser works directly with separated children seeking asylum, helping them through the asylum system and ensuring that they get the help and advice they need. The adviser also offers advice and information to carers and other professionals working with children and young people.

Our special thanks must go to the Refugee Council who served 98 of our young clients seeing them every Thursday for a full day at Hyde House.



Director's Report

Health and Wellbeing

Much of our work is directly health focused for example the advice work where we saw clients with over 1,800 health related enquiries. During 2017/18 our health focused activities included:

- Health access and health promotion workshops for our clients
- Expanding on our "Holistic Model of Support" targeting the better mental wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers
- Mental health support project supporting young refugees
- Mothers & Toddlers Group to promote a healthy LifeStyle through health promotion workshops
- Production of an illustrated handbook for Maternity Departments by our ESOL teachers for mothers with limited or no English
- Running ESOL classes with emphasis on vocabulary for visiting the doctor and health-related subjects
- Active partnership with the Multilingual Wellbeing Service, in partnership with two other organisations and NHS Barnet focusing on the better wellbeing of ethnic minorities in Barnet.
- 2 outreach surgeries based at Edgware Hospital.
- An active planning group member for organizing the Barnet Mental Health Event
- Policy work with NHS: Focusing on our client group our views and opinions will help NHS North Central London deliver equitable commissioning and help to meet our public sector equality duties.
- Ecotherapy activities i.e. gardening to support those with mental health issue in a green environment and providing workshops on food and nutrition for our clients
- Residential retreat from those with mental health problems
- Providing one-one emotional support/counselling and group work
- Series of therapeutic weekly activities to refugee women with mental health problems, victims of DV, torture and rape. In partnership with artsdepot through our Women's Group, Jasmine. i.e. music therapy, yoga, mindfulness, art & craft, poetry, dance etc.
- Series of therapeutic weekly activities for refugee men with mental health problems encouraging social interactions and tackling isolation
- Close partnership work with research i.e. Hertfordshire University, UCL and Anglia Ruskin University, e.g. supported a paediatric junior registrar, doing a Masters in child community health at UCL. The research was a qualitative analysis on the health-care experience of accompanied children seeking asylum in the UK.
- Participation in a project with Cambridge University and the Police where a randomised control trial (RCT) was developed to test whether out of court disposals, as opposed to a court appearance, have an impact on future reoffending rates.
- Active participation in supporting the Barnet Well-being Hub.
- Development of IAPT Provision for refugees and asylum seekers
- Sharing our "Holistic Model of Support" with professionals through three Health Care conferences organised by The Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust

In addition to the above BRS has been actively in-

involved with NHS Barnet's different activities to promote better health within the community e.g. Stop Smoking, flu jab etc.

We are a resource to be drawn upon by health professionals to support them to support this client group and understand their needs better.

We were closely involved in policy work around the provision of counselling and psychotherapy services for refugees and asylum seekers including young refugees. We have been liaising and working with service providers, in particular health professionals, statutory and voluntary sector staff to raise awareness about the physical and mental health needs of asylum seekers and refugees. In the past we used to provide training for service providers on refugee health issues but this year, due to cuts and shortage of staff we did not feel the demand was there. Instead we redesigned our training program and attended different network meetings, using the opportunity to talk about our clients and their needs. We provided several refugee awareness talks to our local schools in their assemblies, attended leaving care team meetings and had one to one meetings with those who were willing to learn more about refugee issues.

"BRS helped me to find my health again"

Director's Report

Our Achievements at a Glance

Through the provision of our Holistic Model of Support, we have met or exceeded all of the targets agreed with our funders which include:

- 1710 Clients accessing all our services with 408 new clients
- 7300 Advice/general enquiries
- 595 Clients accessed our service through outreach surgeries
- 501 Client visits to emergency support drop in services
- 167 Clients attended our Immigration Drop in with visiting solicitors
- 5 Health promotion workshops 28 attendees
- 12 Workshops on accessing health, housing and welfare benefits
- 10 Mindfulness and Art therapy sessions with 70 attendees
- 5 Parenting Skills Workshops with 25 attendees
- 36 Yoga and relaxation sessions (6 courses, 6 sessions each) to 150 attendees
- 54 Sessions of gardening with 30-40 active attendees on weekly basis
- 12 Drop in mental health support sessions with 81 attendees
- 58 Clients received one to one counselling
- 18 Clients attended our Residential Retreat
- 87 Volunteers supported BRS within different activities
- 9 Training courses provided to volunteers with 58 attendees
- 14 Clients/volunteers managed to get into paid

employment

- 160 Young people involved with our successful youth activities
- 2 round Citizenship classes for 26 attendees (17 and 9)- 24 sessions each
- 129 students attended 11 Successful ESOL classes 2 sessions per week including 22 health related
- 13 Women registered with our successful Mothers & Toddlers Group in partnership with the Hyde Children Centre
- 14 Men registered with our successful Men's Group (2 ESOL classes)
- 50 Women registered with our Jasmine Women's Group
- 12 Vulnerable clients received befriending support

"BRS helped me to find my lost life and supported me to rebuild my life"

Healthwatch Barnet Visit to BRS

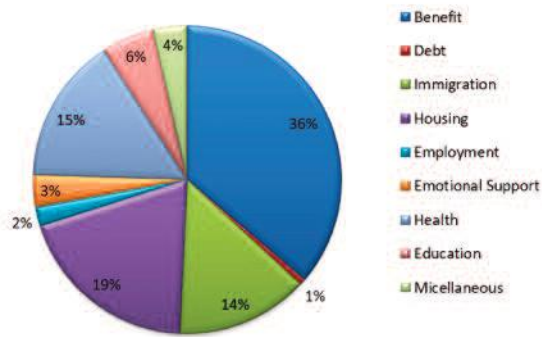
Healthwatch is the independent national champion for people who use health and social care services. Their aim is to make sure that those running services, and the government, put people at the heart of care. Their sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

On July 13th 2017, Healthwatch Barnet visited BRS and interviewed 20 clients to find out about the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers with National Health Services, including GP appointments, communication, and emergency services. This provided Healthwatch Barnet and BRS with important information regarding client needs such as improved understanding of the NHS systems through multilingual informational leaflets and the necessity of interpreters in health services.

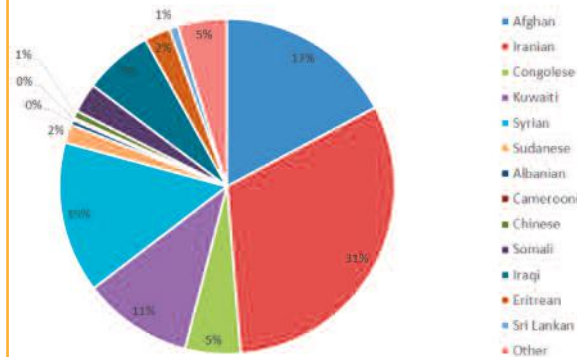


Director's Report

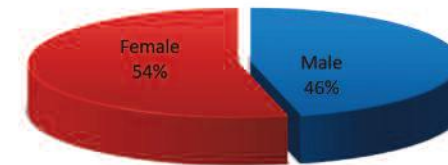
Enquiry Areas 2017-18



Where Our Clients Come from?



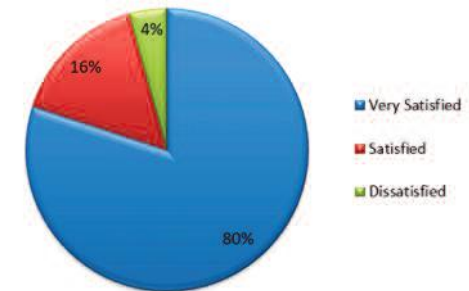
Clients by Gender



Customer Satisfaction Survey

In order to retain our Advice Quality Standard of the Community Legal Service (CLS) as well as making sure we provide the highest standard of service to our clients according to their needs, it is essential to have in place a feedback process for the clients we see.

Throughout 2017/18 we randomly selected clients who had used our services and gave them questionnaires. Over 161 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 132 were returned. Our response therefore was a healthy 81%. Out of the 161 questionnaires returned 80% felt 'very satisfied' with our services and 15% 'Satisfied' and 2% felt "we should improve in some areas". Over all 78% felt the service they received improved the quality of their life.



ESOL Classes

Many refugees and asylum seekers arrive in the UK with little or no ability to speak English, which hinders their ability to integrate socially and economically. The current provision of English language teaching in the UK fails to meet the complex needs of refugees and asylum seekers, leaving them unable to reach their full potential or to engage in society. BRS is incredibly proud of promoting social inclusion and community cohesion. Over the past year we provided eleven Skills for Life English classes (33 hours a week), for 129 learners at Pre-Entry to Entry 3 levels.

