

Barnet Refugee Service

ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11





Our major funders for 2010/11

- **Barnet Primary Care Trust**
- **Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust**
- **Youth Opportunities Fund**
- **Integrated Youth Support Service-
Voluntary Sector Fund**
- **Lloyds TSB**
- **London Councils**
- **The Jill Franklin Trust**
- **The Beatrice Laing Trust**
- **The Church and Community Fund**
- **The Odin Charitable Trust**

Barnet Refugee Service 020 8905 9002

Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm

Barnet Refugee Service, Suite 9, Second Floor Podium, Hyde House, The Hyde NW9 6LH

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

Charity Number: 1107965

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

Co Ltd by Guarantee: 5243595

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Foreword from the Chairman



Through our work we are aware of the cruelty sometimes inflicted on our fellow man...

Looking back over earlier reports I have made to you, it is striking how often I have needed to refer to the difficult economic environment we are working in. It will therefore not be surprising for you to hear that the past year has presented us with the greatest challenges we have yet had to meet.

BRS has operated during the year with great flexibility and we have striven ceaselessly to always be there to support and advise our vulnerable clients and to squeeze the most out of every donated pound.

This has been, despite the challenges, another successful year for us in providing our services to people at all the various stages of the asylum process. We enter the next year from a position of relative financial strength under the expert guidance of our Honorary Treasurer.

Our continuing success is greatly to the credit of our Director, Nazee Akbari, who has been tireless and imaginative in her endless search for new funding. She has managed the organization with considerable skill and we all owe her a great debt of gratitude for her hard work.

Special thanks are also due to all our employees

who are the ones who have had to take on the extra workload. I referred above to the great flexibility we have adopted during the year, the reality of this flexibility is that our team are always finding a way within their tight schedule to take on one more client's problem.

Our staff team are helped enormously by all our volunteers and our Director is equally helped by the guidance of the trustees. We thank all our wonderful trustees and volunteers.

In seven short years BRS has established itself as a major member of the local voluntary sector and is respected for its integrity and determination to help those who have fled persecution to start a new and successful life in this country.

Through our work we are aware of the cruelty sometimes inflicted on our fellow man. This awareness drives our absolute commitment at BRS to human rights, freedom of expression and personal dignity not as an abstract value but as an individual right for every person.

Peter Salomon
Chairman

Message from the Director



It gives me great pleasure to present you with our annual report 2010/11. This report highlights the road that BRS has taken over the past year to meet the challenges of providing a professional, accessible and supportive service to refugees and asylum seekers in our community. This past financial year was an anxious time at BRS. The current financial cuts left us uncertain about the future of our ongoing SLA with NHS Barnet. Furthermore, the London Councils' sudden decision of not funding their funded organizations beyond March 2011 added to this insecurity! We also had other funding streams due to end, making us face the possibility of having to cut back on valuable and important areas of activity. I am delighted to say that those fears have now been dispelled for another year thanks to successful bids, renewal of our SLA and the public campaign against the London Councils decision. These all enabled us not only to maintain our many activities but also to be responsive to developing needs amongst refugees and asylum seekers. Our long-established information, advice and

services have remained in great demand with busy drop-in sessions at five different locations across the boroughs of Barnet and Enfield. Basic legal advice has also been available by our advisors who are registered with the Office of Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC). Unfortunately due to the changes and cuts at Barnet Housing Support Services our partnership with them ended at the end of the financial year and we lost our Housing Support officer, seconded to us by Barnet Council. Our support for destitute asylum seekers has been maintained throughout the year, thanks to the continued generosity of supporters who have made one-off or regular donations or raised money through a variety of events, and to the dedicated work of many volunteers, including asylum seekers themselves.

With special thanks to the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust, we further developed our Refugee Youth Support activities. An area of great distress for us still remains that is to say the inability for asylum seeking children to access higher education and we are currently engaging with a number of partners i.e. Omid International, to try and address this problem.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to our staff and volunteers, for their dedication and commitment and the service they all provide so full-heartedly to people in need to ease the process of integration. On behalf of the team and of all our clients, I

would also like to express sincere thanks to all our funders who have enabled us to provide the services that we set ourselves to do, including: NHS Barnet, Lloyds TSB, The Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust, London Councils and many others.

I would also like to thank all the supporters and friends of BRS who give donations and their time to help us in our venture. Without their ongoing support we would not be where we are now. I am certain that we will continue to receive such support in the future. Last but not least, my deep-felt appreciation goes to the Board of Trustees who have given me and the team constant support and motivation. I would like to mention the ongoing, sometimes daily support from our Chair Peter Salomon. Peter has been like a rock in our sometimes uncertain situations and I am forever grateful to him for his support and solidarity.

Barnet Refugee Service strives to remain passionate about its work, even in the face of competitive funding and above all exists to work in partnership and not competition with other organisations. Our business is still driven by the needs and demands of our clients and this will always be the driving force in what we do.

