

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023



Our Major Funders

For 2022 / 23:

- Barnet Council
- NHS Barnet (CCG)
- City Bridge Trust
- BBC Children In Need
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- The John Lyons Charity
- The Mercers Company
- The European Fund (AMIF)
- The Young Londoners Fund
- The Leathersellers' Company
- The National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF)
- The Betty Messenger Charitable Foundation

Barnet Refugee Service
(working name New Citizens' Gateway)

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Charity Number: 1107965
Co Ltd by Guarantee: 5243595

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Foreword From the Chair



Conor Doyle
Chair

Through 2022 and early 2023, refugees and asylum seekers faced a very difficult combination of an asylum system failing to process applications and soaring energy and food prices. This was and continues to be compounded considerably by government policy and media rhetoric that refers to these people who seek protection as a problem rather than seeing them as the victims of war, persecution and destitution that they are.

NCG has continued to support this most vulnerable section of our society, delivering record levels of support across all service lines. Our Advice and Counselling services continue to grow and yet remain substantially over-subscribed. Our Outreach Service now covers 3 hotels across Barnet. Our Youth Support Service continues to grow and develop and our ESOL and Volunteer-led services continue to thrive.

We have spent the year strengthening our internal systems and processes. We have engaged with our beneficiaries and our stakeholders to re-establish our Vision, Mission, Values and Ambitions to ensure we are in tune with our charitable purpose. We have used this to clarify internal organisation and responsibilities and engaged a new auditor with specialist experience in charity finance. Through all of this change, Nazee and the management team have demonstrated great leadership, resilience and determination. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to them, and also to each of our staff, volunteers and trustees for their unrelenting commitment and dedication to our cause.

It is so gratifying to see this team recognised through the prestigious 2023 GSK Impact Award. This award is a hallmark of excellence in the charity sector where NCG was selected with 9 other winners out of over 400 applicants. The NCG team so deserve this recognition. We also thank Ponusamy Karunaharan who stepped down as treasurer and trustee this year after 16 years of voluntary service to NCG. His contribution has been immense. We are deeply grateful to our funders and donors for their support in these challenging times and for sharing our passion for this cause. We are so grateful for the encouragement, training and networking that they provide. We look forward to the year ahead. While we will continue to build strength and resilience into our organisation, our focus will be on remaining in tune with the needs of refugees and people seeking asylum, building our Youth Services and developing our Voice so we inject a more positive narrative of the great contribution of migrants to our UK communities.

Our team is clear about the importance of their work. I am wholeheartedly confident of this team's commitment to supporting refugees and people seeking asylum and of their ability to adapt and thrive in our evolving environment. I look forward with confidence to the year ahead.

Conor Doyle
Chair

Message From the CEO

With great pleasure, I present to you New Citizens' Gateway's annual report, a reflection of a year that has tested our resilience and fortified our commitment to our cause. This chapter will be carved into our history as one of the most challenging yet defining periods in our 18-year journey as an independent charity. The world is facing one of the most compelling challenges of our time: The year 2022 witnessed a staggering count of over 108.4 million refugees, each story a testament to the forces of persecution, conflict, and human rights violations. Regrettably, instead of embracing collaborative approaches, numerous governments around the world embraced closed borders and divisive policies, employing a style that deprived those who were displaced of their fundamental humanity. Within the UK, asylum seekers and refugees faced a convergence of challenges, from the Nationality and Borders Bill to the devastating tragedies in the Channel that claimed the lives of so many people seeking safety and the ongoing aftermath of the Covid pandemic. In the midst of these challenges, I take immense pride in the work we've accomplished at NCG.

**Challenges may be
daunting, but they fuel our
determination.**

Throughout 2022-23, our organisation has grown, amplifying its voice and, most importantly, supporting the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. We've not only stood with them but have strived to place their voices at the forefront of our mission. This commitment is woven into every facet of our operations. This year, our Holistic Model of Support has blossomed, gaining strength with each challenge.

A remarkable achievement was our outreach project addressing the urgent needs of newly arrived asylum seekers in three Barnet Hotels. With the invaluable backing of Barnet Council, this endeavour stands as a true testament to inspiration on all fronts.

We were also honoured to receive the prestigious 2023 GSK IMPACT Award, a testament to our excellence in advocating for those in need. This award is a tribute to our remarkable staff and volunteers who tirelessly dedicate themselves to our cause. Their skill and unwavering commitment are the bedrock upon which NCG stands.

Our gratitude extends to our funders, supporters, and friends. Your generosity has empowered us to fulfil our mission, and we express our heartfelt thanks. To those who have chosen to celebrate their special occasions by supporting us, your dedication speaks volumes about the community we've built.

I extend my deepest gratitude to our Board of Trustees, with special acknowledgement to our Chair, Conor Doyle. Your unwavering support has nurtured our growth and fortified our vision, ensuring that our services maintain their proficiency, transparency, and accountability to both those who seek our assistance and our valued financial supporters.

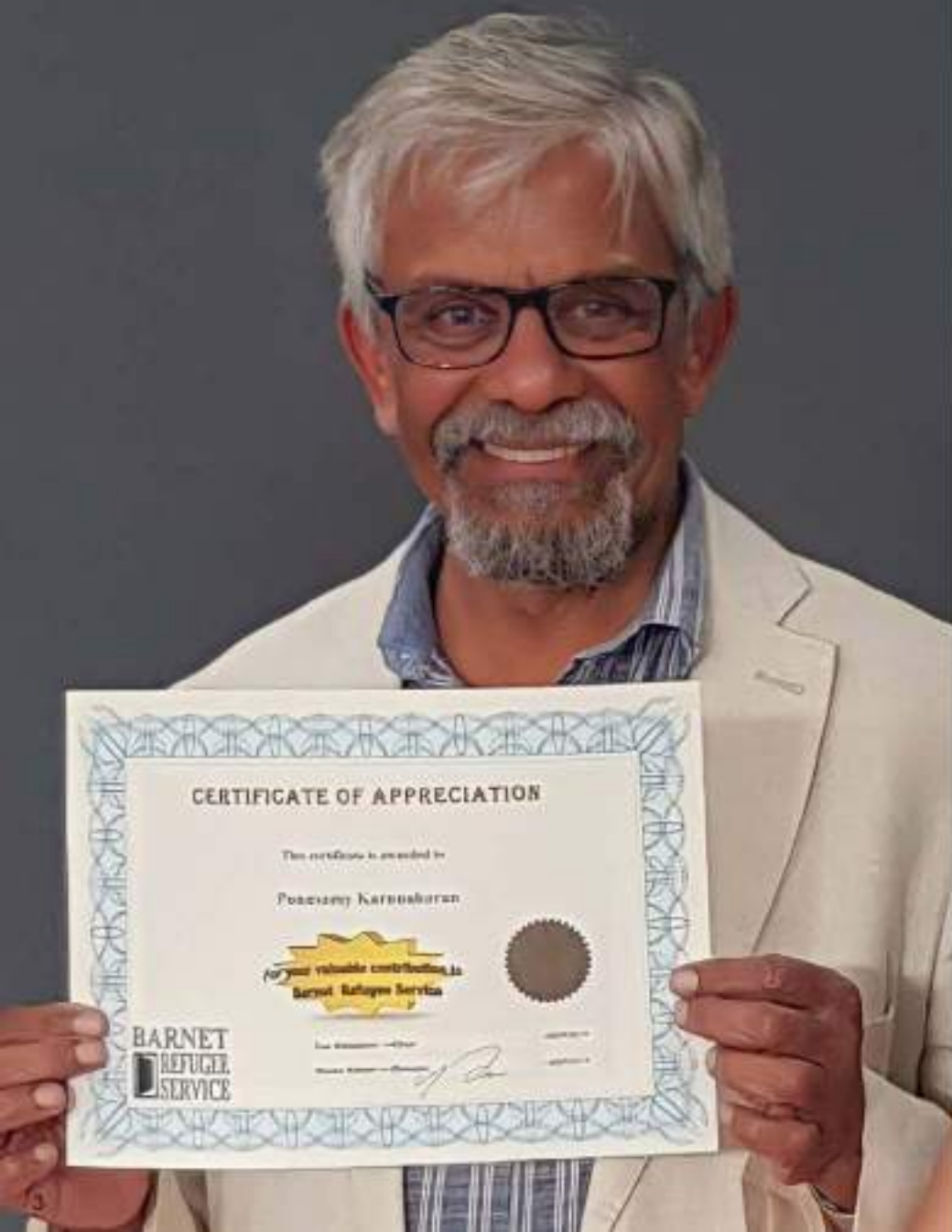
As we step into the future, we remain resolute. Challenges may be daunting, but they fuel our determination. We look ahead with optimism, knowing that through collective effort and unwavering commitment, we can pave a path to a world where empathy prevails, where every individual's journey is valued and supported.

Nazee Akbari
CEO



Nazee Akbari
CEO

Goodbye, Mr Treasurer!



During the years 2022-23, we sadly said goodbye to a pivotal figure within our organisation, Ponusamy Karunaharan. For an impressive 16 years, he diligently served as our Treasurer before retiring from this role.

Throughout the challenging 16-year span, Ponusamy's constant presence acted as a robust source of strength for me as the CEO. His unwavering passion and composed attitude consistently provided solace and optimism. In a world where humanity hovers on the edge, encountering someone like Ponusamy was genuinely inspiring.

His remarkable kindness and genuine concern for others are prominent, and I firmly believe that if more individuals were to embody his qualities, the world would undergo a transformative shift into a genuine paradise.

Ponusamy's legacy lives on through the identity of "New Citizens Gateway." His ongoing commitment and dedicated support have left an enduring imprint on NCG. I take this opportunity to genuinely extend my gratitude to him on behalf of the numerous individuals he has supported over the years. We deeply value his unwavering dedication during this period.