This project is supported by 17 qualified teachers and 9 teaching assistants, most of whom are from a refugee background and who wish to pursue a career in education. Our teachers play a very special role, making a huge difference in the lives of their students, who are often women and children. 82% of these students are women and 18% are men; this is particularly important as it is often hard to reach



refugee and asylum seeking women, and they are often isolated. Having the ability to communicate in English has a significant impact on the mental and emotional well-being of many clients. Our students are a unique group of learners. While some achieved high levels of academic qualifications in their home country, others were unable to attend school for a variety of reasons. What connects all the students is a common desire to learn and improve their English skills. Every day we witness the joy of the students, particularly some of the women as it is often their first time in the classroom as they had no school-like experiences from their home country.

ESOL for Unaccompanied Minors

This year, a special class was created and tailored for unaccompanied children referred to BRS from social services, foster carers, schools, and others. These children had recently arrived and were waiting to begin school or college. This class took place twice a week for a total of five hours. There were 13 young people who attended these classes on a regular basis.

Trinity Exam

We are proud to announce that BRS managed to gain accreditation with Trinity College and became a Registered Exam Centre in 2017. Trinity College is a highly regarded International Exam Board for English Language and ESOL Skills for Life qualifications and its qualifications are well recognised and



highly valued.

Students from the ESOL classes were offered the opportunity to take external exams and 15 students rose to the challenge. The students were ably tutored in reading and writing, for 2 terms, by Sara Hessabi, an experienced ESOL Skills for Life teacher. For many of the students, it was the first time they had ever taken an exam let alone an external exam that required regulations and procedures very different from the classroom setting of BRS. Indeed, for a couple of the students this was a very far cry from their home country where they had had no formal education and never been to

school. The results were brilliant and everyone involved must be congratulated. 14 students sat Entry Level 1 writing, 13 of those students sat Entry Level 1 reading and 1 student took Entry Level 2 reading. 13 students passed, some with very high marks. Naturally the students were delighted and not only did they achieve their first qualification and certificate in the UK, they gained in confidence and self-esteem and increased their skills for settling here and living on a day-to-day basis. All the students spoke very highly of Sara, for her unstinting support and encouragement and we thank her for her ongoing support and dedication.

We feel we have had another successful year and our special thanks must go to our donors and our dedicated teaching team and in particular our volunteer ESOL Coordinator, Ann Sultoon, who made this possible.



From right to left

Anne Sultoon, Ros Staines, Rachel Winton, Helen Forbes, Orna Almagor, Rosemary Biseo, Helen Syani, Hoda Bashaagha, Elizabeth Morrell, Sue Engelbert and Farida Stanikzai

Not in the picture:

Sima Rutherford, Elizabeth Perrot, Vivien Chappell, Helen Stone, Jill Joseph, Hawa Bibi, Muhammad, Amy Lin, Rahim Rahmati, Annisa Pryor, Rahela Amiry, Naima Aminuddin, Katharine Sathe, Madeline Ioannidis, Josephine Cuttall, Linda Carey, Ruth Kitching, Hannah Cass Simpson, Fatemeh Sadeghi, Noa Weinstein, Jill Joseph, Asma Khalil, Belqis Sadat, Wahideh Majeedi, Sara Hessabi,

Director's Report

Citizenship Classes

For the last 2 years BRS have offered citizenship classes to aid refugees granted status and leave to remain in preparing for the Life in the UK Test. This test is one of the pathways to citizenship and preparation is crucial to successfully passing the exam. The test covers United Kingdom history, politics, laws, and traditions and is made up of multiple choice questions. After passing the test, individuals can apply for citizenship.

This was a successful program. In 2017 two classes of 24 sessions each were run by a qualified ESOL teacher. Of the 27 participants, 25 took the exam and all of them passed. The other 2 students are waiting for an upcoming test date to complete the exam.



Drop In for Destitute Asylum Seekers

Destitution is a huge problem amongst asylum seekers, one that pushes them to the brink of our society. Asylum seekers have to wait months or years for the outcome of their asylum claim, during which they are prohibited from working and only receive minimal or no financial support. As a result, asylum seekers are reliant on charities and their limited social networks to make ends meet.

We have been running a Drop In to support destitute asylum seekers since 2006. This essential project has continued to flourish. This year we had 500 clients who collected more than 1800 food parcels. Our Drop In is currently providing emergency food to destitute asylum seekers and refugees while they are in the transition period. This service has been funded by kind donations by individuals, schools, Harrow Food Bank and local faith groups. During the year food and toiletries were donated by numerous schools, individuals, groups, churches, temples and synagogues. Linking with the National Zakat Foundation, Al-Mizan Charity, Churches Hardship Fund, Catholic Women's League and many other small funders, we managed to raise funds for individual destitute clients where they received the support in the form of cash or supermarket vouchers. Our special Thanks go to all those donors and to those who donated their harvest collection to BRS.

In particular we would like to thank Mrs. Jodi Mishcon, who set up the Big Shop Appeal for BRS and managed to get 52 sponsors to spend £100 each for a weekly shopping for our destitute clients. Jodi also accepted responsibility for doing the shopping on a regular basis and getting it delivered to our office. Our sincere appreciation goes to Jodi and the team of donors to the Big Shop Appeal.



"I am failed asylum seeker. BRS helped me with food and clothes vouchers"

Director's Report

European Placement Network Erasmus+ Project

For the 5th year running our successful partnership with Erasmus+ enabled us to support another one of their Interns by providing a six months Internship Program. Erasmus+ is an European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and aims to modernise education, training and youth work across Europe. They support Students in both higher education and vocational education and training to benefit from the opportunities and gain work experience in another country.

During the past year we hosted our Fifth intern Elsa Roche , an International Law graduate for six months. Elsa Katie is an affectionate, intelligent, capable, dedicated, and pleasant young lady who is passionate about human rights. Her caring nature and positive attitude towards humanity has made her an excellent character to help people in need. She was a great asset to BRS who worked closely with different projects and her contribution was greatly appreciated.

European Placement Network Feedback

"We are always delighted to work with Farida because she provides quality work placements for our trainees seeking to work in NGO's. She lets us know of any problems and is always keen to see the trainees develop their skills. Furthermore Farida is always available when we need to contact her and she is someone we will work with again and again. Barnet Refugee service is the best NGO we work with in terms of the quality of the placements and the satisfaction of the trainees. (Gary McGrath- Placement Coordinator)"



Case Study 1

Elsa Roche
International Intern

My name is Elsa Roche. I am a French national and I studied international law. I didn't find a job right away after studying, so I decided to look for work experience as a volunteer with a charitable association. Through European Placement Network I was lucky enough to be selected for a six month internship at BRS under the guidance of Farida Stanikzai, which turned out to be a hugely enriching experience I will never forget. The great strength of BRS is the huge breadth of interdisciplinary services that it is able to offer to help asylum seekers with their primary needs, bringing together advisors, social workers, psychologists, teachers, volunteers from all walks of life and other support workers. It also offers a safe and calm environment to those who are most vulnerable and in need of support.

Farida actively manages all these services with great skill, and so by shadowing and supporting her, I was able to get involved in a very wide variety of activities: welfare advice, English classes, women's groups, after school clubs for children and gardening clubs ... I was also able to get experience in the extensive project management that is needed to make sure BRS is so successful.

In addition to its small number of paid staff, BRS relies on an incredible team of volunteers who do an amazing job, without whom BRS would not be the organisation it is. I have now found a job as a drafts person in international law in France, and I find the experience I gained at BRS to be useful every day.

Little did I know what I walked into BRS on my first day that I would find a family who would welcome me and shape me so much over the next six months, and I will always remember everyone I worked with so closely. I also gained deep appreciation of how important the work is of volunteers, who stand behind all the amazing projects that BRS delivers.

I sincerely hope BRS continues to thrive with the same ambition that makes it such a success today.

Multilingual Wellbeing Service (MWS)



Multilingual Wellbeing Services is a consortium of Black Minority Ethnic and Refugee community organisations in Barnet with an expertise in mental health and wellbeing. The consortium was set up in June 2010 as a separate legal entity and got registered as a Charity in 2012. The partner organisations are Barnet Refugee Service, Chinese Mental Health Association and Farsophone Association. As a board member and an active member of this consortium during the past year BRS has been liaising with MWS to achieve its aims and objectives. The aim of this project is to improve the mental health of BMER communities in Barnet by increasing their knowledge and confidence in accessing support, supporting BMER mental health services to provide support to others suffering mental distress in their community. We are pleased to announce that this project continuous to flourish, providing mental health promotion workshops and providing counselling services. MWS is an active partner with Mental Health NHS Trust and is delivering Improvement Access to Psychological services (IAPT) in Barnet.