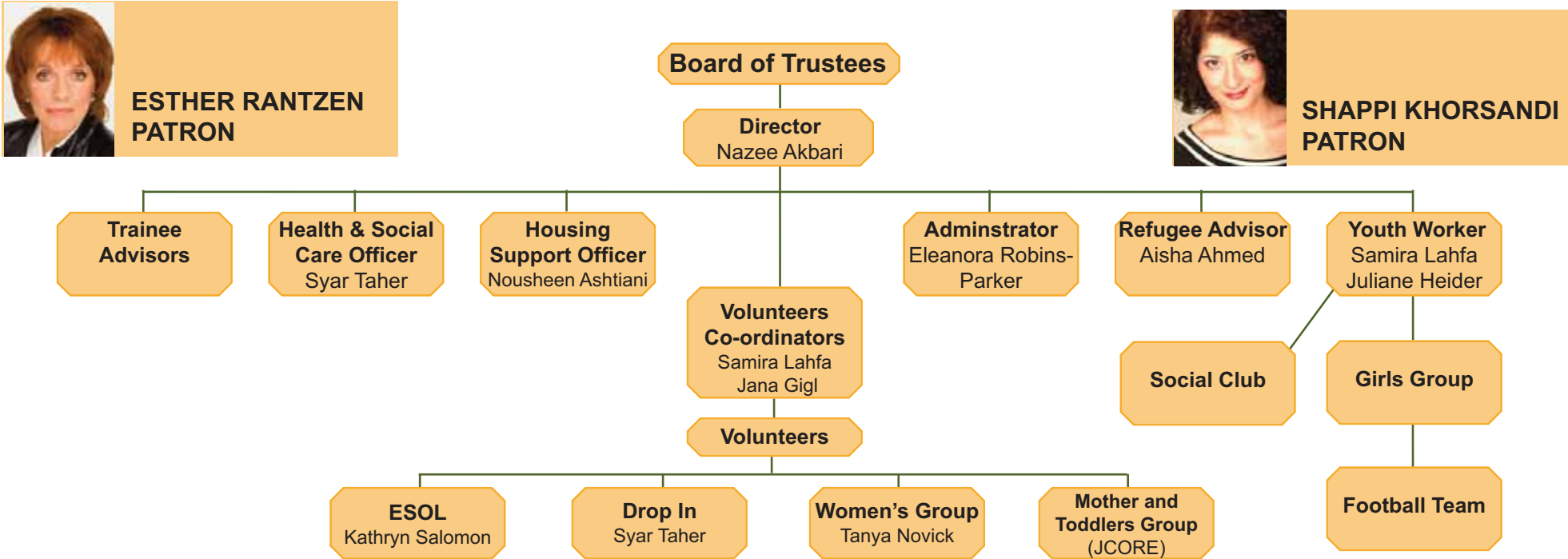
Nazee Akbari
Director

Organisational Chart



Trustees serving in 2009/10 were:
 Peter Salomon (chair)
 Ponusamy Karunaharan (treasurer)
 David Levey (Secretary)
 Tirza Waisel
 Tanya Novick
 Roger Selby
 Kamran Saedi
 Shubhi Raymond
 Anahied Hatamian

*Board of Trustees: from right sitting Tirza Waisel, Ponusamy Karunaharan, Kamran Saedi
 From right standing: Roger Selby, Shubhi Raymond, Peter Salomon, Tanya Novick, David Levey*



Our Staff



Nazee Akbari
Director



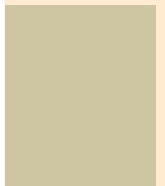
Syar Taher *Refugee Adviser (Health, Housing and Welfare Benefits) with a specialism in Section 4 and NASS support*



Samira Lahfa *Volunteering Development Coordinator (left September 2010)
Refugee Youth Worker*



Nousheen Ashtiani, *Housing Support Officer, seconded to BRS by Barnet Housing Service, Barnet Council*



Eleanora Robin-Parker *Administrator (Joined July 2010)*



Aisha Ahmed, *Refugee Advisor, General advice including welfare benefit, housing, education*



Jana Gigl *Volunteering Development Coordinator (Joined November 2010)*



Kathryn Salomon
Volunteer ESOL Co-ordinator



Tanya Novick
Volunteer Women's Group Coordinator



Juliane Heider *Refugee Youth Worker (Joined October 2010)*

Director's Report

Annual Report for the year 2010-11

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

Introduction

Barnet Refugee Service is situated at:

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 2011 can be found on page 23 .

The Board of Trustees are satisfied with the performance of the charity during the year and the position at 31 March 2011 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 fulfill 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:

- **Barnet Primary Care Trust**, to cover the salary of the Refugee Specialist Health Adviser and half of the Director's posts plus a proportion of the running costs
- **Lloyds TSB** , towards the costs of our Volunteering Development program
- **London Councils**, through BAN partnership led by AdviceUK which cover salary of a part time refugee advisor
- **The Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust**, towards the costs of the Director's and the part time Administrator's salaries, and the costs of the Refugee Youth Support project and Women's Group
- **Odin Charitable Trust** towards the costs of our Drop in
- **Youth Opportunity Fund** towards the running cost of our Social Club in partnership with Paiwand Afghan association
- **Jill Franklin Trust** Towards the costs of our Drop in

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. 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.

Director's Report

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 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.

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.

Director's Report

Our Fundraising in 2011/12 will focus on securing funds to make Volunteer Development Coordinator role into a full time position and recruit an additional part time advisor. We will seek funding for the continuation of our Refugee Youth Worker's post and develop our youth activities further focusing on projects supporting emotional wellbeing of young refugees. We will take part in partnership bids to expand our services.

Donations

We received over £10000 cash donations from many individuals, organisations and faith groups. Thanks to the generosity of the public and the hard work of our dedicated volunteers we raised over £3000 through 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 North Western Reform Synagogue for their massive appeal for both money and gifts in kind as well as The Khwateen Pakistani Muslim Women's Association for their Ramadan Appeal.

We also received over £250 from Waitrose, the Supermarket, through their Community Matters scheme which was used towards our ESOL classes.

During the year food was donated from numerous churches, temples and synagogues. The food was utilised as emergency food parcels for destitute asylum seekers at our weekly Drop In. It was not practical to value these vital donations but we believe the retail value to be in excess of £6000. We continued receiving left-overs or sample from our local Salisbury's store under the banner of 'Local Charity Supported by Local Stores'.

For our Drop in we continued receiving fresh sandwiches from Pret a Manger at Euston Station branch and bread from Daniels Bakery in Temple Fortune. During the year, second hand clothes and baby equipment were provided by many donors with a probable value in excess of £3,000. For our end of year party we were donated many gifts from various sources and for the third year running we received a massive donation of brand new stationery as gifts for children from the Play Write Group.

Background to our work

Our client group is one of the most vulnerable sectors of society. They have very low, or no incomes. Many are not allowed to work. They have poor linguistic skills and little or no knowledge of their rights and entitlements. They need our help to access health, housing and other services. A high proportion of them suffer from poor mental health resulting from traumatic experience in their home country (war, famine, rape, violence) and the difficulties they face in adapting to life in the UK. Gaining the motivation, skills and knowledge to enter into full employment is a daunting task for many.