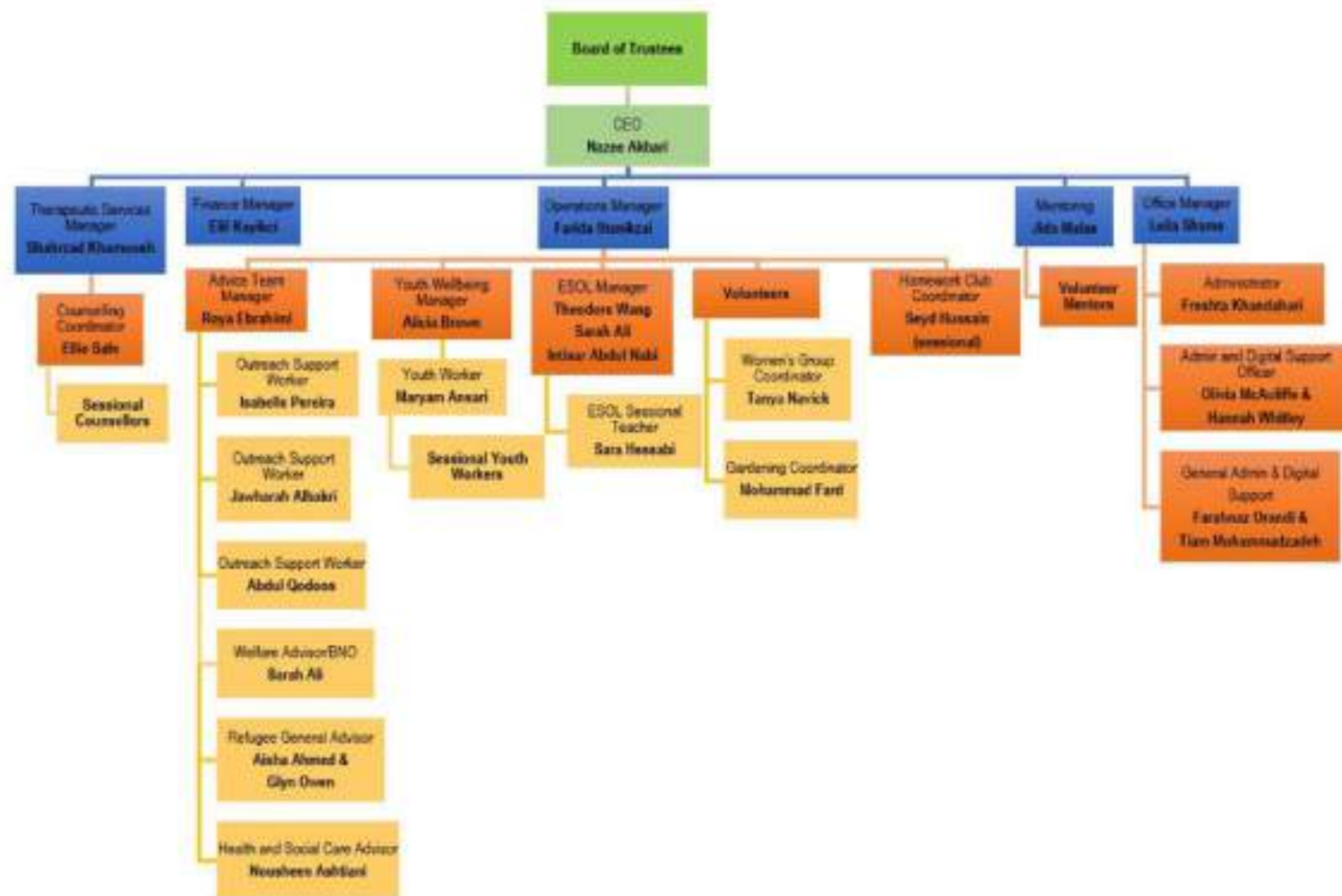
Nazee Akbari, CEO

We wish you all the best and
we miss you dearly Mr. Treasurer!

Organisational Chart

Trustees serving in 2022-2023

- John Conor Doyle - Chair
- Ponusamy Karunaharan - Treasurer (retired 07/09/2022)
- Dr Sanjiv Ahluwalia
- Golnar Bokaei
- Dr Penny A Trafford
- Esmond S Rosen (appointed 07/09/2022)
- Fanta Sheriff (co-opted 05/04/2022)
- Pegah Tamkinfard (resigned 07/08/2022)
- Geetha Thirusaba-Nathan – Treasurer (co-opted 07/09/2022)



Nazee Akbari
Chief Executive Officer
Farida Stanikzai
Operations Manager
Roya Ebrahimi
Advice & Outreach Team Manager
Nousheen Ashtiani
Health & Social Care Advisor
Aisha Ahmed
Refugee General Advisor
Glyn Owen
Refugee General Advisor
Abdol Qodoos
Outreach Support Worker
Isabelle Pereira
Outreach Support Worker
Jawharah Albakri
Outreach Support Worker
Sarah Ali
Welfare Advisor (BNO)

Leila Shams
Office Manager
Freshta Khandahari
Administrator
Olivia McAuliffe
Admin & Digital Support Officer
Hannah Whitely
Admin & Digital Support Officer
Farahnaz Orandi
General Admin & Digital Supporter
Tiam Mohammadzadeh
General Admin & Digital Supporter
Shahrazad Khamoush
Therapeutic Service Manager
Ellie Safe
Counselling Coordinator
Elif Kayikci
Finance Manager
Jida Malas
Mentoring Manager

Theodore Wang
ESOL Manager
Sarah Ali
ESOL Manager
Intisar Abdul Nabi
ESOL Manager
Alicia Brown
Youth Wellbeing Manager
Maryam Ansari
Youth Worker
Mohammad Fard
Gardening Coordinator
Tanya Novick
Women's Group Coordinator

Sessional Workers

Alice Horsley – Youth Worker
Ghazala Khattak – Youth Counsellor
Jasmine Ansari – Youth Counsellor
Hicham Jabrane – Youth Counsellor
Jani Santos – Youth Counsellor
Banu Aydin – Counsellor
Kiyem Omur – Counsellor
Sultana Momand – Counsellor
Valbona Preniqi – Counsellor
Fadi Salam – Counsellor
Negeen Zohari – Counsellor
Sahar Salim – Counsellor
Sanaz Mohebpour – Counsellor
Hicham Jabrane – Counsellor
Njomeza Kartallozi – Counsellor
Shamsi Mahdavi – Counsellor
Soraya Mohammadi – Counsellor
Ghazala Khattak – Counsellor
Fatuma Farah – Counsellor
Ertie Kia – Family Therapist
Kiran Seth – Clinical Supervisor
Paul M Terry – Clinical Supervisor
Haleh Kazemian – Clinical Supervisor
Sara Betteridge – Clinical Supervisor
Evonne Cameron-Phillips – Clinical Supervisor
Syed Hussain – Homework Club Coordinator
Sara Hessabi – ESOL Teacher
Tulin Ucur – ESOL Teacher
Ashley Levien – Football Coach

98 Volunteers

CEO's Report

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

Introduction

New Citizens' Gateway
(registered as Barnet Refugee Service)
8th Floor
Hyde House
The Hyde
London NW9 6LH
Telephone: 020 8905 9002
Email: info@ncgateway.org.uk
Website: www.ncgateway.org.uk
Registered Charity: 1107965
Company Ltd by Guarantee: 5243595
Incorporated as company September 2004

Our History

Barnet Refugee Service emerged as a charitable entity resulting from the integration of two initiatives founded in 1997: the Refugee Health Access Project and Homeless Action in Barnet - Asylum Seekers Project. Achieving independent charitable status in April 2005, the organisation has operated under the working name "New Citizens' Gateway" (NCG) since April 2021.

About New Citizens' Gateway (NCG)

NCG is collaborating with both individuals and organisations to enhance the well-being and elevate the quality of life for migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers who are situated in the UK, whether they reside, work, or pursue education here. Our activities are aimed at diminishing inequalities in health, as well as social and economic exclusion, while facilitating a positive process of integration and fostering personal independence.

Our Clients

NCG's purpose revolves around aiding refugees and individuals seeking asylum who have endured harrowing experiences under some of the world's most oppressive regimes. Having escaped unimaginable horrors, they encounter ongoing challenges in the UK, frequently grappling with homelessness, impoverishment, and the inability to secure employment. Our objective involves extending essential assistance to these profoundly vulnerable and traumatised individuals, equipping them with the necessary support to reclaim a life of dignity. Subsequently, we guide them in constructing secure, content, and meaningful lives within the confines of the UK.

Our Vision

All refugees are to be welcomed, safe, respected and resettled.

Our Mission

New Citizens' Gateway (NCG) provides holistic support and services which enable the inclusion of those seeking and getting protection in England and Wales and which allow them to access their full potential as equal participants in UK life. The focus of our work is to improve the quality of life and promote the physical, social and mental well-being of refugees and people seeking asylum who live, work or study in the UK. We also help to reduce health inequalities, social and economic exclusion, and enable the positive integration and personal independence of these people.

Statement of values

New Citizens' Gateway firmly upholds the belief that equality is an inherent birthright for every individual, and that seeking asylum is an indispensable human entitlement. We readily recognise that our society is marked by instances where many individuals encounter unwarranted prejudice and constrained prospects, owing to circumstances that are inherently unjust.

Our Values

Inclusive

We believe in an equal voice, equal opportunity, equal rights, and fairness for everyone. Being client-led and culturally sensitive is core to being inclusive.