Director's Report

Sowing Seeds Gardening Project

Gardening is a powerful therapy for most of our client group who have experienced trauma and psychological pain. BRS Sowing Seeds (Eco-therapy)/Allotment project began in April 2015. The goal is to promote positive mental health and wellbeing and facilitate the development of a social network and friendships through a gardening group. We are able to witness first-hand how this project has helped clients to relieve stress, depression, and social isolation while promoting community cohesion and integration.

This project is one of our therapeutic projects that has become attractive to a majority of our clients of all ages, ranging from children to adult men and women. There are 40 refugees and asylum seekers from 11 countries and four refugee volunteers who are actively involved two to three times a week. They decide amongst themselves what they would like to grow and how they would like to use the space, giving them a sense of ownership. They have often chosen to plant vegetables from their home countries to use while cooking traditional recipes and they teach each other and share stories to work in a collaborative and creative way.

This project develops one to one peer support and helps bridge cultural divides, reconnecting individuals with memories from home while helping them to create new memories here. Many of our ESOL, Mothers and Toddlers, and Youth group attendees also visit the allotment and hold their sessions there.

During the past year we provided four on-site training sessions in the allotments. The first two sessions were provided by a volunteer nutritionist who spoke about nutrition and the benefits of eating fresh produce. The other two sessions were provided by the Royal Horticultural Society's Community Outreach Advisor Chris Young on planning when and where the crops should be planted in the allotment and when to sow them according to the calendar. We are very grateful to both volunteers who provided the training, the volunteer nutritionist and RHS Community Outreach Advisor Chris Young.

Our special thanks must go to all the volunteers who supported this project and in particular Vegeun Boick for his coordination.



Director's Report

Promoting Education amongst Refugee and Asylum Seeking Children

Afterschool Homework Club

Many refugee and asylum seeking children did not have the opportunity to go to school in their home countries or their education may have been disturbed due to conflicts or wars. When they arrive in the UK, they are placed in classes based on their age. However, their level of education is often below that expected for the class, leaving them feeling inferior and behind compared to their classmates. This impacts their confidence, self-esteem, and ability to learn. Moreover, their parents often lack understanding of English and an understanding of the UK education system, rendering them incapable of fully assisting their children with their homework.

For the last two years, BRS has successfully been running an afterschool Homework Club on Mondays and Fridays. Eighteen students have attended the club facilitated by our nine volunteers. All of the volunteers are from nearby schools, colleges, and universities who have a strong understanding of the British education system.

Sunday Tuition Classes

Another facet of our objective to promote education amongst refugee and asylum seeking children is BRS Sunday Tuition club, which has been facilitated through the financial support of the Muslim Hands since 2016.

We have had 40 students benefit from this program since its establishment.

The students are taught and prepared to embark on their secondary school journey and to prepare for their GCSE exams. This includes three hours of maths, English language and science lessons (KS1-KS4) throughout the year. The main focus was to support students from primary school to secondary school and in the GCSE exams.

Our Tuition support has proven to be one of the most needed projects that we are running. Our special thanks must go to Muslim Hands for their financial support and all volunteers who supported this project wholeheartedly.



*Graduation of our Homework Club students
From left to right: Farida Stanikzai, Zainab Khalil (Coordinator), Maqsood Ahmed (Director of Muslim Hands), Nazee Akbari, Zein Qureshi (tutor)*

Director's Report

Mothers and Toddlers Group

Within our extensive range of English language programmes, BRS provides ESOL classes tailored to mothers with preschool aged children in partnership with Hyde Children's Centre on Tuesdays from 9:30-11:30am. This project has been a continued success at BRS and this past year, 10-12 mothers and 10-13 children attended these sessions regularly. While the mothers are taught pre-entry to entry level English by a qualified ESOL teacher, the children are looked after by an experienced nursery nurse with the support of two volunteers.

The English classes focus on teaching practical vocabulary on essential topics such as health and going to the GP, shopping, safety, and more. The group is relaxed and provides the mothers with the opportunity to meet other women. For the children, a diverse range of activities are provided in order to enable them to develop skills to help prepare them for attending nursery.



As some of the mothers are not familiar with common British nursery rhymes, they are invited to join their children for the last quarter of their lesson to practice these rhymes with their children. This provides the mothers with the opportunity to become acquainted with the rhymes and support their children outside of class. We give special thanks to the Hyde Children's Centre and their staff for accommodating this group. Our special thanks also goes to all the volunteers who supported this project during the past year.

Barnet Unity Festival of Faith and Culture

Barnet Refugee Service took part in the Faith and Cultural Festival organized at Burnt Oak Leisure Centre on May 14th, 2017. The Festival was intended to show that Barnet is a great place to live, work, study, play, and pray. This event provided an excellent opportunity for the community to stand together in harmony and unity against some of the hostile challenges we face from those who attempt to sow discord and division amongst us. Around 1,200 local residents attended, along with 40 local faith leaders and many volunteer organisations. BRS is a member of the multi-faith community who support the mission of this event and showcased its services.

On June 6th 2017, the Barnet Multi-Faith Forum opened a multi-faith prayer room at Brent Cross Shopping Centre. Community and religious leaders, including a BRS representative, were invited to cut the ribbon.



Director's Report

End of Year Gift Distribution

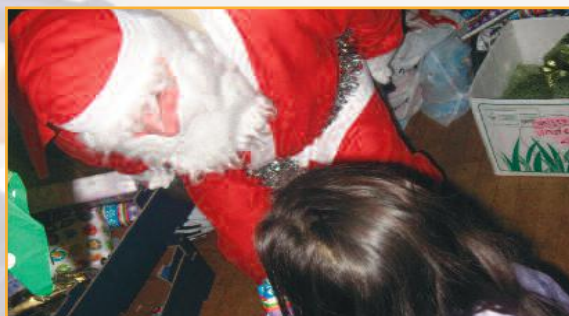
For the past 12 years we organised an end of year party for our clients and their families where adults enjoyed food, entertainment and socialising while children were greeted by Father Christmas who gave presents to all of them.

For our last End of Year celebration, due to the work load we decided to limit this party to the distribution of Xmas gifts to the children only.

In December 2017 as the holiday season commenced, 135 gifts were distributed to our clients' children by Father Christmas at an event which was hosted at our office. These gifts were provided by generous donations from churches, schools, community organisations, and other individuals. For many of these newly arrived children, it was the first time they had received gifts. This has made such a difference in the lives of these chil-

dren. Although some of these families do not celebrate Christmas, this allows the children to feel more welcomed and included in the community, particularly at school.

We are so grateful to all the people who were thinking of our refugee and asylum seeking children and made donations to make this happen.



Case Study 2

Nancy Brenner Volunteer Befriender

I have been a volunteer Befriender at Barnet Refugee Service for almost a year, and it has been a positive and important journey. I was uncertain at first as to what would be needed in this role as Befriender although it was explained to me but along the way I realised that it was exactly what the word Befriender meant - being someone's friend.

I was a Befriender for a young woman with a disabled child who had arrived in the UK over a year before we met. She had had to negotiate many situations over a long period of time on her own until she was given refugee status, moved into an appropriate flat to meet her son's physical needs, and her son finally entered into a junior school. We met weekly, often just for a coffee and chat, but it was this weekly contact that proved most important. She now had a "friend," who asked about her and her son and was interested in them and how they were. There were some practical ways (for example, speaking to one another in English on our visits, talking on her telephone to some official on her behalf when her fluency in English made this extremely difficult, helping her learn how to negotiate the underground, or attending seemingly daunting interviews with her), but primarily it was mostly in just being a friend who listened and supported her. To my surprise, my support was also a great relief to the young woman's parents and family who were far away in another country and worried about how their daughter and grandson were managing without family or friends nearby.

Director's Report

Celebrating World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day is a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy against social stigma. Through Barnet Wellbeing Hub, BRS was part of planning the 2017 World Mental Health Day that took place on October 10th. Hundreds of supporters attended the event to draw attention to mental illness and its major effects on peoples' lives worldwide. Many community organisations from Barnet took part in the event and showcased a variety of information about their services regarding mental and emotional wellbeing.

A large canvas that read "What makes you smile?" was exhibited with the assistance of BRS volunteers and staff, in which attendees of the event were invited to express their feelings.



Barnet Mental Health Festival

BRS hosted a stall at the Mental Wellbeing and Arts Festival "I AM Normal" on September 23rd, 2017 at Arts Depot.

Mental Health Awareness Week May 8-14 2017

On Tuesday 9th May the Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church in collaboration with Barnet Refugee Service, Mind in Barnet, Inclusion Barnet - Wellbeing Hub, Patient Voice, Barnet Carers Centre organised an event. Organisations in Barnet shared information about the services and resources they provide for mental wellbeing, health and illness.