Asylum seekers are not allowed to work. There are often lengthy gaps in provision of support on arrival and on getting refugee status.

The refugee children are the most vulnerable group of all. As a result of what they have been through, the inner worlds of some young refugees and asylum seekers may be populated by abuse and horror that expresses itself in a variety of unconscious, non-verbal manners, evoking strong negative feelings in the people around them. Even refugee children whose experiences are less obviously terrifying have to deal with being displaced and severe disruption of the normal routines of life.

Many emotional and behavioural problems among refugee children are consistently associated with the effects of war and other atrocities. Increased anxiety and depression are common responses. Some children act out their distress rather than talking about it.

Parents and teachers have identified and reported significant changes in behaviour following war experiences. Self-harm and eating disorders are another regular manifestation of distress in children who have been exposed to violence. Poor concentration and memory impairment are common reactions, and children can suffer loss of development skills which threatens their educational achievement, and, when left unattended, these difficulties can progress to serious and complex problems later in life.

There are not enough adequate mechanism/services to support this client group in place.

Director's Report

London Legal Support Sponsored Walk

On the first warm evening of May, 23 friends of BRS joined with 4500 supporters of the London Legal Support Trust to walk 10kilometres. Our team raised over £3000 in sponsorship money for our organisation.

A brilliant achievement during a time when all talk was of spending cuts, higher taxes and general gloom. This 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.



This was our third year participating in the walk and there was a new route taking in St James, Green and Hyde Parks. Perfect on a lovely spring evening. All our walkers had a truly enjoyable evening, even if they were a little stiff the next morning.

Case Study 1

Mr. X was brought to us by a good Samaritan who found him sleeping rough at a bus stop. The client is HIV positive and suffers from other health problems. On investigation, we discovered that the client was a failed asylum seeker, destitute and very frail. Mr.X had no outstanding asylum claim with the Home Office.

We assisted the client in submitting a fresh claim and also applied for section 4 support on his behalf. Client was also provided with food parcel to ease his hardship. We liaised with medical professionals to see that the client received the necessary medical attention he needed. Within 8 weeks of his fresh claim, the client was granted Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK. Mr.X has finally settled down in the UK and is working as a volunteer and also looking for paid for work...

I thought I will
be dying on my own...
BRS saved my life!

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. We have seen 866 clients which includes 363 new clients and handled over 5023 enquiries including 1510 cases during the last year. (Please see charts on page 12).

We maintained strong links with other advice providers with whom we cross refer. We continued offering services to our clients through immigration advice surgery, Housing and specialist welfare benefits advice surgery at our base at Hyde House. We also work in partnership with Barnet Multicultural Centre where we get our partner solicitors to see the clients. The service is provided by Barnet Law Service and Duncan Lewis Solicitors

Outreach advice clinics

Our team of advice workers offer outreach clinics in 7 locations across the boroughs of Barnet and Enfield.

- Emergency Support Drop In for destitute asylum seekers to access food parcels and clothes on Mondays.
- Advice and Information Centre, Edgware Community Hospital on Tuesday afternoons
- Three Barnet College sites on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays
- Edgware Community Hospital, Refugee clinic on Friday afternoons
- Southgate College on Tuesdays

Health work

Much of our work is directly health focused such as

the advice work where we saw clients with over 360 health related enquiries. Our health focused activities include:

- Policy work with PCT: actively involved with CAMHS policy and strategy planning with regards to young refugees, policy work round using interpreters
- Partnership work with JCOR and attracted funding for Mothers & Toddlers Group to promote Healthy Life Style by health promotion workshops
- Production of an illustrated handbook for Maternity Dept by our ESOL teachers for mothers with limited or no English
- Involvement and support the work of Community Development Workers in Barnet
- Being a steering group member of Barnet Multilingual Wellbeing Service with the aim to set up an organisation focusing on better wellbeing of ethnic minorities in Barnet.

In addition to the above BRS has been actively involved with PCT's different activities to promote better health within the community for example following the Swine Flu Epidemic we actively participated to educate our client group about this by distributing leaflets in different languages or organizing workshops.

We are a resource to be drawn upon by health professionals to support them in their roles and help ensure Barnet PCT continues to provide appropriate services. Through the partnership work we do with Barnet PCT such as the PPI Diversity workgroup and the Mental Health Network we aim to assist in looking at how services can be improved.

We were closely involved in policy work around using interpreters, overseas charging, provision of counselling and psychotherapy services for refugees and asylum seekers including young refugees.

During the past year we gave several presentations to health professionals and at conferences and seminars on the health needs and in particular mental health needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

Health Access Workshops

We are performing an essential link between Barnet PCT and refugees and asylum seekers in Barnet through our workshops and user group and as a patient representative, helping to increase understanding and raise awareness amongst health professionals of refugees' needs and issues and amongst refugees of their rights to health and their responsibilities in using the services. BRS gave 12 health talks to refugees and asylum seekers. These included talks to classes of ESOL students at Barnet College different sites (over 200 students in total), other refugee organisations and our own projects.

The aim of these health talks is to ensure our client group is using health services adequately and appropriately. It covers the common services available, how to access them, what to do in an emergency or at the weekend or evening.

At these talks it was stressed how this information should be passed around to all friends and family and a resource pack including information on local services was distributed.

Health Promotion workshops

During the past year we delivered 13 health promotion workshops which included Mental wellbeing, Women's Health, Healthy Eating, Swine Flu, Men's Health, Breast Awareness, Importance of Vaccination and Smoking cessation. We also provided health focused workshops for our young people at our social club on Drug abuse and Sexual Health.

Director's Report

Housing Support Service



Barnet Refugee Service, the Barnet Housing Service and The Supporting People Program piloted a partnership program to ensure that all refugees/asylum seekers receive the help and guidance they need to succeed in living independently and fully participating in the society they live in. This partnership program started in September 2007. This has been an extremely successful service. Nousheen Ashtiani, our Housing Support officer, spent 4 days a week at BRS and 1 day a week at Barbara Langston House, North Finchley. During the past year this project dealt with more than 230 clients with over 1000 enquiries supporting refugees and asylum seekers with their practical issue and in particular housing. Unfortunately due to the cuts and the change of policies this successful project ended in March 2011.