Respectful

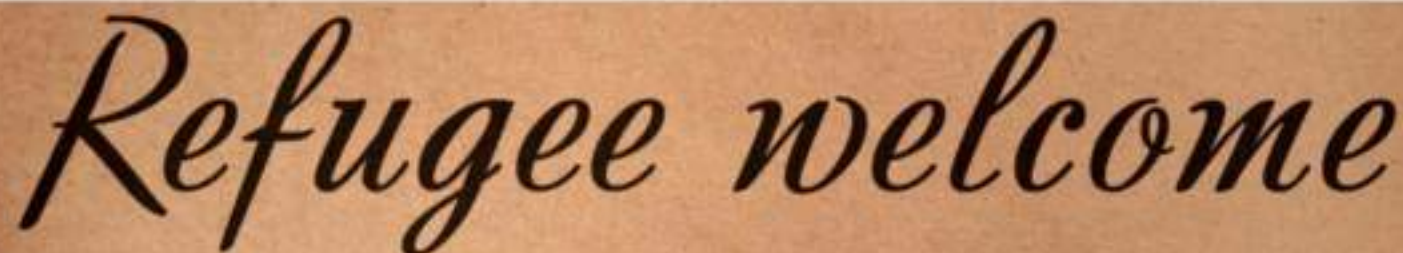
We treat everyone with kindness, empathy, openness and honesty. Active listening is the first step. This includes how we engage with clients, staff, volunteers and everyone we engage with. It is part of our professionalism.

Collaborative

We believe in partnership. Working together results in better plans, decision-making and solutions. We work together internally and externally with other stakeholders for the best possible outcomes for our clients.

Empowering

We believe in enabling people to solve their difficulties and give them more participation in their solution, and hence develop the skills, experience and confidence to solve future problems.



Refugee welcome

Our charity's objects, as defined in the Memorandum of Association are:

1. To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those who are seeking asylum or who are granted refugee status and their dependents living, working or studying (temporarily or permanently) in England and Wales (hereinafter, the 'Beneficiaries').
2. To advance the education and training of those people defined in Object 1 as Beneficiaries.
3. To advance the education of the public in general about the issues relating to refugees and those seeking asylum.
4. The relief of financial hardship to those people defined in Object 1 as Beneficiaries.
5. The provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupations with the object of improving the conditions of life of those people defined in Object 1, who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances.

Strategic Plan 2023-2028

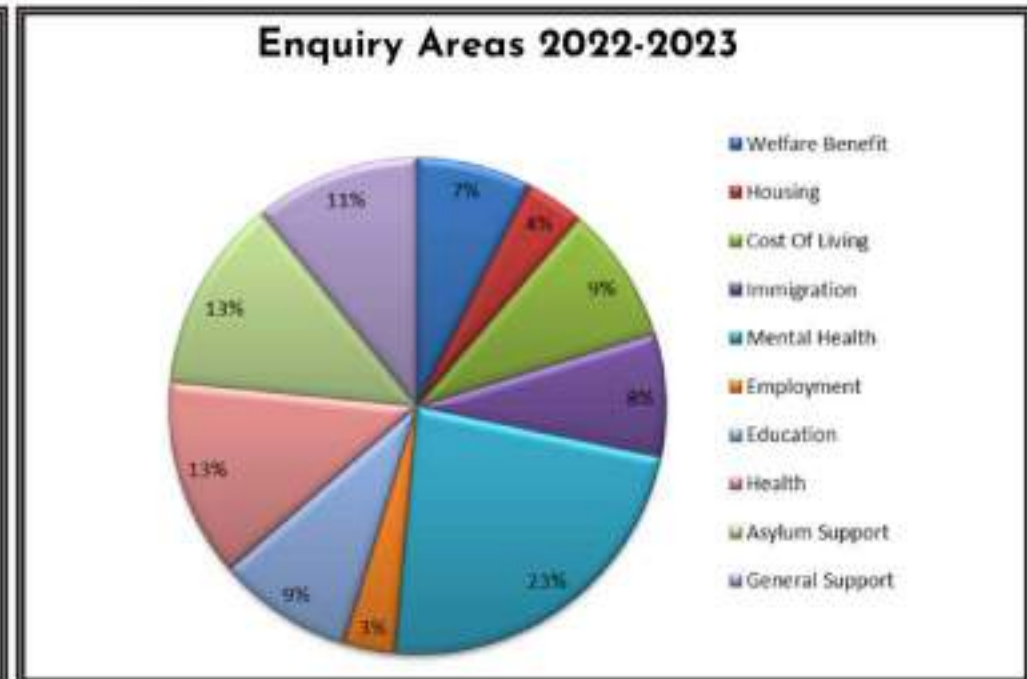
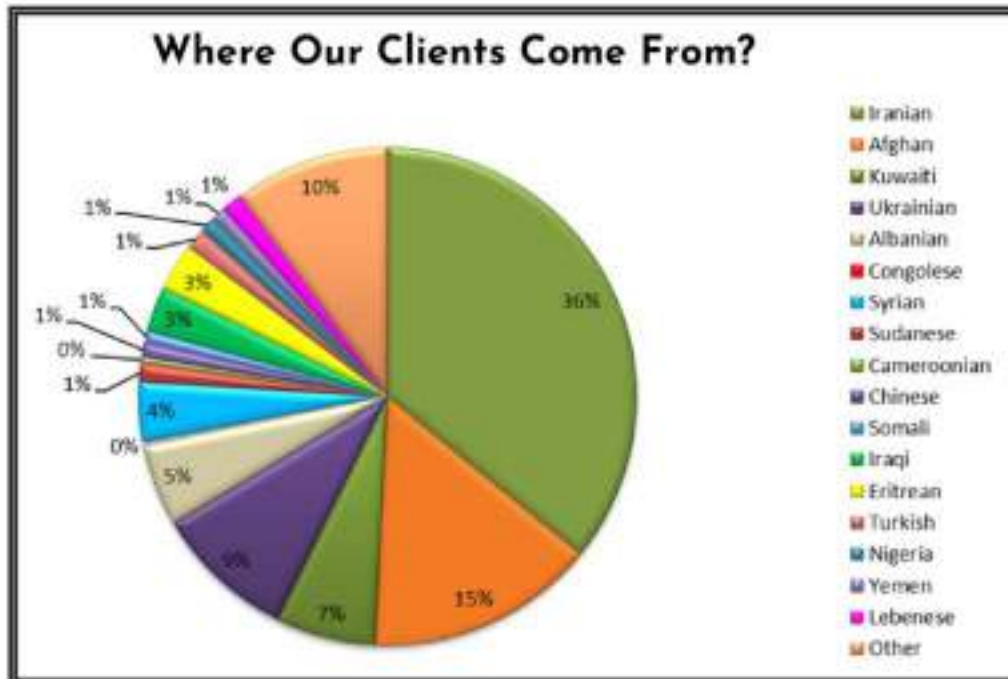
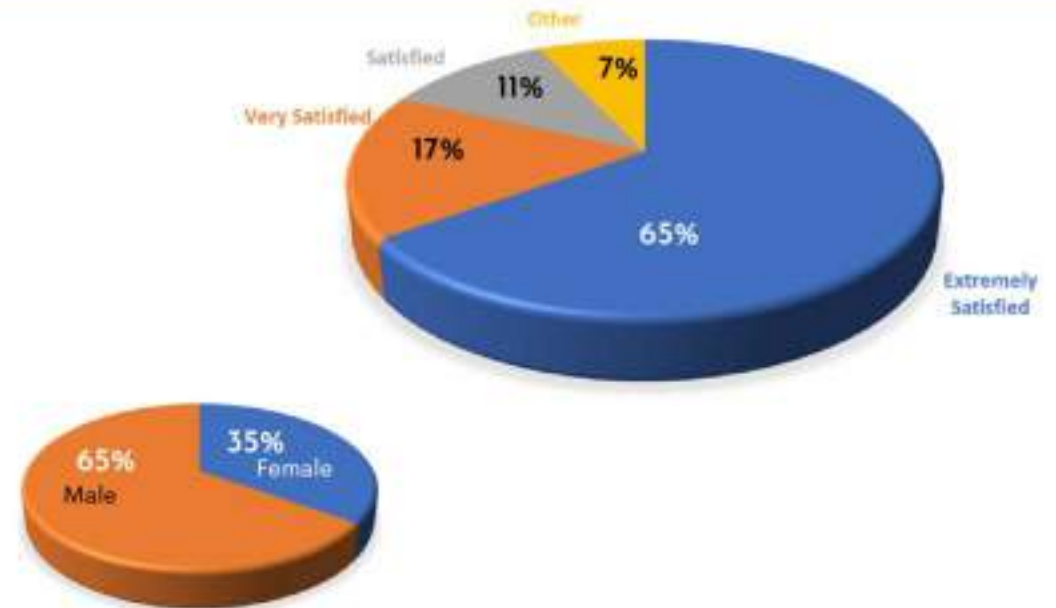
In the year 2023, our organisation formulated a comprehensive five-year strategy to steer our efforts and propel us closer to this overarching objective. The charity has articulated a visionary framework for the future we aspire to create, complemented by a mission statement that defines the organisational essence required to attain this aspiration. Our operational approach encompasses the description of annual objectives across our front-line services, advocacy and advice and collaboration work. This collective effort underscores our commitment to effecting positive change and fostering a more inclusive society.

Our Ambitions

- 1 For NCG to be more client-led.
- 2 To further develop our holistic model of support.
- 3 Establish NCG as one of the most trusted organisations in youth work.
- 4 To work in collaboration with other agencies to influence government policies and public narratives for improvement in the protection of refugees and those people seeking asylum.