Lush Oxford Street

From May 26th to 28th 2017, BRS participated in the fundraising event 'Charity Pot Party' hosted by Lush Oxford Street. The event was intended to spread awareness of BRS and to raise funds for the organization through the sale of the best-selling hand and body moisturiser Charity Pot. Over a three day period, a BRS staff member and service user were invited to visit the store to provide information about the services BRS provides and the client's personal experiences as a refugee. Additionally, BRS provided a workshop for the Lush staff to raise awareness about refugees and asylum seekers. BRS is very grateful for this partnership with Lush Oxford Street that allowed for £1,098.80 to be raised.

Director's Report

Psychosocial Therapeutic Activities

Refugees who have been forced to leave their homes in search of safety are among the most disadvantaged groups in our society. The majority of them have been faced with the tragic loss of their homes, family, and friends, and as a result they often have very specific mental health needs. Our experience of working with this client group confirms that therapeutic psychosocial activities are the most effective way of intervening to support these clients with their mental health issues.

During 2017/18 we provided our clients with a series of workshops and activities. This was with the aim of helping clients develop strengths, and manage their depression, stress and anxiety, as a way to recover from their trauma. The workshops also helped them to practise ways of caring for themselves and rebuilding their self-esteem, hence more positive integration.

We are pleased to report that during the past year we managed to run 43 different workshops in Mindfulness, Yoga and Art Therapy for 116 clients. This was with the help of professional therapists and qualified instructors to whom we are very grateful.

The combination of Art Therapy and Mindfulness helped participants cope day-to-day and al-

lowed participants to begin to get a sense not only of who they were, and what they had lived through, but potentially who they could become. The sessions also helped refugees and asylum seekers to explore different ways of expressing their emotions and feelings, and to achieve self-discovery through non-verbal communication.

It has been proven that Yoga has a great impact on this particular client group who often suffer from PTSD, depression and anxiety. The Yoga sessions were very well received by participants and helped them to reduce their stress, energise and to improve their body both externally and internally.



Director's Report

Volunteering Project

Volunteers are an invaluable resource who contribute enormously to every service run at BRS. They hail from all walks of life and backgrounds and bring a wealth of expertise and experiences. We are fortunate to currently have 89 volunteers who work side by side with the organisation and provide practical help that makes a big difference to the lives of the vulnerable clients we serve. In line with our safe guarding policy they all are referenced and Enhanced DBS checked.

Volunteers are crucial to the success of all of our programs, including Advice, ESOL, Mother and Toddler Group, Women's Group, Peer Support/Befriending, Youth group, Gardening, Counselling, Office administration, Interpreting, Homework Club, Job Club, and more.

One of the aims of BRS is to involve refugees and asylum seekers with the volunteer programme. This has been successful, as 45% of our volunteers are from refugee backgrounds, who work closely with clients and other native speaker volunteers. Participating in a volunteering experience can provide refugees and asylum seekers with confidence, em-

ployment and language skills, and a positive path to integration.

We support our volunteer advisers to gain accreditation with the Office of Immigration Services Commissioners (OISC). They also have the opportunity to attend in-house and external training relevant to their roles in order to keep them updated and provide quality service to clients. The contribution of the volunteers is highly appreciated at BRS, as they play an immensely important role in the success of the organization. Every year we organize a special Volunteer Reward and Recognition event to celebrate their hard work and outstanding involvement. During Volunteer Week in June 2017, BRS nominated five of our refugee and asylum seeker volunteers to receive an award of recognition from Volunteering Barnet.

We carry out an annual survey on the satisfaction of our volunteers. The result of the last survey carried out in July 2017 confirms that they come from a variety of nationalities and backgrounds, including Afghanistan, Sri-Lanka, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Sudan, Algeria, France, Libya, Pakistan, Syria and native British. 90% of volunteers rated their experience as "excellent" and 10% as "very good".



Volunteers Training and Workshops

During the past year 57 volunteers attended various training sessions and workshops which included: Voluntary Return Awareness, TB Awareness, Introduction to Asylum Support, Managing Pressure at Work, An Overview of Asylum Law in the UK, Managing pressure at work, safeguarding refugee children and young people, ESOL - Pre Entry level, Human Trafficking and its Immigration Implications for Survivors, Gardening and Nutrition and AQA in catering.

We are proud to announce that with BRS's help and support 7 of our volunteers managed to get into paid employment.

We would like to thank our funder The Big Lottery Fund for supporting this essential project. Also our special thanks go to our Operations Manager, Farida Stanikzai for her continuous passion, dedication and excellent work.

**A VERY BIG THANK YOU to all
our volunteers!!!**



Our Volunteers

Volunteer Trustees

Golnar Bokaei
Dr Helal Attayee
Ponusamy Karunaharan
Ammar Bajboj
Roger Selby
Dr Zoe Aslanpour
Ahmad Nabil Hashemy
Conor Doyle

Volunteer Advisers

Jawharah Albakri

Event Volunteers

Razieh Noromand
Zohreh Shahrabi
Shalina Khanom
Masood Tahmassebi
Maryam Mostafavi

Admin and office volunteer

Farzana Saqib

ESOL Volunteer Coordinator

Anne Sultoon

ESOL Volunteers

Elizabeth Perrot
Ros Staines
Rosemary Biseo
Helen Stone
Orna Almagor
Vivien Chappell
Annisa Pryor
Jill Joseph
Helen Syani
Sima Rutherford
Naima Aminuddin

Madeline Ioannidis
Katharine Sathe
Hawa Bibi Muhammad
Linda Carey
Rachel Winton
Amy Lin
Ruth Kitching
Josephine Cuttell
Belqis Sadat
Sue Engelbert
Rahimeh Rahmati
Elizabeth Morrell
Asma Khalil
Fatemeh Mirsadeghi

Finnce and book keeping

Fahimeh Afshinrad
Shahzad Hamidi

Women's group

Tanya Novick
Elsa Shamash
Monica Shackman
Mahtab Azizi
Jane Clegge
Kgnggho Fay
Melissa Sabeti
Moluk Vakili

Men's Group

Fatemeh Mirsadeghi

Mothers and Toddlers group

Patricia Peiris
Hannah Cass-Simpson
Noa Weinstein
Shogofa Nowrozi

Youth Work

Maria Jimenez
Lauren McWilliams
Payam Sattari
Sumayah Bukhari

Interpreters

Rahela Amiry
Hoda Bashaagha
Alaa Alibrahim
Ahmed Aissouf
Adila Badri
Ammar Bajboj
Patricia Peiris
Thuraia Elmayar
Fatemeh Mirsadeghi
Shafiqah Valizadeh
Massoud Tahmassebi
Muzhda Istanikzai
Kgnggho Fay
Sadete Cakigi
Fatemeh Mirsadeghi

Advocates/ Befrienders

Val Davies
Rahela Amiry
Fatemeh Mirsadeghi
Nancy Brenner
Adila Badri
Shafiqah Valizadeh
Houda Bashaagha

Emotional Support

Laila Al-Attar
Nahid Karamali
Claire Jutta
Katie Rose
Sahar Salim

Employment and Education Adviser

Kate Lobo

Gardening

Turyalai Khaksar
Vegeun Boick
Shafiqah Valizadeh

Homework club

Louise Foddy
Hannah Cass-Simpson
Mariam Faruq
Preeti Banerjee
Evelina Vertelkaite
Hanna Cass- Simpson
Katy Soraya
Zahra Monsur
Nazia Bharde
Juliet Kuo
Naz Simsek
Anjli Majithia
Naima Aminuddin

Community Liaison

Michael Mugishangyezi

International Intern

Elsa Roche

Social Work Student

Magnifique Mufabe

Volunteer Trainer

Debby Klein

Volunteers Party 2018



**We make a living with what we get but we make a life by what we give!
A VERY BIG THANK YOU to all our volunteers!!!**

Director's Report

Emotional Support Project

Global events like wars and natural disasters have led to the refugee population reaching numbers not seen since the Second World War. Attitudes to asylum have hardened, with the potential to compromise the mental health needs of asylum seekers and refugees. The challenges in providing mental healthcare for asylum seekers and refugees include working with the uncertainties of immigration status and cultural differences. Asylum seekers are at particular risk of developing mental illness, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety. A major challenge for mental health workers is understanding how different cultural groups communicate psychological distress. Lack of knowledge could lead to some patients receiving inappropriate psychiatric diagnoses, and normal human responses to extremely traumatic life events could be inappropriately pathologised.

During 2017/18 using bilingual therapists, we provided one to one counselling and emotional support to 58 clients who sought this service in different languages and received emotional support in a culturally appropriate manner.