BAN (BME Advice Network)



BRS is a member of this successful BME Advice Network. Led by AdviceUK and funded by London Councils as a partner BRS received funding and has recruited a part time refugee advisor since November 2008. BAN is an integrated network of quality assured advice services delivered by and for people from London's migrant and refugee communities. BAN currently has 45 members, 19 of which comprise a sub-group delivering the London Councils funded Access Improvement Project. This project was initially funded until October 2012. But in December 2010 due to recent changes, the London Councils, which represents the capital's 33 local au-



thorities, decided to repatriate funds from its £26m grants program to individual councils, meaning they would be free to spend the money as they chose and our network did not fall into their priority groups and was decided that we will not be funded beyond March 2011. Following a campaign, a judicial review brought by one of BAN members which resulted in the Judge ruling that London Councils' consultation process was flawed and that it failed to meet statutory equality duties. The judge quashed all of the cuts and ruled that London Councils must rerun the consultation process with full impact equality assessments. As result of the second consultation it was confirmed that the funding for our group continues until the end of the original commission. This was excellent news! We would like to thank all parties involved for their contributions to this success - responding to the consultation and for their key roles in the campaign.

Our refugee advisor, Aisha Ahmed, is providing advice, information and support to refugees and asylum seekers on a variety of issues.

Meeting our targets

We have met or exceeded all of the targets agreed with our funders which include:

- 866 clients accessing advice services including 477 new clients
- 5023 advice enquiries
- 599 advice outcomes
- 736 client visits to emergency support drop in services
- 6 training sessions to statutory agencies and refugees/RCOs
- 8 health promotion workshops
- 12 workshops on accessing health, housing and welfare benefits

- 281 clients accessed our service through Barnet College and Southgate College Drop in surgeries
- 21 users accessed employment and volunteering opportunities
- Over 45 women registered our Jasmine in partnership with Arts Depot
- Over 200 young people involved with our successful Youth Work projects
- 87 clients attended our Immigration Drop in with visiting solicitors
- 14 clients attended our Housing Drop in with visiting solicitors
- Successful ESOL provision including 34 health related Lessons
- Successful Roots & Wings Girl's group work in Partnership with Arts Depot
- Successful Mothers & Toddlers Group in partnership with JCOR
- In house legal advice in partnership with Barnet Law Service and Duncan Lewis Solicitors

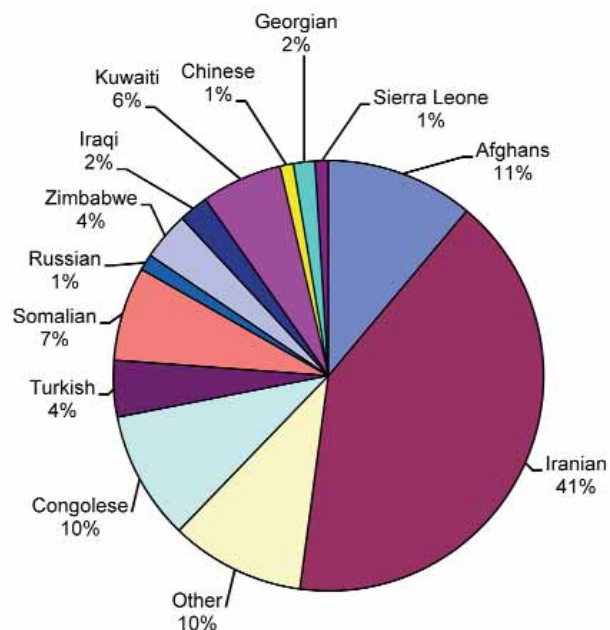
Refugee Awareness training

During 2010/11 we have delivered 6 refugee awareness trainings including 3 Mental Health Awareness workshops to professionals. This is a central part of our strategy to ensure that appropriate and accessible services are provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Barnet and that professionals from those service providers know how to best help them. In an environment of media hostility it is even more important that we are able to deliver this training to front line providers to put asylum seekers' needs, rights and entitlements in to context.

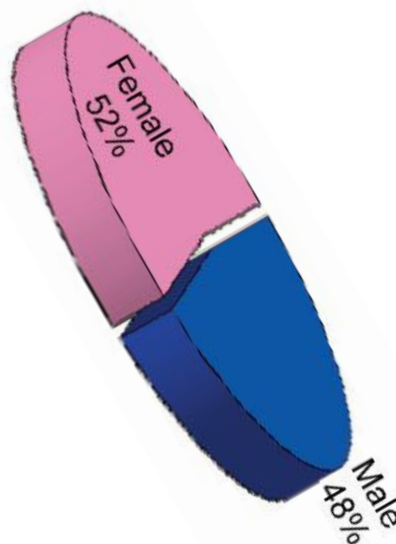
The course covers the health and other needs refugees and asylum seekers have and ensures that health professionals and other service providers are able to respond appropriately to the specific issues of this vulnerable client group whilst understanding the rights and entitlements they have.

Director's Report

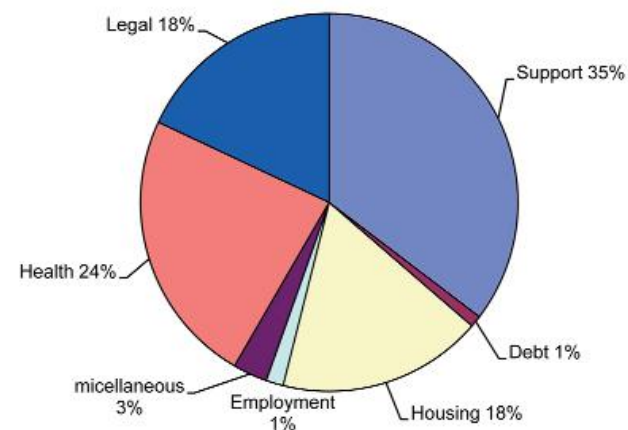
Where our clients come from?