Clients' Satisfaction Survey 2022-2023

To ensure the quality of our services and continually enhance them, it is crucial to establish a feedback mechanism. Throughout the 2022-23 period, we conducted random client selections from our diverse service offerings. The findings from this assessment reveal an exceptionally high level of contentment among the respondents. An impressive 65% of the survey participants conveyed their extreme satisfaction with the services they received, underscoring the profoundly positive influence our offerings had on their lives. Additionally, 17% of the respondents reported feeling very satisfied, and an extra 11% expressed a general sense of satisfaction with our services. The remaining 7% provided ratings below 7 out of 10. For those interested, the comprehensive evaluation report on all services is accessible upon request.



CEO's Report Our Achievements at a Glance

Utilising our Holistic Model of Support, we have attained or exceeded all the objectives mutually agreed upon with our funding partners. These include:



GSK

An award winner of
GSK Impact Award
2023



4,500

Individuals participating in our
wide range of services



21,500

Advice and general inquiries
were dealt with



1,800

Asylum seekers accommodated
across 3 Barnet hotels



800

Asylum seekers received
emergency food parcels



168

Christmas gift parcels were
distributed to asylum-seeking
children



518

Participants attended 43 psycho-
educational IAPT workshops



2868

Bilingual counselling sessions
benefiting 219 clients



29

Mentees were assisted
in their integration



48

Participants attended 7
Citizenship workshops



132

Participants took part
in 11 cooking sessions



24

Clients attended our
Residential Retreat in
Kent



10

Participants took part
in a Day Trip to Kew
Gardens



170

Participants attended 43 Gardening sessions



15

Participants attended 8 Arts & Crafts workshops



120

Women took part in a 34-week Jasmine Women's Group



340

Participants attended 17 Yoga sessions



13

Volunteers transitioned into paid roles



26

Week Occupational English Test Course to 11 Afghan health professionals



34

Sessions of the Mums & Tots group, with 22 participants



98

Volunteers engaged in various BRS activities, with 67 actively participating



148

Individuals attended both formal and informal ESOL sessions



1,820

Total participations, engaging over 120 young people in our 247 youth activities



60

Refugee children across KS1-KS4 were offered weekly tuition sessions in Maths and English



£14000

Raised in financial assistance for individual clients



29

Volunteers completed level one adult and children safeguarding training

Winning the 2023 GSK IMPACT Awards

We take immense pride in announcing that the New Citizens' Gateway has received a distinguished national award for its exceptional endeavours in supporting the physical and mental well-being of asylum seekers and refugees in London. Our unwavering commitment to fostering a positive impact has been acknowledged through a rigorous selection and evaluation process, where we emerged as one of the 10 recipients out of over 400 charities nationwide. This esteemed recognition was granted to us as part of the 2023 GSK IMPACT Awards, a collaborative initiative between GlaxoSmithKline and The King's Fund. Now in its 26th year, these awards stand as a symbol of excellence within the charity sector, celebrating the remarkable contributions of small and medium-sized charities dedicated to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals across the UK.



This achievement stands as a testament to the outstanding governance demonstrated by our Trustees and the unwavering commitment of our staff and volunteers, all of whom have worked tirelessly to create a significant positive impact in the lives of those in need. We gratefully share this honour with each and every individual involved. Our sincere thanks extend to our referees, William Cooper from Barnet Council and Julie Pal from CommunityBarnet, for endorsing our application. Also, our heartfelt gratitude goes out to all those at GSK who have placed their faith in us and provided their support in our mission to create a positive influence on the most vulnerable members of society.



Barnet Civic Awards

Traditionally, the annual awards of the Borough of Barnet recognise and celebrate the accomplishments of individuals and organisations throughout the Borough in two categories: Lifetime Achievement and Outstanding Service to the Community. This highlights some of the incredible people and organisations in Barnet who have a significant impact on creating a safe, well-managed, and family-friendly environment for all. We're excited to announce that, for the second consecutive year, NCG received the Certificate for 'Outstanding Service to the Community' in April 2022. Furthermore, our Operations Manager, Farida Stanikzai, also received an award for her contributions to the Borough.



Admin Team



Leila Shams
Office Manager



Freshta Khandhari
Administrator



Olivia McAuliffe
Admin & Digital Support
Officer



Hannah Whitley
Admin & Digital Support
Officer



Farahnaz Orandi
General Admin & Digital
Support Officer



Tiam Mohammadzadeh
General Admin & Digital
Support Officer

The importance of office administrative and support staff is frequently underestimated. Despite their often behind-the-scenes work, few people are as deeply intertwined with every facet of our charity's operations as our skilled administrative team. The vital role they fulfil within our business cannot be underscored enough.

Throughout the 2022-23 period, our administrative team delivered invaluable clerical and administrative services across various projects and activities. They adeptly handled client interactions, and successfully managed a diverse array of tasks and challenges on behalf of both managers and employees, resulting in more efficient workflows and enabling each staff member to focus on their individual strengths.

Our sincere gratitude goes to every member of our admin team, and we would like to give special recognition to our Office Manager, Leila Shams, for her ongoing commitment and unwavering support.

Thank You Admin Team!



Roya Ebrahimi
Advice Team
Manager



Nousheen Hazrati Ashtiani
Health & Social Care
Advisor



Aisha Ahmed
Refugee Advisor



Glyn Owen
Refugee Advisor



Jawharah Albakri
Outreach Support



Abdul Qadoos
Outreach Support



Isabelle De Lima
Pereira
Outreach Support



Sarah Ali
Welfare Advisor/BNO

Advice, Information and Guidance

The year 2022-2023 marked an exceptional period for our advice team, with a notable surge in activity that etched a significant chapter in our history of service provision. During this span, New Citizens' Gateway (NCG) embraced the opportunity to extend its support and assistance to a substantial cohort, with over 4,500 participants in its various services. Our dedicated advice team emerged as a central force, expertly managing an impressive load of 21,500 enquiries, with a focus on providing guidance to 691 new clients.

In line with our commitment to assessing the quality and effectiveness of our services, the Advice Team embarked on a proactive initiative. A comprehensive questionnaire was carefully produced and, from a pool of 691 fresh clients, 200 were randomly selected for participation in our customer satisfaction survey and were interviewed by volunteers. Of these, a remarkable 165 responded, revealing an encouraging picture. More than 65% conveyed high levels of satisfaction with our service, with 17% expressing a sentiment of being very satisfied.

An additional 11% communicated their contentment with our services, featuring our dedication to quality. A profound note of gratitude extends to our dedicated advisors and the firm commitment of our Advice Team Manager, Roya Ebrahimi. Their hard work and dedication have been instrumental in our achievements. We would also like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to our esteemed funders, namely the European Fund (AMIF), National Lottery Community Fund, and the Lloyds Foundation for their generous financial support. Their contributions have enabled us to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve.

During the challenges posed by the pandemic and its associated travel limitations, a notable surge of asylum seekers entered through Southeast ports, and were temporarily placed in London hotels by the Home Office. In a collaboration funded by Barnet Council, our Outreach Team adeptly established a pivotal presence, initially operating within two local hotels, which expanded to three over the course of 2022-23.

Outreach Work - Asylum Seekers in London Hotels

The impact of our outreach team was substantial, as they diligently supported and aided over 1,800 individual asylum seekers placed in these Barnet-based hotels. Our outreach activity encompassed more than 3,500 visits, resulting in a remarkable count of 7,300 enquiries from individuals actively seeking our guidance and support. In a display of comprehensive assistance, we not only provided advice and direction but also furnished essential items such as supermarket vouchers, clothing, shoes, travel costs, food parcels, school uniforms, and various other forms of support.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the numerous individuals, groups, faith-based organisations, and other entities that contributed and supported this project. Their collective efforts played an invaluable role in making this initiative successful. We also extend our appreciation to Barnet Council and Barnet CCG for their generous financial backing, which has been instrumental in bringing relief and assistance to those in need.



Journey To Integration

In the past year, we successfully wrapped up our "Journey to Integration (JTI)" project, a comprehensive effort that extended over 3.5 years and benefited 848 individuals throughout its duration. This initiative was primarily aimed at enhancing integration and alleviating the isolation experienced by refugees through a range of intensive support measures, aiding them in rebuilding their lives.

The project's activities included volunteering, mentoring, ESOL classes, citizenship-related programmes, the provision of information, advice, and guidance, gardening, emotional support, as well as the establishment of a Homework Club tailored to young refugees. Additionally, we offered six months of intensive support to Afghan nationals who had obtained refugee status via the resettlement programme.

We wish to express our deep appreciation to the European Fund, particularly the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), for their invaluable financial backing, which played a crucial role in the success of this project.




"This project is part funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union."

Health and Wellbeing

As a valued partner in the Barnet Wellbeing Hub, a significant portion of our efforts is concentrated on matters of health. Our involvement is notably evident in our handling of over 4,000 health-related inquiries through our advisory services. Throughout the timeframe of 2022-23, our initiatives geared towards health encompassed:

- Amplifying our "Holistic Model of Support" to cater to the improved mental well-being of refugees and asylum seekers.
- Implementation of a mental health support initiative dedicated to aiding young refugees.
- Administration of ESOL classes with a focal point on enriching vocabulary for medical visits and health-related subjects.
- Taking an engaged role within the planning group to orchestrate the Barnet Mental Health Event.
- Execution of ecotherapy activities, such as gardening, as a means to provide solace to those grappling with mental health challenges within a green environment. Additionally, we organised workshops concerning food and nutrition for our clients.
- Participation in The Refugee Mental Health & Place Network organized by Kings College.
- Active involvement in the Barnet Mental Health Strategic Partnership.
- Furnishing personalised one-on-one emotional support and counselling to both youth and adults.
- Delivery of family and couples therapy sessions.
- Facilitation of psycho-educational workshops as part of the IAPT provision.
- Organisation of a series of therapeutic weekly engagements tailored for groups such as refugee women facing mental health struggles, and survivors of domestic violence, torture, and rape.
- Our Women's Group, known as Jasmine, provides outlets such as music therapy, yoga, mindfulness practices, art and craft sessions, poetry workshops, and dance, among others.
- Cultivation of close collaborative connections with researchers from institutions such as Brunel University, UCL, and Kings College.