Our special thanks should go to our Emotional Support Officers, Paria Motiee and Sahar Salim and the team of volunteer counsellors who make this vital project a success.

Counselling Service in a Local GP Surgery

During 2017/18 we established a partnership project with Dr. Azim and Partners, our local GP, where counsellors from BRS attended their surgery once a

week and provided mother tongue therapy to their clients. This was a successful project and we thank Dr. Azim for his ongoing support.

Emotional Support Drop In

Our emotional support workers and volunteers run a monthly drop in session on the last Friday of each month, to support refugees and asylum seekers through life's transitions and times of crisis. We do so



by providing cultural familiarity when people need it most, offering a space for open dialogue and expression, and support in accessing professional health and wellbeing services.

During the past year we provided 12 Drop In sessions serving 81 clients with a variety of issues. The feedback from our clients confirms that this project was of a great value for them as they felt they had a place to turn to when they felt they were in need of support emotionally and could not wait to go in the system to be seen. Our special thanks goes to our funder, the Big Lottery Fund for their financial support.



Case Study 3

Helen Forbes
Volunteer ESOL Teacher

Having ended a career as a Secondary School teacher of History and Politics and as Head of Sixth Form, I wanted to help in a refugee camp in Greece. I took the Trinity TESOL qualification, and had a rewarding time in the camp. I took part in many activities there, including teaching English. Via Volunteering Barnet, I then discovered the ESOL classes at BRS. This was exactly the voluntary work I was looking for, and I am so happy to be part of the organisation. Before the summer I taught the Level 4 class once a week, and share taught a Level 1 class. Among other students, this included an ever growing number of unaccompanied children, who had recently come to the country from Calais- France.

I was very pleased to hear that all but one of the boys started at College in September, and believe the classes they had at BRS will help them cope. This term I am teaching class 2B. I love preparing lessons which will give the students useful skills, and of course my aim is to make the lessons interesting and fun. Recently we have been discussing neighbourhoods. The students said they could not make friends with their neighbours, as they didn't have sufficient English to talk to them. Any help we teachers can give, so that the refugees can overcome the isolation which the lack of language imposes, has to be worthwhile.

I hope that my students will in time be able to have a chat with their neighbours, and so feel more integrated into their communities.

Director's Report

London Legal Support Sponsored Walk

The thirteenth anniversary of the London Legal Walk took place on 22nd May 2017 with 700 registered teams and 12,000 walkers. The evening turned out to be perfect for our team and all other walkers on the Legal Support Trust 10K Charity Walk.



Thanks to our dedicated 14 walkers who raised around £1500 in sponsorship, a really remarkable achievement. This is a brilliant achievement during a time when all talk was of spending cuts, higher taxes and general gloom. The funds raised by our walkers went directly to BRS and made a significant contribution to our vital advice service for our clients who have fled persecution and seek asylum and a chance to rebuild their shattered lives.

Our special thanks go to the walkers and most importantly all the sponsors who generously sponsored our walkers to raise funds for this important cause.



Case Study 4



Magnifique Mufabe Trainee Social Worker

My name is Magnifique and I am a 3rd year social work student at Anglia University Chelmsford. During my work placement at Barnet Refugee Service, I was involved with supporting service users with different needs. I made sure each person was treated with respect and was given all the support they needed. I worked to make a difference in their lives in whatever way possible.

On a personal level as a student, I wanted to support individuals in reaching their potential and achieving social integration by assimilating into their new community.

Whilst working at Barnet Refugee Services, I witnessed many successful instances of building rapport and trust with service users. An example of this was during the end of the year party event, the organisation would celebrate with interfaith and community building activities with people from various backgrounds and religions.

Despite the difficulties they may face, dignity is what keeps BRS going as they help create meaning in people's lives. BRS aims to be productive and give back in the community. What I learned working with service users at BRS is that refugees should not be forced to or pushed to share their stories; we as a society should focus on earning their trust and friendship instead. We must be considerate to the struggles, but treat them as dignified human beings.

Lastly, the working environment at BRS was welcoming and exciting. BRS has such a talented, committed, and diverse team all working together to support asylum seekers and refugees in the difficult process of adapting to life in the UK. My work experience gave me a broad understanding of how the process of seeking refuge in a new country can impact on one's life. BRS KEEP UP YOUR GOOD WORK!!!!!!

Case Study 5 Mr. P from Syria

I came to the UK with my wife and my daughter under the Syrian Resettlement Programme last year. My daughter is 8 years old and prior coming to the UK, she did not attend school in Syria due to war and moving from one place to another. When she arrived in the UK, she had no knowledge of English and she didn't get a place in a local primary school until a few months after our arrival.

Barnet Refugee Service set up the "Promoting Education Amongst Refugees" project. The project supports children like mine in rebuilding their lives and integrating into the community. As my daughter did not have the chance in Syria to study, when she came here, her mother and I were very worried about her education and how she would cope at school. Luckily, I was so fortunate to learn about the opportunity at BRS.

My daughter started with no knowledge in English, and she is now able to have a conversation using simple sentences and she is also pleased that she is able to help her mother in her English. She is progressing equally well in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In maths, she has made very good progress, and based on feedback from her primary school teacher, she is now performing above the level for her age.

I had the opportunity to volunteer for this project as teaching assistant, mostly supporting a brother and sister; neither had any prior schooling and nor had their parents. In addition the children both had a speech impediment which made it more difficult for them to communicate. In the beginning, they were both shy and uncomfortable speaking in class. Together with the teacher, we provided emotional support which developed their confidence, enabling them to participate more fully in class.

This project also enabled the provision of a safe, supportive and friendly environment where the teacher was able to create and monitor an individual teaching plan for each child, focusing on getting to know each student and their level of knowledge. He also made sure that parents were kept up to date with the progress of their child and parents were also encouraged to ask if they had any questions. I am ever so grateful to BRS.

Befriending and Peer Support

BRS befriending/Peer Support project was developed in 2016 to support vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers who are socially isolated.

The volunteer befrienders/ peer supporters provide refugees and asylum seekers with opportunities for social interaction and a sense of belonging in the community.

Last year, twelve clients were matched with 7 volunteers. The volunteers helped the clients with GP registration, understanding their health and social care entitlements and how to access them, and accompanying them to health services, housing, job centres, and the Home Office. They also introduced the clients to community activities, services and free or low cost resources such as museums, parks, libraries and charity shops. Additionally, the befrienders helped clients to understand public transport and postal services and how to contact emergency services. Overall, the befrienders help the clients to build confidence, improve their understanding of UK culture and systems, and understand the services and entitlements they receive.

The volunteers typically meet with the clients every week for six months and if there is a need, it can be extended it for another 3 months. The volunteers report each time they visit the client and have regular supervisions with the Operations Manager.

Due to the needs of the scheme and the high demand, we are working to befriend more vulnerable clients by partnering with Host Nation. We are grateful for this partnership that allows our program to grow and meet the needs of our destitute clients.

Our special thanks must go to all the befrienders and volunteers who supported this project during the year.

Director's Report

Residential Retreat

In August 2017, for the second year running, BRS held a weekend residential retreat at Bore Place Farm in Kent. 18 Refugees and asylum seekers had an opportunity to spend time in a natural environment, to bond over food and dance, to attend Freedom through Movement and Music, mindfulness, and art therapy workshops, as well as yoga and meditation classes. They also spent quality time going on a therapeutic nature walk, visiting the allotment and baking bread together.

The retreat helped our clients to break down language barriers, bridge cultural divides, and discover themselves; they were able to connect with people coming from different cultures and backgrounds who had had similar life experiences.

During the nature walk the participants were encouraged to use mindfulness techniques while exploring, to be aware of their thoughts and bring themselves to the here and now. They were each asked to pick something from nature that they most resonated with, and later on to share with the group. At the end of the retreat, they created a four-piece group collage. It was a pleasant experience for all and we thank all our volunteers who supported this activity.



Event to Welcome Syrian Refugees

For the last two years, BRS has been actively involved in supporting Syrian refugees who have come to the boroughs of Barnet, Brent, and Westminster under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. BRS has provided advice, guidance, employment support, and application assistance for travel documents and financial support from other charitable foundations.

On July 1st, 2017, BRS in partnership with Universal Peace Foundation (UPF) organised an event in Moat Mount Outdoor Centre to welcome Syrian refugees to Barnet. This was an opportunity for them to meet one another and socialise and enjoy the food and entertainment whilst the children participated in archery, face painting, henna, and more fun activities.



Director's Report

Parenting Skills Workshops

We know that being a parent can be both rewarding and challenging. But being a refugee parent in a country with a different culture is more challenging. Our parenting workshops were designed to support our clients and to help them build a strong and secure relationship with their children, whatever their age.