Clients by Gender



Enquiry Areas 2010-11



Customer Satisfaction Survey

In order to retain our Quality Mark Standard of the Community Legal Service (CLS) as well as making sure we provide 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 2010/11 we randomly selected clients who had used our services and gave them questionnaires. Over all 86 questionnaires were distributed out of that 51 were returned. According to the CLS / CDS Client Feedback Guide a normal response is between 25 – 30 %. Our response therefore is a healthy 59%. Out of the 51 questionnaires returned 73% felt 'very satisfied' with our services 48% felt the service they received improved their case. To access the full report on our client evaluation please contact our office.

ESOL Classes

ESOL Classes

The government emphasises 'multiculturalism' and 'integration' and the fact that immigrants should learn English! At the same time the entitlement to English classes at colleges of further education is being cut.

People who move to the UK need English language skills to access training, gain employment and participate in society..

The government's new proposal indicates that asylum seekers and people on Section 4 support will not be eligible for full public funding - they will be ex-



pected to pay 50%. This will also affect mothers with young children as they will be considered as "non-active claimants"! Research carried out for Greater London Authority indicates "fluency in the English language to be the single most important factor affecting refugees' ability to find work, their type of employment, and their future employment prospects. In addition, English language ability is likely to affect other integration factors such as community cohesion." (A survey of Refugees Living in London: Ipsos Mori 2010). The same report confirms "...women and people with low or no qualifications, and more likely, family commitments are said to be a barrier to accessing ESOL training."

We strongly believe that it is fundamentally important for refugees to be able to start learning English as soon as they arrive in the UK. We believe that integration starts at day one, the day a person claims asylum and in order to bridge the gap we continued developing our ESOL classes for those who can not access mainstream education services.

Our ESOL classes have been running since January 2008.

There are 3 levels, Pre-entry (our class1) for students with no English and often little or no literacy in their own language. Entry 1 (our class 2) and Entry 2 and above (our class 3). The twice weekly classes are of 90 minutes duration. We have 5 qualified and experienced teachers and three helpers who all are working with us on voluntary basis. During the past year our student base was principally drawn from Afghanistan, Iran, and the Congo. The friendly and supportive atmosphere generated in the classes was very beneficial for those students suffering depression as a consequence of their refugee experience. Additionally we have also run a highly successful class for expectant mothers where they learn the lexis needed for doctor and hospital anti-natal visits. A high emphasis was placed on vocabulary for visiting the doctor – something our students all need to know.

**"Before,
the doctor talked
but, I did not understand.
Now I know the words."**

We feel we have had a successful year and our special thanks must go to our funder, the Beatrice Laing Trust, our dedicated teaching team and in particular our ESOL coordinator Kathryn Salomon.

Women's Group (Jasmine)



The BRS Women's Group continues to meet, based at the artsdepot, on Tuesdays to participate in the arts programme led by Poppy Szaybo.

During the past year, a series of drama workshops were held, culminating in a public performance on stage at the artsdepot. Jasmine participated in a Na Laga'at workshop on sensory communication & then attended a performance by this company of blind & deaf actors at the artsdepot.

The participants have begun to write their own poetry & prose, some in their mother tongues, but mainly in English. A new project was launched to produce material (prose, poetry, auto-biography, photos etc) for a book to be published in the summer of 2011. In December, the annual end-of-year party was held, catered by the women themselves.

More word games have been introduced to improve their English, these are very popular and great fun. Certificates of attendance continue to be given quarterly and are prized by the participants.

Participants are coming from a wider variety of countries, including China, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Cameroon, Iran, Afghanistan, Iran with an average weekly attendance of 15+.



***" I think about the group
when I go home.
Can we meet 2/3 times a week?
I look forward to Tuesdays"***
A women's group member



The group continues to help the participants by reducing their isolation, improving their spoken & written English, facilitating socialising & friendship.

Participants in Jasmine are working well together & friendships are being made. It certainly seems to help the women who are all under a lot of stress – there is laughter, mutual support & self-expression during the sessions.

BRS continues to provide a fortnightly food parcel to destitute attendees & refund each participant daily bus pass at £3.90.

We continue to receive referrals from outside agencies including social services, GPs and Mental Health unit as well as friends of participants.

We feel we have had a flourishing year our special thanks must go The Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust to support this project, the artsdepot, our dedicated volunteers and in particular our Women's Group Coordinator Tanya Novick.

"When I came, I was very shy. I learn here. When we go out we have a very good time."

FORUM FOR ADVICE

The Little Treasures

The "Little Treasures" is a weekly stay, play and learn group for Refugee and Asylum seeking mums with toddlers and babies under five. The purpose of the



group gives mums the opportunity to make friends and socialise, play with their little ones and improve their English while their children learn through free play, activities, messy play, singing, dancing, educational outings, informal English teaching and interaction with each other. With the main focus of all activities being on health related areas, It is also a great opportunity to prepare children for Nursery and for the mothers to gain access to information relating to having young children and how to teach the kids to stay healthy.

The group runs every Tuesday morning from 10am – 12 noon during school term times at West Hendon Community Centre.

This successful project was set up In partnership with the Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE) in 2009 and has been flourishing since.

I didn't know crisps are bad for my child!

A group member



DROP IN

Drop In for destitute asylum seekers



Our Drop In is run as usual at St. Matthias Church Hall near our main office building in Rushgrove Avenue, Colindale. This essential project has continued to flourish with 736 visits last year. Our Drop In is currently providing emergency food and clothing to destitute asylum seekers and an advice clinic. It is also a forum for our clients to meet others. During the year food was donated from numerous churches, temples and synagogues. This service has been funded by kind donations of individuals and local faith groups. We continued receiving left-overs or sample from our local Salisbury's store under the banner of 'Local Charity Supported by Local Stores'. For our Drop in we are receiving fresh sandwiches from Pret a Manger at Euston Station branch and bread from Daniels Bakery in Temple Fortune. Our special thanks also go to our local bakery and grocery stores in Egware, Orli Café and Yarok, for their ongoing support.