"I did not know how to access health services; you helped me a lot..."

Further to the points mentioned above, NCG has taken an active role in various initiatives led by NHS Barnet aimed at enhancing community health. Notable instances include participation in Health Watch and the organisation of events for World Mental Health Day. We serve as a valuable asset that health professionals can tap into, aiding them in providing support to this specific client group and attaining a deeper understanding of their unique requirements.

"Helpful classes, patient teachers, supportive advisers".



The Average Rate of Satisfaction



"NCG helped me a lot to have a clear vision about my situation".

Drop-In for Destitute Asylum Seekers and Refugees

The presence of poverty looms large among asylum seekers and refugees, persisting for prolonged durations. This includes those who are new arrivals as well as those whose asylum applications have been denied. Annually, thousands of individuals find themselves adrift, disconnected from government support. Even among those who receive financial assistance, the allowance provided frequently remains inadequate, proving insufficient to meet their basic necessities, especially in the face of the escalating cost of living. NCG's Drop-In project, conceived as a lifeline for destitute asylum seekers and refugees, has constantly extended its influence and impact over the years. Among the challenges that persist, the present year stands as a testament to our unwavering commitment. We continue to provide vital assistance to individuals navigating the complex path of transition. Through our provision of emergency food aid, we not only ensure their well-being but also uphold their dignity in the midst of adversity.



During 2022-23, we take pride in having assisted over 800 asylum seekers and refugees across both contingency and bridging hotels, as well as those residing within the community, by providing them with emergency food parcels, essential items, and vouchers. Our efforts translated to the distribution of 183 food parcels, 230 blankets, 300 hot water bottles, 350 pairs of gloves and hats, 168 pairs of shoes, and 78 toiletry packs. Moreover, supermarket vouchers valued at £4,500 were distributed, amplifying the reach of our assistance. Additionally, through the generous collaboration with Goods for Good, a series of clothing donations took place, benefitting residents in the Barnet hotels.

- We extend our deepest appreciation to the individuals, foundations, and grassroots collectives whose unwavering support has made this activity possible. Your contributions have brought tangible relief and renewed hope to those experiencing the dire effects of destitution.

BNO (Hong Kongers) Project

In collaboration with Meridian Wellbeing, NCG embarked on a 6-month pilot project aimed at assisting British Nationals Overseas (BNO Hong Kongers) with their transition and integration into the UK. The project primarily focused on delivering comprehensive information, guidance, and support to clients throughout their settlement process. NCG held the role of a guide and advocate, offering advice across several critical domains to facilitate the continuous adjustment of BNOs into their new environment. These areas included welfare, healthcare, housing, education (schools), local amenities, and various aspects of familiarisation with the host society. The project targeted both individuals and families who were residing in specific areas, namely Barnet, Harrow, Enfield, Haringey, and Brent.

Key Activities:

Welcome Events:

Over the course of 6 months, NCG actively participated in orchestrating and conducting four major "Welcome Events" in March, April, May, and July. These gatherings took place at the Meridian Wellbeing Hub and attracted an impressive attendance of approximately 120 participants per event. The Welcome Events served as a platform for sharing essential information and fostering community connections.

Information Workshops:

NCG also facilitated eight distinct workshops, each tailored to address specific topics relevant to the integration process. These workshops encompassed areas such as British Cultural Understanding (120 participants), Council Services & the Role of Voluntary Sector Organizations in the UK (15), Child Services and their Function (23), Adult Social Care Services (33), Vehicle Purchase & Maintenance (36), and Property Maintenance (33). For each workshop, experts from the respective fields and from social services were invited to deliver insightful presentations, followed by interactive Q&A sessions.



Kew Gardens Trips:

As part of the project's efforts to enhance client engagement and community building, NCG organised two trips to Kew Gardens during the summer. A total of 85 clients, accompanied by volunteers from both organisations, took advantage of 70 complimentary tickets to explore Kew Garden. Both trips were met with overwhelmingly positive feedback from clients, marking them as resounding successes.

ESOL Classes:

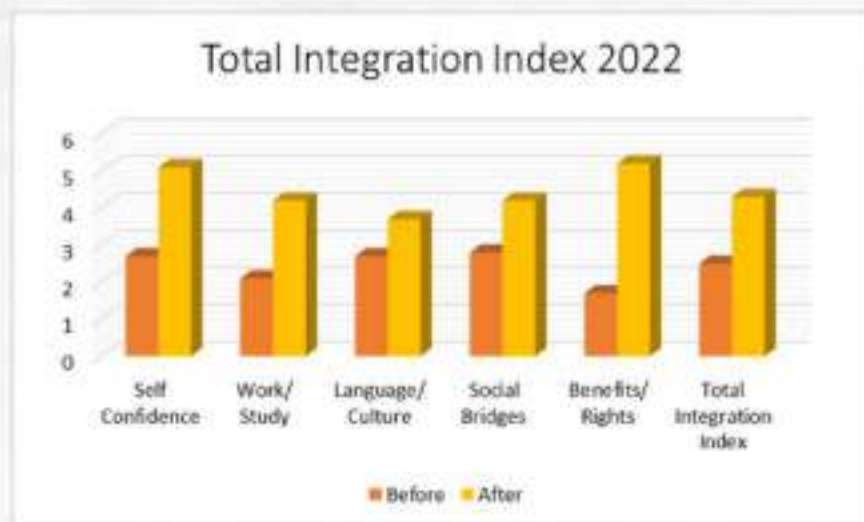
NCG and Meridian Wellbeing jointly facilitated English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes for BNO clients. NCG played a crucial role in coordinating and providing qualified volunteer ESOL tutors, while Meridian offered the necessary venue support. The ESOL classes proved to be highly beneficial for clients in terms of language acquisition and integration. The collaborative effort between NCG and Meridian Wellbeing marked a successful endeavour in supporting British Nationals Overseas from Hong Kong in their integration journey within the United Kingdom. Through a diverse range of activities, workshops, events, and ESOL classes, the project effectively facilitated the transition process and contributed to the overall well-being of the BNO community.



We extend our sincere gratitude to our partner organisation, Meridian Wellbeing, for their significant role in this impactful collaboration, as well as to our BNO Welfare Adviser, Sarah Ali, whose exceptional efforts were integral to the project's achievements. Sarah went above and beyond to ensure the project's success, and her dedication is commendable.

Mentoring Programme

We have successfully completed our 3-year Mentoring Programme, aimed at offering crucial support to refugees during their integration journey. This programme demonstrated its effectiveness in enhancing the integration of refugees within the UK and has been instrumental in assisting numerous refugees in understanding life in the country, accessing guidance to navigate the system, gaining an understanding of their rights, and charting a path for their livelihoods and professional endeavours. The project received funding from the European Fund (AMIF) and was officially completed in January 2023. In line with our dedication to excellence, we carried out an annual evaluation for the year 2022-23 at the close of 2022, with active engagement from 29 mentees.



The evaluation findings revealed encouraging results, highlighting the Mentoring Programme's efficacy in generating positive effects on the mentees' lives. Prior to the implementation of mentoring, the mean overall integration score across all participants was documented at 2.9 on a 6-point scale. Nonetheless, after the provision of thorough mentoring assistance, this score underwent a significant improvement, notably ascending to 5, indicating a substantial 35% enhancement.



Jida Malas
Mentoring Manager

With the support of 69 mentors over the course of the 3-year Mentoring Programme, we provided assistance to 84 refugees, observing significant developments in their personal and professional growth. This newfound self-assurance empowered them to explore novel prospects in education and employment alike. By cultivating social connections, they seamlessly assimilated into the wider community, fostering a feeling of belonging and support. Additionally, our mentees exhibited an enhanced comprehension of their entitlements and advantages, arming them with the skills to adeptly navigate the intricacies of their newfound society.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the European Fund (AMIF), our dedicated team of volunteer mentors for their unwavering support, and our Mentoring Manager, Jida Malas, for her essential contributions in achieving the success of this project.



"This project is part funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union."

NCG Youth Wellbeing Project (YWP)

For the 14th Year running our Youth Wellbeing Project (YWP) had another fruitful year in 2022-23 and demonstrated its commitment to supporting the well-being of refugee and asylum-seeking young people, particularly those who have experienced trauma, abuse, and neglect. The project aims to enhance the overall health and well-being of these young individuals by providing opportunities for support, socialisation, confidence building, and integration into the local community. Through various activities, such as weekly social clubs, youth counselling, football clubs, ESOL classes, girls' clubs, youth outings, and school holiday activities, the project aims to empower young people, build their confidence, and help them realize their full potential. Over the past year, the YWP has expanded its services and tailored activities in consultation with young people. During the reporting period, the project served over 120 young people and received 84 new referrals. A total of 247 different sessions were delivered, with a combined attendance of over 1,820.