In 2017, we delivered 5 parenting skills workshops to 25 parents. The sessions included group discussions and practical tasks to help parents build on their strengths and gave them time and space to think about any changes they wanted to make. The sessions focused on understanding the cultural differences for parenting in the UK and encouraging parents to forge strong bonds and build trust with children. This included disciplinary strategies for toddlers to teens and how to encourage children to feel positive about themselves.

The parents that participated had the opportunity to ask questions about their personal, day-to-day issues with their children and learned how to respond to these situations positively. They were equipped with lots of practical solutions as well as tips for improving communication, building positive relationships, and other useful parenting skills.

“My 2 children are always busy with games, and ipad, the trainer showed me techniques how to encourage my kids to be away from games and not to play all the time.”

Accreditation Course in Catering

During the past year three of our volunteers as well as four of our clients successfully completed the intensive AQA accreditation course in catering which was run by Sufra Foodbank / Food Academy Plus which included training, coaching and support needed to find sustainable employment.

Across the programme, participants learned professional cooking skills, project management skills and customer service as well as numeracy, literacy and ICT. This was followed by work experience in a professional restaurant at the London Designer.

We are pleased to announce that following this program three of our participants managed to get into paid employment. Our special thanks must go to the Sufra Foodbank/Food Academy Plus for organising and managing this course.



Case Study 6 - Mrs. B from Afghanistan

I arrived in the United Kingdom in 1990 and sought asylum. Since then, I have had seven children, who were all born here. Six of my children have citizenship status, but due to complications with my asylum case, myself and my oldest child, who is over 18, are still awaiting decisions regarding our citizenship. Although six of my children are British Citizens, because my case is still pending, I am not eligible to apply for any mainstream welfare benefits. To support myself and my seven children, the only government benefit I receive is child benefit. Currently, I am living with a friend who graciously provides accommodation for me and my children. We share one room, the living room, which we use for eating, sleeping, and everything in between. Due to this and my separation from my husband, I face severe financial burden. Thankfully, BRS has provided immense support to me and my children. We receive vouchers and a weekly food parcel to offset the costs of necessities. My children attend the Youth Club and the Tuition classes every week. Additionally, at BRS I feel comfortable to talk about my struggles, and I know that the staff understand and empathise with me, the always invite me when they have any social events.

I am extremely grateful to BRS for their referral to an immigration advice solicitor from the National Zakat Foundation. I had no access to legal aid, and through this free service, I was advised that my children who had British birth certificates were entitled to apply for UK citizenship, leading to six of my children becoming UK citizens. In turn, this strengthened my eldest child and my cases for status as well.

I am so grateful that now my children with citizenship are now able to attend school trips because they have a passport. Overall, this has given me renewed hope and I am very thankful.

Director's Report

Youth Activities

Of all the children living in England, refugee and migrant children are amongst the most vulnerable due to the combined effects of their own, or their parents', experiences in their country of origin, during migration, and their social and economic circumstances in the UK. Children and adolescents exposed to violence, the upheaval of war and relocation are at high risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression (McGuinness, 2015).

Refugee and migrant children are particularly vulnerable to mental health problems. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and other separated migrant

Children, the majority of whom arrive in the UK alone, are especially vulnerable to experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder, low level and severe depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, self-harming behaviour, and loneliness.

Our youth activities program has been running since 2009. With the financial support of the John Lyon's Charity, throughout 2017/18 we provided a range of recreational and psycho-social activities to



vulnerable young people. During the year we provided one to one and group advice, support, group activities and ultimately helped young refugees' emotional and social development in an informal setting but through educational processes, mostly in the borough of Barnet but in neighbouring boroughs as well.

Through our activities, we enable young people to develop their voice, influence, build confidence and find their place in the society while reaching their full potential.

Our aim is to provide an opportunity for learning which complements that of formal education, also preparing young refugees to tackle a whole spectrum of issues, and through group work (activities) help them develop supportive relationships with other young people, open their eyes to new experiences, and build confidence, ambitions and empathy.

Our special thanks must go to the John Lyons Charity for their continuing financial support.

Weekly Social Club

For the eleventh year running we continued our activities within our weekly Youth Social Club. With special thanks to Middlesex University, we moved our social club to their Hendon Campus, where we have been offered access to many facilities such as football field, basketball, tennis and table tennis. Moreover we gained access to venues that could be used for screening films and hosting computer workshops. This is a mixed group (majority boys) meeting every Thursday with the average of 10-12 young people participating in different activities.

These young people come from a variety of background and nationalities such as Iran, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Somalia and Libya.

During the past year, our young people regularly enjoyed table football, table tennis and pool. We also played football outdoors when the weather was fine. We organised football sessions in partnership with the SHAPE programme within Barnet Council Community Sport Team. We provided a series of workshops for our young people including photography sessions, taekwondo workshops, English through Art, Art workshops and dance and movement workshops.



Director's Report



Natural History and Science Museum Trip

In April 2018 ten of our young people enjoyed a trip to both the Natural History and Science Museums. From dinosaurs and detective work, to nature photography and all-nighters, there were activities to suit all our young people at the Natural History Museum.

As the home of human ingenuity, the Science Museum's record of scientific, technological and medical achievements from across the globe helped our young people to make sense of the science that shapes our lives. This was an enjoyable educational trip for all.



Visit to RAF Museum

We organised a session with the RAF (Royal Air Force) Museum where young people did some art & craft while learning about the history of pilots who participated in the Second World War, some of whom also came from ethnic minority backgrounds. Our young people had the chance to wear some original outfits from that historical period which were part of the RAF Museum heritage.

"for the first time in my life I felt I have a family"

Winter Wonderland Trip

We took eleven of our young people to Winter Wonderland Hyde Park during the Christmas holidays. The feedback from the young people confirms that it was an amazing unforgettable experience for all. Entry to Winter Wonderland was free and our young people enjoyed different rides. The highlight of the day for them was the Giant Wheel ride. The tickets were provided to us for free. We thank Winter Wonderland for the generous offer.



Director's Report

Recreational Summer Activities

Our summer activities were targeted at 25 of those young people who are unaccompanied minors aged 13 – 21 years old who represent one of the most disadvantaged groups in our society. We opened these activities to 20 other young people who access our services as well as those from the host community. The total number of participants in this summer activity was over 50 young people.

The Young refugees from the Calais recently arrived in to the UK are very isolated. As their families sponsored them to leave the refugee camp in Calais they are not entitled to any support. They get few opportunities to participate in mainstream activities or to explore the positive and exciting aspects of London and of the UK in general. With this project our aim was to create a stimulating environment, which would enable them be independent and integrate into their communities. Most of them were unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. Many of them were referred to our service by social services or foster carers, as the great majority of these young people are on a low income and therefore have fewer opportunities to enjoy trips, activities and sport programmes than their peers.

Football Program

Our six weeks football summer program ran at the Capital City Academy in Willesden every Thursday. 25 young people attended and enjoyed the football session on weekly basis. They were highly interested and committed the football, which they expressed by saying, "it is their favourite sport". The Football club was open to any young person who was mainly Syrian and Afghan young refugees who recently arrived from Calais but included other young people from host community.

Tenpin Bowling

Bowling is great fun and is enjoyed by people of all ages. Especially, for those who were experiencing it for the first time, in a great competitive atmosphere full of fun and big laughs. This activity was welcomed by 15 young people who participated. The young people all enjoyed playing it, while having a great sense of competition.



"Thanks to BRS for all the trips which they arranged. We all hope the best for you"

Canoeing and Kayaking

This activity took place in the Lee Valley Regional Park which offers various water activities and it is one of the well-known parks that offer fun activities including water activities. Under the supervision of professional trainers fifteen young people had the chance to visit the park, were provided with special outfit for water activities and participated in canoeing and kayaking activities.



Director's Report



Music Therapy

This six weeks course was well received by the 16 young people who came along to enjoy this activity; for the majority of them it was a unique experience, as they had never previously had the opportunity to experience it. Our professional music therapist used Drums as a tool of intervention to accomplish individualised goals within a therapeutic relationship. In this process the music therapist used music and all of its facets physical, emotional, mental, social, aesthetic, and spiritual to help our traumatised young people to improve their physical and mental health.

“The outdoor sports were interesting activities which made us meet new friends and have a good relationship with them”



Self Defence

We ran a six weeks course of self-defence for 14 young people. The aim of this activity was to support our young people to build on their life skills and develop their confidence and personal power. Run by a professional trainer the course was an opportunity for participants to explore physical and non-physical techniques for self-defence, body language, assertiveness and more. This was a well-attended activity and the feedback from the participants confirmed its popularity.