MWS

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 registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee. The founding partners are Afghan Association Paiwand, Barnet Refugee Service, Chinese Mental Health Association, Farsophone Association, and Somali Family Support Group.

We set up this consortium in response to the needs identified by the individual partner organisations and the Community Development Workers in Barnet, in close collaboration with NHS Barnet. Each of our partners has a strong track record in reaching out to their respective communities and providing holistic mental health and wellbeing services, with either an emphasis on advice and advocacy or on mother tongue counselling services.

The aim of this project is to improve the mental health of BMER communities in Barnet. We aim to do this 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 and by providing counselling services in a range of different community languages. The consortium approach enables us to bring a range of communities together that would not normally come into contact with each other to share learning together and as a first step into using mainstream services.

With special thanks to NHS Barnet, MWS has been given a one-off grant through Working for Wellness with the aim to start the consortium's work with two part time members of staff, a project manager and a mental health officer in November 2010.

Destitution
is against
human rights...

Case Study 2

Elise Perrot
ESOL Volunteer



I have really enjoyed working for BRS as an ESOL teacher for the past three years. I have been a language teacher all my life: I love languages and I love teaching. I felt I wanted to give more especially after volunteering while living in Africa. The team at BRS was extremely welcoming and the induction program was very informative and helpful.

Learning English really helps people with all the practicalities of living in the UK for the first time. For instance, it can make it easier for them to meet other parents in the playground. As well as being a language class, the ESOL lessons enable students to relax in a welcoming atmosphere which is often in contrast to many of the more formal administrative appointments they need to cope with.

By volunteering at BRS, I have learnt a lot about a section of society I had little knowledge of. Most importantly, it has made me appreciate that anybody could, one day, become an asylum seeker and about how vulnerable one can suddenly become."

Youth Activities



Our youth activities continue to flourish and grow. The aim of this project is to develop youth activities in the borough for young refugees and asylum seekers, including unaccompanied minors, who have unique needs, many being isolated and facing linguistic and cultural barriers, as well as a level of hostility. Difficulties

and stress arising for newly arrived young people following traumatic incidents in their country of origin and on their journey to the UK are often neglected, and leave young people in a very vulnerable situation. This has been confirmed by numerous research projects, e.g. a report by the Mayor of London in relation to "vulnerability to problematic drug use" in February 2011. Following the financial support from Barnet Integrated Youth Support Service Voluntary Sector we continued this worthwhile project by developing it to be more focused on those with mental health support needs and received funding from the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust.

To address the needs, in partnership with Paiwand Afghan Association, we developed a variety of projects during the past year. We also managed to set up new and fruitful partnerships. We have had participation of over two hundred young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

North London Global Gathering

Working in partnership with Paiwand Afghan association and Youth & Connexions, the Social evenings at the North London Global Gathering have become more and more popular. There are over 120 young people registered with us from a wide range of backgrounds. The aim is to provide young refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived young people the opportunity to make friends, learn English, try some-

thing new and enjoy positive activities in a safe environment where they make the rules. Some of the activities that are enjoyed include: football, basketball, arts and crafts, Nintendo Wii, internet, cooking, board games, table football, table tennis and pool. We also provide health promotion workshops for this group including Sexual Health, Drug & Alcohol misuse, Self Defense etc.

Projects

"Simple Act" Refugee Week Event

During the Refugee Week in June 2010 we have had an evening of performances in partnership with the artsdepot, Paiwand Association, Youth & Connexions, Refugee Youth Project and Attic Theater. Our young people had the opportunity to get involved with variety of acts and the audiences enjoyed some great "Simple Acts" by some fantastic young people from a wide range of backgrounds working with different organisations in Barnet. The performances included: The artsdepots Roots & Wings dance, drama and music, live Drumming by Refugee Youth Project, Song writing by GIGI Girl's Group, Afghan singing group and a lot more.



Refugee Youth Support Project

The Refugee Youth Support Project (RYSP) provides psycho-social support and advocacy for young refugees. The RYSP aims to facilitate and improve an enabling, stable and secure environment for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young refugees with mental health issues arising from trauma, abuse and neglect. The RYSP focuses on building confidence and self-esteem, and opening up opportunities for the young people. More specifically, the RYSP supports young people to access education and training, advice and one-to-one emotional support. Importantly, the RYSP allows for young people to create their own spaces of fun and recreation.

Youth Activities



Fun activities

During the past year despite our limited budget we managed to raise funds and had series of fun activities under the umbrella of our Refugee Youth Support Project.

During the half term in February 2011 our young people went canoeing at Laburnum Boat Club. The Laburnum Boat is run by young people and works a lot around inclusion. This was a great trip and the young people really enjoyed it. London Dungeons, Thorpe Park, bowling at the Hollywood Bowl Finchley were amongst our other fun activities during the past year.



MC GiGi (Multicultural Girls Group)

In partnership with Refugee Youth Project Barnet Refugee Service this project has been running for past two years. The group invites females aged 13 to 18 from BMER communities. The Girls have undertaken a project in which they will promote the Girls Group to other schools. They have worked really hard to produce a presentation. During the sessions they have cooked, participated in arts and crafts, danced and had discussions on different topics. They have also enjoyed a trip to London Dungeons and ice skating at Alexandra Palace.



'Fragments' and 'London Dreams'

Funded by Barnet Youth and Connexions and The Barings Foundation and led by artsdepot, we have had an evening of performances by members of our Roots and Wings programme in April 2010. Taking London as their inspiration, the Youth Group have been working with Paula and Kamini Tavanandi to create a piece exploring spoken language, body language and dance in the urban setting. This well attended evening was a true success



Residential Trip to YMCA Fairthorne Manor, Southampton

In April 2010, 12 of our young people had a 3 day residential trip to YMCA Fairthorne Manor in Southampton. The aim and objectives of this trip were to give these young people the opportunity of experiencing positive activities and new experiences while in a residential setting, to be active and participate and facilitate emotional well being and good mental health. The activities involved: Aerial Runway, Burma Bridge, Raft Building, Archery and Abseiling. The trip was thoroughly enjoyable and gave a lot of the group a trip they will not forget. For those new to the country and in care it gave them the opportunity to spend more time with their community and to make new friends. The activities enjoyed at Fairthorne Manor also gave the young people new experiences, some healthy exercise and great memories.