Alicia Brown
Youth Wellbeing Manager



Maryam Ansari
Refugee Youth Worker



During this reporting period, we fostered partnerships with external organisations, resulting in fruitful collaborations with the PhotoVoice project, Never Such Innocence, BOOST, Flying Seagulls, ECPAT, Brook, Chickenshed, and Community Focus Project – ARTiculate. These partnerships have enriched the experience we offer and extended the array of opportunities available to our participants. The achievement of our YWP project can be attributed to the kind financial assistance provided by our Funders: The Young Londoners Fund, BBC Children in Need, and The John Lyons Charity. We extend our heartfelt thanks to them. In addition, we'd like to express our gratitude to our youth team, with special recognition for our Youth Wellbeing Manager, Alicia Brown, for her exceptional management and unwavering commitment.

Youth Quality Mark

During 2022, the Youth Team achieved accreditation from London Youth, attaining the esteemed London Youth Bronze Quality Mark. This Quality Mark serves as the pinnacle of London Youth's Quality Assurance initiative, granting youth organisations a symbol of distinction that gains recognition from both local authorities and funders. This accomplishment stands as a notable success for our youth team and they hold aspirations to advance towards securing the silver accreditation in the latter part of 2023.



NCG Youth Council

In the 2022-23 period, we established our Youth Council, which arranged its initial meeting to deliberate on ways the young people could contribute to the advancement of the NCG Youth Wellbeing Project. The Youth Council convened for the first time in July 2022 and held multiple meetings throughout the year. The Youth Team looks forward to nurturing the growth of the Youth Council in the coming year. The presence of a Youth Council holds significance, as it aligns with NCG's core commitment to engage with clients, providing them with a valuable platform to influence the shaping of our youth activities in accordance with their requirements.

Weekly Social Club

Our Youth Club provides engaging activities for a diverse range of young refugees and asylum seekers aged 12 to 21, including unaccompanied minors. The club convenes every Thursday evening at Middlesex University. Throughout the 2022-23 period, we successfully conducted 41 sessions, with a total of 496 attendances. Our dedicated youth team and volunteers lead the Youth Club, often incorporating guest hosts and facilitators from the creative arts, education and sports sectors. This serves as an excellent platform for young individuals to regularly connect and socialise while exploring new activities and enhancing their skills.

"It feels like a place that I can be myself"





Ashley Levien
Youth Football Coach

NCG Football Club

Football stands as one of the most favoured activities among our youth. Our Youth Team organises a weekly football club, led by a trained coach who provides guidance and assistance to the young participants. This not only offers a chance to have fun, exercise, and socialise, but also concludes the week on a positive note.

Throughout the 2022-23 period, the Youth Wellbeing Project successfully conducted 28 football club sessions, gathering an impressive total of 528 attendances. The football team meet consistently on Friday evenings at Middlesex University, boasting a regular attendance of 20-25 young individuals. In the summer of 2022, we facilitated a football tournament, joining forces with Young Roots, another youth organisation supporting young refugees. We have plans to repeat this event in the summer of 2023.

A special note of appreciation is due to our youth team, with particular recognition extended to coach Ashley Levien. Ashley's kind and inspiring attitude has been a positive role model for our young participants, and we extend our gratitude to him.



ESOL For Young People

ESOL classes are incredibly important for young refugees and asylum seekers, giving them the vital language skills required to flourish and seamlessly become part of their new communities. During the 2022-23 period, we hosted 63 casual online ESOL sessions catering to both beginners (entry level 1) and advanced learners (level 2+), with a total of 308 participants. These interactive lessons, combined with practical exercises, empower our students to cultivate essential communication skills. This empowers them to communicate well, pursue education, engage with their local communities, navigate daily life with self-assurance, and achieve comprehensive social integration.



Youth Excursions and School Break Activities

Throughout this reporting period, our Youth Team organised 32 excursions with a total participation of 249 attendees. These outings and events were scheduled during evenings, weekends, and school/college holidays. The array of activities encompassed a visit to Whitechapel Gallery, a Hollywood Bowl trip, a Refugee Week Dance held at Montrose Park, an enriching Proud Places journey to Barnet Physic Well, an engaging Proud Places expedition to Alexandra Palace, a cooking adventure at the NCG allotment, an interactive session at Camden Roundhouse Workshop, an insightful tour of the UK Parliament, exploration of the Tate Modern Gallery, an adventurous day at Go Ape Alexandra Palace, a visit to the Natural History Museum, a attractive performance of 'The Lion King' at the Lyceum Theatre, kayaking with Phoenix Canoe Club, the uplifting 'Fly with Me' event featuring Afghan Kites soaring in the sky, an engaging 'Tom, Dick and Harry' performance at Alexandra Palace, exhilaration at Flip Out Brent Cross, botanical exploration at Kew Gardens, participation in Into University Hammersmith, ice skating at Winter Wonderland, and a thought-provoking performance of 'Jack! Playing is Believing' at Chickenshed Theatre, all culminating in a group meal at Soor Restaurant Hendon.



These diverse activities played a crucial role in fostering enjoyment, friendship-building, and integration for our young individuals. Their active participation not only improved their emotional well-being but also improved their social interaction skills and gave them new perspectives on various aspects of UK culture. This greatly aided their smooth integration into society. We extend heartfelt gratitude to our funders, youth volunteers, and dedicated youth team for their invaluable contributions.

Virtual Educational Workshops

We strongly believe that guiding young refugees towards future success involves imparting knowledge on subjects that assist them in navigating their mental well-being and gaining insights into the workings of this country's systems. Throughout this reporting period, our youth team successfully organized and collaborated with external partners to conduct the subsequent online workshops and sessions for the programme's young participants: a workshop on the UK Parliament, an online session with Health Watch, a workshop titled "Boost" focusing on entering the job market, a session by Barnet Integrated Clinical Service (BICs) about stress management, workshops on developing positive coping strategies for anxiety, loneliness, and isolation, an "Accessing Education" workshop in collaboration with Middlesex University, and a Stress Management Workshop conducted by NCG.

Contingency Hotels Outreach

Numerous young asylum seekers and their families are currently residing in temporary hotels throughout London. Over the course of this reporting period, the youth team introduced the Youth Wellbeing Project and its associated support services to two such contingency hotels within the borough of Barnet. Moreover, in December 2022, the youth team collaborated with young individuals to engage in the packaging and distribution of Christmas gifts to asylum-seeking residents of the hotels. With an eye toward the future, the youth team is actively pursuing the expansion of their assistance to children and young individuals lodging in hotels throughout 2023 and 2024.



Mosaic Rooms Young Collective

The Mosaic Rooms have been committed to their support for artists and cultural practitioners spanning the Arab world and beyond. In a collaborative effort with the Mosaic Rooms, we established our own young collective within the Mosaic Rooms Gallery in West London in 2022. This initiative, known as the Mosaic Rooms Young Collective, extends an invitation to young individuals to immerse themselves in the realm of visual arts, adopting fresh perspectives in analysing, conversing about, and generating creative work as a unified entity. A cohort of up to 10 young participants from the NCG Youth Wellbeing Project have enthusiastically embraced this collective, benefiting from the guidance of the staff team. They have actively participated in the following projects:

The Mosaic Rooms Young Collective: Anatomy of a World

Commencing in September 2022 and running through November 2022, we were engaged in 10 consecutive weekly sessions. Collaborating with artist Nia Fekri, these young minds navigated a multidisciplinary avenue toward collective storytelling. Employing imaginative exercises, participants crafted narratives that intertwined, worlds that converged, and characters that were a fusion of diverse elements. The culmination of their efforts materialised in the curation and design of their own exhibition space within the gallery. The young collective composed a public opening event in November 2022, following which their exhibition remained accessible to the public from November 2022 to January 2023.



The Mosaic Rooms Young Collective: Shall We Sit Together?

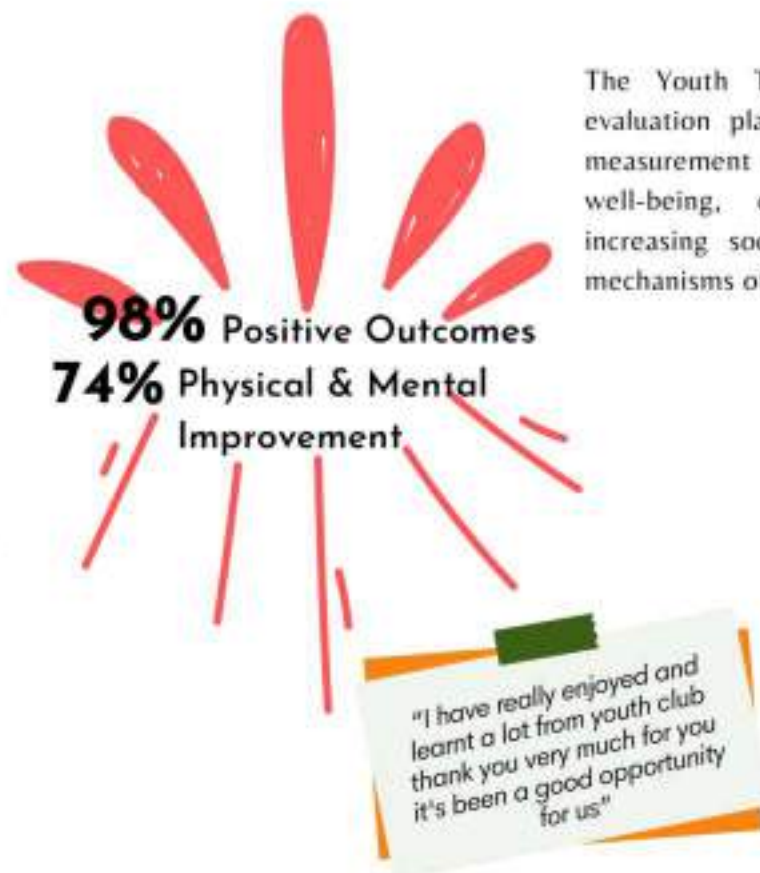
In 2023, we reinitiated this activity in March, with its continuation scheduled until November 2023. This phase of the project is a collaboration with Febrik, a not-for-profit platform centred on participatory art and design research. Febrik's focus lies in examining the rights to spatial occupancy among marginalised groups in contested refuge spaces.