Camping Day Trip

We initially were planning to have this activity at the end of summer but in order to celebrate Eid (as majority of our young people were Muslim from Syria and Afghanistan) we had this one day activity in July at Moat Mount Camping site. We had over 35 young people attending where we invited some of our Syr-

ian families to celebrate the Eid with our young people. This was proved to be very effective as these particular young people from Calais never had opportunity to be in an environment to enjoy the family like gathering for years. As well as food, entertainment, and BBQ our young people experienced activities like archery, team building games and site mapping exercises.



Director's Report

BRS Football Clubs

Football is the most popular activity among our young people. Last year with the financial support of London Sport and SHAPE / London Borough of Barnet we set up two football clubs. Throughout the year 50 football sessions were run by a qualified football coach Ashley Levien from Superbos Community Football Project.

More than 50 young people were involved in this project most of them living in the Boroughs of Barnet, Brent and Harrow, and the great majority of them being young unaccompanied asylum-seeking male children. Many of them had come from the Calais refugee camp and they were either supported by Social Services or live with their relatives in the UK. Our young people came from Afghanistan, Somalia, Albania, Iran, Sudan, Eritrea, Iraq, Syria and Iran.

We organised 2 football tournaments in April 2018 and our teams played against Watford FC Community Sports and Education Trust team and the Paikwand Association.

This was a successful project and our deepest gratitude must go to our funders, our coach and volunteers who ran this popular project beautifully.

*"I just wanted to thank BRS for giving me the opportunity to deliver my services. The general session delivery and attendance has been amazing and I can honestly and openly say that in all of the years that I have been delivering football projects, this has been one of the best and most enjoyable sessions I have ever had the pleasure of delivering. All of the young people that attend are very polite and respectful, they are always smiling and joking which makes the sessions very enjoyable and I believe this also plays a big part in encouraging further participation. Upon arrival at the session, they all shake hands with each-other and with myself, which really shows a great level of maturity. Many of them even show fantastic leadership skills which I hope can be put to good use by the service going forward." **Ashley Levien***



Director's Report

Jasmine Women's Group



The Jasmine Women's Group was established in 2006. It is an inclusive group which welcomes all women from diverse cultural backgrounds at any stage of the asylum process. From the pool of 50 registered members we have a regular attendance of 25 women on a weekly basis. Their ages range from mid-40s to 70s. They travel to the group from all over London and beyond e.g. Luton and Potters Bar. They meet every Friday from 10:30am to 1:00pm during term time at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Mill Hill.



The weekly sessions of the group provide a meeting place where women from different backgrounds can socialise. The activities help them acclimatise, gain some knowledge of British culture, make friends and relieve their isolation and loneliness. During 2017/18 they were engaged in varieties of psychosocial and therapeutic activities such as art and crafts, yoga, jew-

ellery making, music therapy, hat designing and many more.

The yoga sessions which were run by a qualified trainer proved the most popular activity. We provide 6 courses of 6 sessions of yoga to our ladies. The sessions were chair-based, enabling everyone to participate, including those women who had mobility problems. We feel that English classes for beginners and those more advanced are an essential part of our activities. By providing ESOL sessions we helped the participants to improve their written and spoken language skills.



Over the year the women have had opportunities to attend a variety of workshops on health topics such as cancer recognition and prevention, sexual health, nutrition, well-being and First Aid training. Sessions with Healthwatch Barnet were held to convey the women's experiences with local health services. Outings and



events, including the annual end of the year party, viewing the Xmas lights, celebrating Eid and International Women's Day, summer picnic, visiting Kew Gardens, and the BRS allotment, were an important part of the group's social cohesion and integration.



The Jasmine Women's Group is coordinated and facilitated by four BRS volunteers and 3 volunteers from The Church of the Sacred Heart, Mill Hill who is providing us with the venue free of charge. Our special thanks must go to them. We would also like to extend our deepest gratitude to Tanya Novick who has been coordinating this group since its birth in 2006.

*"Helps me not to be lonely.
Less depression, less stress."*

*"If not there, stay indoors talking to
nobody. Very lonely."*

*"Special day for us. Plan to get out
of home."*

Director's Report

Men's Group

We are pleased to report the success of our Men's Group for the 7th year running. Throughout the years we changed the shape and the form of this activity in consultation with the participants. The group expressed an interest in expanding ESOL provision for this group.

The participants are attending ESOL classes on a weekly basis and are able to take part in psycho-social activities i.e. yoga classes, educational board games and outings. They also have an opportunity to socialise in a friendly atmosphere. In addition we run health promotion workshops for them and attend to any problems that the participants may be experiencing.

We are also very thankful to our committed volunteers, without whom the club could not exist.



Job Club

Gaining employment is an integral factor in the successful resettlement of refugees as it allows for economic and social integration. Refugees and asylum seekers who arrive in the UK have a broad skill set and include many highly educated individuals. However, refugees and asylum seekers face multiple barriers to employment upon arrival in the United Kingdom. These include a lack of understanding of the labour market, lack of relevant experience, lack of understanding of UK work culture, and the language barrier.

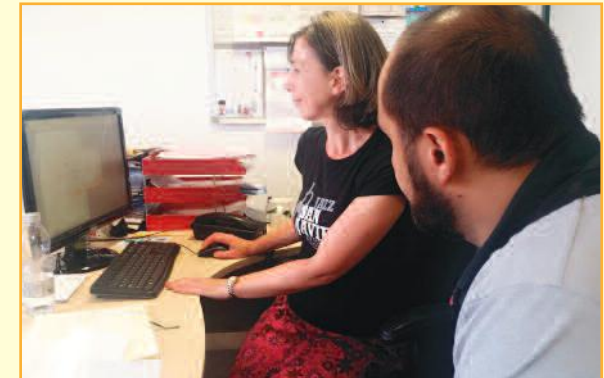
In 2017 BRS provided advice and guidance to those refugees who were looking to access employment, training, voluntary work, and admission to college or university.

Our employment advisor, Kate Lobo, assisted 41 volunteers and clients in CV writing, online job searches, registering with online job portals, applying for jobs, completing application forms, interview techniques and training, how to respond to a job offer, and queries regarding national insurance numbers. She has also assessed their suitability for different types of employment, in terms of computer literacy and English language skills.

In addition, Kate made direct contact with hiring companies and organisations in both the voluntary and private sector. In this capacity, she liaised with hiring agents after a client's CV was sent to advocate on their behalf and provided a reference for their application. This increased the likelihood of clients receiving an interview or opportunity for employment. Additionally, she has formed relation-

ships with both 5E, a specialist skills training organisation, and Barnet and Southgate College.

We are proud to say that last year with Kate's support 7 volunteers and 9 clients got into paid employment and several were registered for IT training courses, and others have accepted voluntary roles in charity shops and foodbanks. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Kate Lobo for leading on this essential project and dedicating her time on a voluntary basis.



*"After many years of unemployment I finally found a job !
Thank you BRS!"*

Refugee Awareness Talks

During 2017, BRS was invited by many churches and schools to raise awareness about refugees and asylum seekers. This helps the community, particularly children, to better understand and empathise with the refugees and asylum seekers in the community. In an environment of media hostility, this awareness is essential to put the asylum seekers' needs and rights into context.

Last November, BRS was invited to Kingsbury High School to explain to students what BRS is doing, why it is needed in the community and how refugees and asylum seekers, especially children, benefit from the services the charity provides.

We strongly believe that this activity is one of the best tools to get the host community involved with encouraging of more positive integration of refugees.



"Thank you very much for coming in yesterday, it made a huge difference for the students to actually meet a real person instead of researching from the internet." **Annette Woodrow**

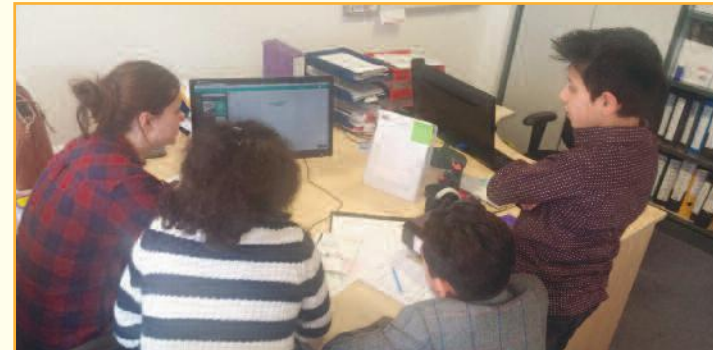
Student Placements

Barnet Refugee Service works with a range of universities, colleges and schools and offers students the experience of a real-life work placement.

In 2017, BRS worked closely with Anglia Ruskin University and provided 70 days' work placement for a social work student. In addition, a 100 hours work placement was provided for a student from Barnet and Southgate College.