Youth Activities

Roots and Wings

The Roots and Wings is artsdepot's free group for all young people who have recently moved to the UK which is run in partnership with us. The young refugees and those seeking asylum in the UK are especially welcomed. The group is growing due to fun sessions and arts awards qualifications. Meeting every week at artsdepot this group chooses a new arts project every term. The past projects include making a dance film, learning different dance styles and music production, and a theatre production. The group performed in artsdepot's two theatres and outdoors at a festival!



The feed-back from the participants confirms that joining this fun and friendly group is a good way to meet new people, make friends and learn new things and most importantly get a qualification! During the past year the participants managed to gain Arts Award at Bronze/Level 1, Silver/Level 2 and Gold/Level 3.

On the 30th of April last year this group together with the Roots and Wings Women's Group performed at the artsdepot.

Barnet Wonderers Football Club

Despite that fact that there was no funding for this group, the Barnet Wonderers self-sufficiently entered the league. They successfully completed the football season by winning most of their League games and finishing 4th. The young people are eager for funding to be found for next year as it was difficult for them to improve with a lack of training pitches, coaches and facilities. The players did very well despite all of these constraints. A big well done to them all!



Barnet Mini World Cup Tournament

In July 2010 we held a one day football tournament in partnership with Youth & Connexions at Graham Park Astro Turf Pitches. Over 70 players participated and the groups involved were: Grahame Park United x2, G.P. All Starz, Rainbow Centre Dollis Valley, Canada Villa Mill Hill, Afghan Association Paiwand. The aim of this project was to allow young people to enjoy a fun and healthy activity during the holidays and to encourage them in sporting activities and teamwork; coinciding with the World Cup. The Barnet Mini World Cup was a well organised and fun event and was a definite success. There is potential of making it an annual event.



In residential I felt I have a family again...
I did not want to go back to London!

End of Year Party 2010

Every year Barnet Refugee Service organises a party for our client families. The party offers a rare opportunity to those seeking asylum or recently granted the right to settle here, to have a few hours recreation and socialising. Father Christmas gives presents to all the children. For many of them these will be the first presents they have received in a long, long time. Once again this year's party was organised in partnership and with the generous support of North Western Reform Synagogue (Alyth) and St Matthias Church. The party was held at St Matthias Community Centre, Colindale on Tuesday 21st December 2010.

Around 210 clients attended at least half of whom were children.

There was food, entertainment including, opera singers from the Connaught Opera, a children's club as well as Santa Claus who handed out presents to the kids. There were gifts for adults as well. We were fortunate to have the help of over 20 volunteers without whose participation none of this would have been possible. The volunteers worked very hard and effectively together to facilitate the smooth running of the party. The partnership between St Matthias, BRS and Alyth worked well with a great deal of input and collaboration from all three groups

Our special thanks go to the local schools, faith groups and individual donors who provided us with cash and gifts for Santa's Grotto and our Tombola. In particular, we would like to thank the Playwrite Group who once again donated a generous number of different types of gifts which we gave as presents to the children.



Volunteering



Volunteers are integral to our work and their commitment, skills, interests and life experiences are an enormous asset to Barnet Refugee Service (BRS).



During the past year 69 volunteers provided support in every aspect of the services we provide: Advice, ESOL, Mother and Toddler Group, Women's Arts Group, PC training for client volunteers, Girls Group, North London Global Gathering Youth Club, Football Team, Wellbeing Advocates, outreach and interpreting.

BRS recognizes that there are special benefits to refugees from volunteering. They include overcoming isolation and increasing confidence and skills. Volunteering is an important pathway to employment for asylum seekers prevented from working.

With the support of Lloyds TSB we have been running our successful Volunteering Project that supports clients to develop personal skills through volunteering that will help them towards full integration and independence to be able to access further education and/or employment. We are proud to say that since the beginning of the project six of our volunteers managed to gain paid employment.

The relationships developed between UK volunteers and refugees when working alongside each other also help to promote mutual understanding between individuals and communities promoting positive integration.

There has been a number of training sessions taking place for our volunteers internally and externally. Volunteers from a variety of projects took part in a Working with Families training, Volunteer Induction and Refugee Awareness as well as training on welfare benefits.

There has been ongoing support to the volunteers in various posts, including one-to-ones and supervisions. Some of our volunteers have also managed to secure volunteer placements in other organisations such as Farsophone Counselling Service and Multilingual Wellbeing Services based at Edgware Community Hospital.

To support the local community we also take students from local schools for work placements to gain valuable work experience and an insight of charity work.

BRS Volunteering Award Party 2011

BRS Annual Volunteer Party was organised in February to celebrate and thank the volunteers for all their hard work and commitment to BRS. It was an opportunity for volunteers from different projects to meet, enjoy some light refreshments and receive their certificate of appreciation.



Our Volunteers

Web Design/Support

Vi Bang
Korosh Jabbari
Ali Sarshar

Publicity and Graphic Design

Kamela Amiry
Rana Aliakbar

Research

Nicholas Wood

General Volunteers

Abdulwahab Moghrabi
Vijah Depala
Suhad Adam
Emir Arif
Shirin Arif
Alpha Jalloh
Abigail Taylor

Volunteer Advisers / Trainee Advisers

Florence Okregwa
Tirza Waisel

Admin and Office Support Volunteers

Raziah Noromand
Rahela Amiry
Elisabeth Mulugeta
Daniel Moukoury
Ladi Shiru

Football

Hussein Nazari
Ali Salehi

Women's Group

Tanya Novick
Elsa Shamash
Francoise Mandungu
Suhad Adam

ESOL

Kathryn Salomon
Sandra Green
Elizabeth Perrot
Ros Staines
Deena Joy Kestenbaum
Vivian Chapman