Our heartfelt appreciation is extended to The Mosaic Rooms for their invaluable partnership and unwavering support in making this venture possible.

Youth Evaluation Survey

The Youth Wellbeing Project is a complex project consisting of multiple activities and services to support the psychosocial needs of young asylum seekers and refugees. Within each regular activity (ESOL, Youth Club, Football, Girls' Club, Action Club, Outings) there are multiple sub-activities, individual workshops, and events. Due to the capacity within the youth team, and a high number of individual workshops/activities, it is not possible for the youth team to evaluate every individual workshop/activity independently. In response to this, the youth team have developed multiple methods of evaluating of the activities, service, and young persons' development within these activities. The youth team evaluate the young people's progress using quarterly Youth Satisfaction; Feedback made during activities to staff members, staff observations during activities, regular face-to-face young person feedback sessions and reflective meetings, and the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale.

During the past year, of the 84 young people who responded to our quarterly surveys, 80% were male, and 20% were female. In terms of age distribution, 13% were between 12-15 years old, 30% were between 15-17 years old, 33% were between 18-21 years old, and 24% were 21 years old or older. An overwhelming 98.6% of respondents reported positive outcomes from their involvement in the project's youth activities. These outcomes included feeling happier, having fun, learning new skills, making new friends, reducing loneliness, and improving English language skills. Furthermore, 74.3% of respondents indicated that being part of the project's youth club had improved their overall physical and mental well-being. This feedback highlights the positive impact the project has had on the well-being of young people, addressing their emotional needs and fostering a supportive environment.



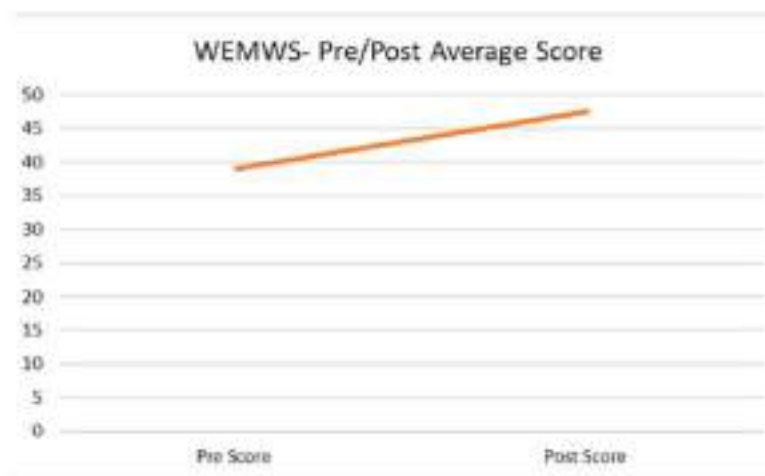
The Youth Team has successfully implemented their evaluation plan during this reporting period. Their key measurement objectives included improving health and well-being, enhancing young people's engagement, increasing social skills and knowledge, and identifying mechanisms of change.

Youth Counselling Service

The Youth Counselling Project has consistently delivered its invaluable services, focusing on offering weekly counselling sessions in the mother tongue to young refugees and asylum seekers. Generously supported by the John Lyons' Charity and Children in Need, the project catered to the needs of 25 young individuals throughout this period.

To gauge the effectiveness of the Youth Counselling Service, we requested all participants to rate their mental well-being using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) both before and after completing their counselling sessions. The Pre/Post ratio, which indicates the average well-being score before and after counselling, initially stood at 39, rising to 47.5 following the conclusion of the 12 counselling sessions. With all but one participant exhibiting an improvement in their well-being scores from pre-counselling to post-counselling, a positive shift in their mental well-being became evident.

In summary, the Youth Counselling Project adeptly addressed the mental well-being requirements of the young participants, as underscored by the notable enhancements in their well-being scores. The favourable outcomes achieved by the project highlight the significance of offering easily accessible and culturally suitable counselling services for the youth. We extend special appreciation to our funders, counsellors, and clinical supervisors for their instrumental contributions in making this project a success.



Bilingual Counselling Service

Asylum seekers and refugees continue to grapple with dire mental health and well-being challenges, a pressing global issue that unfortunately often languishes at the bottom of funding priorities. The absence of timely interventions, both practical and psychological, often leads to re-traumatisation among asylum seekers and refugees. This distressing cycle unfolds during their departure from their homelands, persists throughout their journey to find safety in their chosen destination, and persists amid the unexpected adversities that confront them upon arrival, a struggle that can extend over several years, not to mention the looming threat of deportation. In the span of this reporting phase, our counselling service encountered its busiest period since its inception. Our bilingual counselling service received a notable total of 516 referrals for individual psychological support within the 2022-23 timeframe.



Shahrzad Khamoush
Therapeutic Services
Manager



Ellie Safe
Counselling Coordinator



Of these referrals, 53 received funding for one-on-one counselling under the IAPT program. The origins of these referrals were as follows: 42% stemmed from NHS IAPT Services, 35% from various other organizations (including NCG), 12% were from GPs, 6% from Social Prescribers, and 5% originated as self-referrals. Throughout this period, our counselling service delivered around 2,868 bilingual counselling sessions to 239 clients who successfully completed their treatment plans. The completion rate among these clients stood at 80%, which indicates that 63 clients (20%) did not conclude their courses of treatment. This rate is notably lower than the national average of

40% for non-completion. Our counselling team, consisting of 22 proficient bilingual counsellors, comprises both experienced professionals and trainees. These counsellors offered culturally attuned psychological support in clients' native languages. This comprehensive approach ensured that counselling services were accessible in an array of languages including Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Dari, French, Albanian, Italian, Turkish, Somali, Swahili, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Ukrainian, and Urdu.



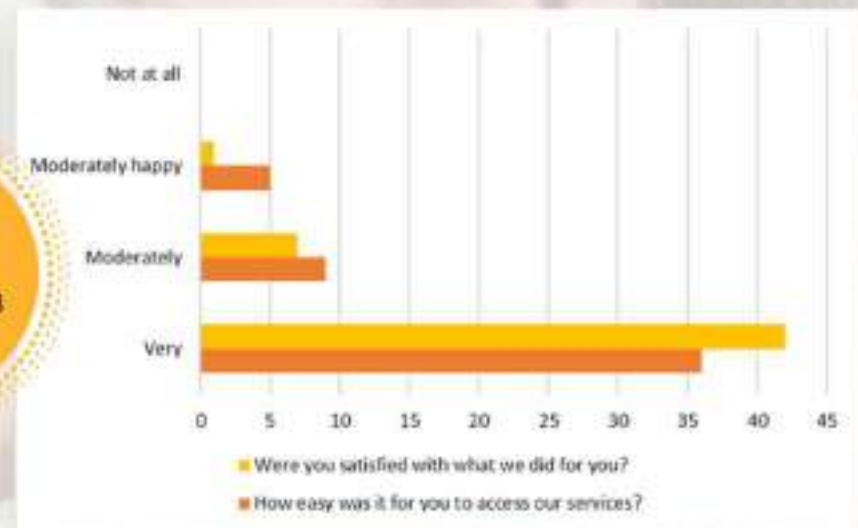
Impact Measurement

The counselling service utilised the national IAPT's recovery measurement protocol to assess treatment outcomes. The Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7) were employed as evaluative tools to gauge the clinical effectiveness. These assessments were conducted at three intervals during the counselling process: at the initial assessment, midway through treatment, and upon treatment completion. Upon concluding a full course of 12 counselling sessions, the data extracted from the PHQ-9 and GAD-7 evaluations unveiled a substantial enhancement in clients' mental health and overall well-being, culminating in a recovery rate of 52%. Notably, the recovery rate witnessed an ascent from 41% after the initial 6 sessions to 52% upon the culmination of the subsequent 6 sessions.

To ascertain client satisfaction with the counselling service, a survey focused on counselling satisfaction was executed. Fifty clients who had successfully completed their treatment were chosen at random for interviews. The findings unveiled that 84% of these clients expressed contentment with the counselling they had received. Furthermore, 59% reported noteworthy enhancements in their mental well-being, and a resounding 82% affirmed their willingness to endorse the service to friends and family.



Female: 252
Male: 261
Transgender : 3



Our heartfelt gratitude extends to our funders, NLCF, and Barnet CCG, whose financial support underpins this invaluable service. We also extend appreciation to our dedicated team of counsellors, clinical supervisors, and particularly our Counselling Coordinators, Ellie Safe, and our Therapeutic Service Manager, Shahrzad Khamoush, all of whom contribute tirelessly to making this service impactful.

IAPT Psycho-Educational Workshops

The Improvement Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service, Step Two, focuses on offering low-intensity psychological support for individuals with mild to moderate levels of depression and anxiety. Over the past year, as part of our collaboration through the Barnet Wellbeing Hub, we successfully conducted a total of 43 workshops, reaching out to 518 clients out of the 560 registered. It is notable that these workshops spanned a diverse array of subjects, containing topics like PTSD, Anger Management, Sleep Management, Panic & Phobia, Anxiety Management, and addressing grief and depression in Farsi, Arabic, and English. The central objective behind these workshops was to empower clients with a comprehensive understanding of mental health conditions while furnishing them with essential coping mechanisms. To evaluate the impact of these workshops, we employed an evaluation form that participants completed at the end of each session. This feedback mechanism proved instrumental in capturing valuable insights regarding participant experiences, the suitability of the content, and the effectiveness of the delivery.