The students had an opportunity to learn from and work alongside our experienced staff. Work placement is very beneficial to students as it aids in the transition from academic studies towards full time employment.

BRS also offered two work-placements to students from Mill Hill County School in 2017. The school students had an opportunity to interact with clients and better understand their needs. This scheme helped promote understanding and empathy towards refugee and asylum-seekers, particularly for their refugee and asylum-seeking classmates. The students participated in distributing food parcels and gained a full understanding of the services BRS provides.



"We are very grateful to you as this most definitely changed their mind set and attitude towards the world of work." **Employment Broker -Barnet and Southgate College**

Director's Report

Celebrating Elsa's 91st Birthday



Last year, we celebrated the 91st birthday of one of our most dedicated volunteers, Elsa Shamash, who has been involved with our Women's Group (Jasmine) for over ten years. Elsa was one of the tens of thousands of children who fled to the UK from Germany under the Kindertransport 80 years ago. As a refugee herself, Elsa dedicated most of her life to supporting those with a similar background. Below is an overview of her life in her own words:

"I really enjoy working with the Jasmine Ladies Group as my sympathies are for refugees, as I myself was one nearly 80 years ago.

Conditions in Germany in the 1930 were very hard and Jews became the scapegoat and were severely restricted. When I was a child, other children were no-longer allowed to play with me. Entry to theatres, cinemas, swimming pools and all public places was forbidden. After the 9th of November 1939, the night of broken glass, when synagogues were set on fire and burnt to the ground, Jewish shops looted, and many men deported to Concentration camps, we knew it would be impossible to stay, but nearly all countries, like now, and the USA had closed their borders. We were desperate. Some Englishmen pleaded with the Prime Minister, as we are pleading at the moment, for England to at least accept the children, and provided we did not cost the government anything, 10,000 unaccompanied mainly Jewish children arrived from Germany, Austria and Tchekeslovakia before the outbreak of the war. We were saved from the death camps that murdered so many of our parents.

I came to a boarding school where the environment was pretty hostile, and conditions were awful, but I was saved from a much worse fate, I was only 11 but knew it. I was lucky that my parents arrived soon after, but penniless with no permission to work either paid or unpaid, pity that the same condition applies now.

We had a very difficult life as refugees but once settled in School in Cambridge and University in London I had a good life. All is well that ends well.

But my story shows what scourge discrimination of any kind is And I would like to plead for tolerance all round. We are fundamentally all the same and should have equal rights."



Case Study 7

Amy Lin
Volunteer ESOL Teacher

I had just completed my CELTA English teacher training and was eager to put my new skills to good use. I was fortunate to come across the wonderful team at BRS. From first contact, Farida and the team welcomed me with open arms. They provided wonderful support and teaching independence. I initially taught the beginners class then moved into the intermediate class.

I found all the students incredibly motivated and willing to learn. They came from countries ranging from DR Congo, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, China - the list goes on.

It was such a wonderful experience teaching them but also being taught by them. I enjoyed learning about their respective countries and cultures - some highlights including learning Arabic phrases to say when someone sneezes, hearing about the beauty of DR Congo and laughing about lifts breaking down.

BRS is such a wonderful and unique place and I can't wait to see the further development and growth of the students in the coming months and years.

Financial Information

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2018

Income Resources	2018 Unrestricted Funds £	2018 Restricted Funds £	2018 Total Funds £	2017 Total Funds £
Incoming Resources from Generated Funds				
Voluntary Income	67,298	8,311	75,609	34,095
Grants	0	46,060	46,060	29,000
Interest Receivable	160	0	160	134
Other incoming resources	0	187,000	187,000	182,145
Total incoming resources	67,458	241,371	308,829	245,374
Cost of Charitable Activities	72,456	223,065	295,521	235,245
Governance Costs	1,086	7,517	8,603	5,275
Total Resources Expended	73,542	230,582	304,124	240,520
Net Incoming/(Outgoing) Resources - Before Transfers Between Funds	(6,084)	10,789	4,705	4,854
Gross Transfers Between Funds	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds	(6,084)	10,789	4,705	4,854
Total Funds at 1 April 2017	54,428		54,428	49,574
Total Funds at 31 March 2018	48,344	10,789	59,133	54,428

Trustees' Statement

The above statement has been extracted from the accounts prepared by Ashley Nathoo & Co and were approved by the Trustees of Barnet Refugee Service on 5th December 2018. The full report will be submitted to the Charities Commission and to Companies House. Copies of the full report can be obtained from the Director of Barnet Refugee Service.

Zoe Aslanpour
Chair

Partnership Organisations

- 1 Advice UK
- 2 Anglia Ruskin University - Official Site
- 3 Ashford Place
- 4 Atta & Co Solicitors
- 5 BAN Network
- 6 Barnet Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team
- 7 Barnet Healthwatch
- 8 Barnet Mencap
- 9 Barnet Recovery Centre
- 10 Barnet Social Services
- 11 Barnet Volunteering Centre
- 12 Barnet Wellbeing Hub
- 13 Barnet Youth Foundation
- 14 Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust
- 15 Blenheim
- 16 Breaking Barriers
- 17 Brent Social Services
- 18 British Red Cross
- 19 Cambridge University
- 20 Camden Social services
- 21 Centre Point
- 22 Community Barnet
- 23 Community Focus (Articulate)
- 24 Doctors of the World
- 25 Dr Azim and Partners
- 26 European Network
- 27 European Placement Network
- 28 Good for Goods
- 29 Grahame Park One Stop Shop
- 30 Great Ormond Street Hospital
- 31 Helen Bamber Foundation
- 32 Hendon Jobcentre
- 33 Hendon School
- 34 Hestia
- 35 Host Nations
- 36 Hyde Children Centre
- 37 Inclusion Barnet
- 38 Islington Law Centre
- 39 Job Centre Plus
- 40 Kew Gardens (Community Scheme)
- 41 Kingsbury High School
- 42 Metropolitan Police
- 43 Middlesex University
- 44 Migrant Help
- 45 Multifaith Forum
- 46 Multilingual Wellbeing Service
- 47 North Locality Link Worker
- 48 North London Hospice
- 49 Onwards and Upwards (Leaving Care Team)
- 50 Pret a Manger
- 51 Refugee Homes
- 52 Refugee Action
- 53 Refugee Council
- 54 Refugee Women's Association
- 55 Safe Passage
- 56 Silver Birch Care
- 57 The Network
- 58 The Sacred Heart Church
- 59 The Tavistock & Portman NHS
- 60 Transitions Living
- 61 Trinity Church in North Finchley
- 62 Turning Point
- 63 Young Roots

Case Study 8 - BRS Client

I am a single mother of four children who came to the UK 10 years ago. I lost my husband as a result of conflict when he went back home to visit his family two years ago. My husband used to help my kids with their homework, after his death, I do not have any one who could help. I did not attend school in my country, therefore, cannot help my children with their education. I was extremely depressed especially after the death of my husband. I was very depressed and most of the time I used to wake up in the middle of the night and thinking about my kids' education and my lack of the ability to help them to do their homework. I am dependent on welfare benefits; I could not afford to pay for my kid's tuition. I have been attending the Barnet Refugee Service's English classes for the last 3 years. One day I was in the class that one of the BRS's staff came and gave us a leaflet and informed us about the opportunity for free children's tuitions. I was extremely happy and enrolled my children. Since 2016 my children attend the tuitions. My children progressed dramatically.

BRS also helped me and provided my very nice and caring befriender. She visits me and my children every week, she takes us out to the park, cinema and help my kids with homework too. We all learn new things from her especially about British culture, free places to visit. She took us to the Kew garden and my children enjoyed a lot.

Thank you from bottom of my hearth, especially Farida who always thinking about me and my children. I always tell my children to give back to BRS when they start university.

Donations

We would be very grateful if you would consider supporting our work financially. If you wish to give us a Donation, please fill out the form below.

I enclose my donation to Barnet Refugee Service to help you provide vital support to destitute asylum seekers and refugees in Barnet.

Cheque (payable to Barnet Refugee Service) for
£_____ enclosed

Please complete the following Gift Aid Declaration as this allows us to claim tax back from the Inland Revenue on your donation without any extra cost to you.

Barnet Refugee Service
(Registered Charity No: 1107965)
Gift Aid Donation Form

Full Name

Address

Post Code

Declare that I want Barnet Refugee Service to reclaim tax on my Donation of £ and any future donation until I inform you otherwise.

Signed

Date : ____/____/____

Note: You must Pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim on your Donation currently 28p for every £1 you give.

**Please return this form with your donation to:
Barnet Refugee Service,
Hyde House
The Hyde, London NW9 6LH**



Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control

[article 25(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights].