Finance and book keeping

Fahimeh Afshinrad
Daniel Moukoury

Mother and Toddler Group

Louise Morris
Madeleine Bines
Anne-Marcelle Tsomo
Ann Fergusson

Youth Work Volunteers

Francoise Mandungu
Kamran Saedi
Rebecca Jones

Volunteer Interpreters

Sukran Anastasio
Freshta Khanadahari
Fatemeh Beagzadeh
Ahlam Ahmed
Suhad Adam
Monique Ebrahimnia

Multilingual Wellbeing Services

Yasmin Kahn
Nasrin Mosamen
Sarah Celaire
Willem Kwo-Kay Cheng

Outreach

Alison Stein
Viola Brisolin

Volunteer PC trainers

Johanna Svanelind
Viola Brisolin

Trustees

Peter Salomon
Ponusamy Karunaharan
David Levey
Tirza Waisel
Anahied Hatamian
Tanya Novick
Roger Selby
Kamran Saedi
Shubhi Raymond

*BRS helps a lot of
people, no matter
where the people
come from or what
colour they have.*

Alpha Jalloh

Case Study 3

*Alpha Jalloh
Volunteer*



I had met Nazee for the first time at Barnet College in Finchley and she helped me to find a doctor. After I received Indefinite Leave in 2003 I had to leave my Home Office accommodation and one day I came back home and the lock was changed so I couldn't open the door to my room and I was homeless with all my dedications inside. I went to BRS office after that she helped me to claim benefits and to find a house and helped for all my problems.

For three years I came every week to Barnet Refugee Service to see Nazee, she helped me a lot. Nazee is my very, very best friend. BRS helps a lot of people, no matter where the people come from or what colour they have.

In 2005 I started to volunteer for Barnet Refugee Service. I like to volunteer because I see Nazee and staff are doing a good job and I also want to do a good job and help other people. I help out with many different things. I helped at the Refugee Festival in 2005 and after that I helped out in the office and with the Emergency Drop-in. I like the job at the Drop-in very much because I like to help other asylum seekers and refugees. My English is better too.

Barnet Refugee Service is a very good organisation because they help people to get a better life. I think there are two good organisations, the Medical Foundation is the best and BRs is the second best...

Financial Information

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2011

	2011 Unrestricted Funds £	2011 Restricted Funds £	2011 Total £	2010 Total £
Income resources				
Incoming resources from generated funds				
Voluntary Income	15,623	-	15,623	29,858
Grants	-	80,037	80,037	71,831
Interest receivable	163	-	163	128
Incoming resources from charitable activities	-	74,392	74,392	74,484
Total incoming resources	15,786	154,429	170,215	176,301
Cost of charitable activities	11,842	154,316	166,158	174,722
Governance costs	3,213	-	3,213	2,542
Total resources expended	15,055	154,316	169,371	177,264
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources - before transfers between funds	731	113	844	-963
Gross transfers between funds	-	-	0	0
Net movement in funds	731	113	844	-963
Total funds at 1 April 2010	50,293	0	50,293	51,256
Total funds at 31 March 2011	51,024	113	51,137	50,293

Trustees Statement

These above accounts have been extracted from the accounts prepared by Ashley Nathoo & Co and were approved by the Trustees of Barnet Refugee Service on 07/07/2011 . The full report will be submitted to the Charities Commission and to Companies House in due course. If copies of full report are required they may be obtained from the Director of Barnet Refugee Service.

Peter Salomon
Chair

Partnership organisations

Advice/ support agencies

1. Advocacy In Barnet
2. Asylum Support Appeals Project
3. Advice UK (BAN membership)
4. Threshold
5. Barnet Law Service
6. Barnet PCT Patient Advice and Liaison Service
7. Citizens' Advice Bureau
8. Duncan Lewis and Co solicitors
9. Homeless Action in Barnet
10. LBB Supporting People
11. LBB Welfare Rights Unit
12. Mary Ward Legal Centre
13. Refugee Council
14. Sangam Centre
15. East Finchley Advice Centre

Employment, Training and Education

16. ATS
17. ACE
18. Barnet College
19. Southgate College
20. Minorities Achievement Project
21. OLMEC
22. RETAS
23. RAGU
24. Refugee Council
25. Refugee Women Association

Health

26. A5 Health Partnership
27. Barnet Primary Care Trust
 - Health Improvement
 - Voluntary and Interpreting Services
 - Mental Health Commissioner
 - Community Mental Health Teams
 - GP practices
 - TB Unit
 - Walk in Centre/ Refugee Clinic
28. Cherry Lodge Cancer Care
29. Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture
30. Medact
31. Farsophone Counselling Service
32. Mapesbury Clinic
33. UAAF
34. Community Mental Health Development

Refugee Organisations

35. Afghan Association Paiwand
36. African Refugee Community
37. African Women Handwork Association
38. Barnet Somali Community Group
39. Farsophone Association
40. Holdhands Angolan Charity
41. Horn of Africa Women's Association
42. Joybringers R Us
43. Refugee Women's Association
44. Somali Family Support Group
45. Sunshine 7
46. Tamil Refugee Action Group
47. Voices for the Minority

Umbrella bodies/ 2nd tier organisations

48. Advice UK
49. CommUnity Barnet
50. Evelyn Oldfield Unit
51. Mentoring and Befriending Foundation
52. OISC
53. Refugee Council

Volunteering

54. Vinolved
55. Barnet Volunteer Centre
56. Camden Volunteer Bureau
57. RSVP

Partnerships

58. Multilingual Wellbeing Service
59. BAN network (BME Advice Network)
60. Forum for Advice and Information in Barnet (FAIB)
61. Chinese Mental Health Association
62. Somali Family Welfare Association
63. JCORE
64. Afghan Association Paiwand
65. NHS Barnet

Young people

66. 331 Young people's Centre
67. Children's Fund
68. Children's Panel Refugee Council
69. Youth and Connexions Service
70. Refugee Youth Project
71. Arts Depot
72. Ijad Dance Company
73. Afghan Association Paiwand

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].