Remarkably, 65% of participants indicated a clear understanding of the objectives, 86% found the workshops to be well-organised, 96% acknowledged the facilitator's expertise, 74% reported increased knowledge of the topic, and 52% stated that the workshops assisted them in managing their mental health in relation to the subject matter. While the overall feedback was highly positive, a significant number of participants expressed interest in having a blend of both one-on-one counselling sessions and group workshops. In summary, the IAPT Psycho-Educational Workshops have undeniably wielded a positive influence by teaching crucial knowledge and skills to individuals navigating mental health challenges.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our esteemed funder, Barnet CCG and CommunityBarnet, as well as our dedicated facilitators and counselling team, whose collective efforts have paved the way for the success of this project.

Refugee Awareness Talks at School Assemblies

One component of our refugee awareness training involves visiting various school assemblies and engaging in discussions, with the goal of enlightening young individuals about refugee challenges and the experiences they undergo upon arriving in the UK. This represents a commendable initiative aimed at combatting racism, discrimination, and fostering increased awareness among schoolchildren of the need to be more empathetic and compassionate toward their peers with refugee backgrounds. Over the past year, we successfully conducted awareness talks at multiple schools across Barnet, with the invaluable support of our youth team. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to these schools for prioritizing refugee issues for their dedicated efforts in promoting the integration of young people, thereby encouraging community cohesion.



Tuition

Tuition programmes for refugee children play a crucial role in breaking down educational barriers, supporting their emotional well-being, and equipping them with the necessary skills for successful integration.

As part of our AMIF project (European Fund) from April 2022 to Dec 2022, we continued to provide 3 hours of weekly Math and English (Key Stage 1 to 4) Tuition to 60 refugee children, this included Afghan children under our AMIF Afghan Project.

The evaluation of this program confirms that 81% of the students were more confident in English and 71% improved their Maths and 77% confirmed that they understood their schoolwork a lot more clearly.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Sayed Hussain and his team of committed teachers for their crucial role in ensuring the success of this project.

"I would like to thank your respected organisation for this precious opportunity you provided to my children to learn English and math which is not only vital for them but also for my wife as she also attends the sessions with my kids."



London Legal Support Sponsored Walk 2022

The London Legal Walk is a yearly occasion involving a 10km post-work stroll, commencing behind London's Royal Courts of Justice on Carey Street. The 2022 Legal Walk took place on June 28th, showcasing the participation of 800 registered teams and over 12,000 walkers.

NCG's team of committed walkers, alongside others, completed this 10K Charity Walk for the 15th instance! We express gratitude to our dedicated 16 walkers who gathered around £1275 through sponsorships. The funds collected by our walkers directly benefited NCG and significantly contributed to our crucial advisory service for clients who have fled persecution, seeking asylum and an opportunity to rebuild their lives.

A heartfelt thank you is extended to the walkers and, most importantly, to all the sponsors who generously supported our walkers in raising funds for this important cause.

"Together, we have the power to create an impact!"



The London Interfaith Fun Run

Thirty-four clients of NCG and 4 volunteers participated in the 2nd London Interfaith Fun Run, which took place on Monday, August 29th 2022. Our client group was offered three distance options: 10km, 5km, and 1km, allowing them to walk, run, or jog. This unique event, organised by the Faith & Belief Forum, provided an opportunity for the city's diverse communities to unite and convey a message to both London and the UK: We stand for friendship regardless of differences, and we support the community irrespective of divisions.

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the Faith & Belief Forum for their generous gesture in providing 37 complimentary spaces, t-shirts, food vouchers, and an inclusive shuttle service for our clients and volunteers. This thoughtful support created a memorable and inclusive experience for our clients, fostering a sense of belonging within the community.



Art & Craft Workshops

Many refugees have experienced trauma and displacement, which has led to mental health challenges and a sense of isolation. This year, as part of our therapeutic project, NCG managed to organise 8 Arts and Crafts workshops, including doll making, jewellery making, greeting card making, and poetry workshops for 48 refugee and asylum-seeking women. These workshops serve as invaluable platforms for empowerment, healing, skills development, and community building. We have witnessed that engaging our clients, especially women, in these artistic activities not only has therapeutic effects to process trauma, reduce stress, and improve their mental well-being but also allows them to boost their self-confidence and fosters a sense of belonging.



Refugee Week

Refugee Week is an annual arts and cultural festival that celebrates the contributions, resilience, and creativity of refugees and people seeking sanctuary. This year's event was inspired by the theme of 'Healing.' NCG, in partnership with the London Borough of Barnet and other community organisations, celebrated Refugee Week on 25th June 2022 at Montrose and Silkstream Parks in Barnet to promote a sense of unity and solidarity with refugees and asylum seekers. The celebration aimed to highlight refugees' skills, talents, and cultural heritage. The NCG youth team played a vital role in the Refugee Week event through an art collage and storytelling activity. The young people created a display representing their past, present, and future aspirations, centred around this year's theme of 'Healing Together.'

A group of eight young individuals performed two traditional dances for the occasion, and another young member played a Persian instrument, the dulcimer. In addition, an NCG staff member sang beautiful Turkish songs. The Mayor of Barnet, Alison Moore, and the audience were so enthralled by the young people's performances that the DJ asked them to close the event with a repeat performance of their Kurdish dance. Additionally, we hosted a 3-day celebration at our allotment where 23 guests, including our funders and supporters, joined us to share a meal with refugees and listen to their stories. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Barnet Council and all our partner organisations for their invaluable contributions in making this event a resounding success.



"Each of us left a piece of our body and soul in our countries when we had forced to flee. The depth of the pain of separation from loved ones and the homeland cannot be handled alone. I am here for you to listen to you. you are not alone in your sufferings."

"I wish for a day when there is no displacement exist and you can find peace all around the world. I wish for a day when no one will have to leave their homeland."

"We all have attachments in our countries that are dear to us, when we enter a new country as a refugee we get confused because we are not familiar with the law of that new country, Thanks to all the kind people in NCG who heal our wounds. How nice it is to help our fellow man if we know something to tell them and guide them. I myself have seen people help me in Britain many times. if I can do something which makes others happy, I do not hesitate, because we are far from our family".

"No matter why you left your country, the grief of being away from home will stay with you forever"

International Women's Day Celebration

Each year the NCG Jasmine Women's Group takes great pride in celebrating International Women's Day (IWD). This year's event, held on 17th March 2023, was a significant milestone in promoting inclusivity and empowering women from diverse backgrounds. The event was open to the local community, allowing refugee and asylum-seeking women to showcase their talents, share their heritage, food, and cultures, and foster connections with fellow members of the community. A total of 87 women participated, including NCG stakeholders, the Mayor of Barnet, local councillors, and supporters. A central focus of this year's celebration was the theme #EmbraceEquity. Our dedicated volunteers organised an interactive session around Equality and Equity. The discussion revolved around driving Gender Equity across different cultures, backgrounds, and communities, emphasising the importance of equal opportunities for women from all walks of life. Thanks to Alison Moore the Mayor of Barnet, who participated in the event and delivered an inspiring speech about the role of women in our society and how refugee women can become integral members of our community, making valuable contributions.



"The event was wonderful and a success. The food and the program outline and the ways it was delivered including the interpreters were carefully planned according to the need of the women, which was excellent! It demonstrated the reason why the New Citizen's Gateway comes to support the migrants and refugees in the community. You know their struggle, you know they need to be supported and you know how to support them. It was a beautiful celebration.

What I have learned from the event is ... how dedicated, hardworking, and passionate you are Farida to the people that you support. It was nice to sit and talk to the ladies too, I could see their faces they look hopeful. I have also learned that Barnet truly becomes a multi-cultural borough." Salma from Inclusion Barnet

NCG Coffee Mornings

From September 2022 to March 2023, NCG organised a series of 7 morning coffee club sessions, which brought together a total of 45 participants. These sessions served as a platform for our clients to come together, share conversations over coffee, and build connections with others who are navigating similar circumstances. The interactions facilitated a deeper understanding among participants, fostering a sense of friendship and empathy. Importantly, these gatherings also played a vital role in combating the feelings of isolation that can often affect individuals in such situations. The positive feedback we received underscores the significance of these coffee mornings, with a majority of our clients expressing their sincere appreciation for the initiative.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes out to the Barnet Refugee Welcome Board, whose invaluable support made these Coffee Mornings a reality. It is through their generous funding that we were able to create a space where connections could flourish and where individuals could find solace in shared experiences. Their contribution has truly made a difference in the lives of our clients, and we extend our gratitude for their unwavering support.



"I share my story, my culture. I enjoy listening to others about mental health. I am not the only person who worries about family. When I listened to others, I realised that they have more problem than me. Volunteers are supportive and listen to us".



"I'm very depressed. Meeting with others helps me to feel better. Volunteers are very helpful. They calm me down and listen to me".

"I enjoy my time with others. I also like listen to the trainers about different topics".



"Lovely to see people from different countries and make friendships with them".

"I have health problems, I am always in my room. Coming out of my room and talking to people makes me really happy".



"Thank you so much; I really liked the conversation with others. My English has been improved since then".

Family Reunion Support

Over the past year, our mission to facilitate the legal settlement of refugee families in the UK through the Family Reunion Scheme has been significantly strengthened by our close collaboration with Mercy Mission, a dedicated community development organisation. This partnership has played a pivotal role in amplifying our efforts and making a tangible difference in the lives of our clients – individuals who belong to one of the most marginalised segments of our society. Mercy Mission's unwavering commitment and generous contributions have not only sustained our activities but have also acted as a beacon of hope for families torn apart by circumstances.



Through this collaboration, we have been able to offer practical assistance and invaluable support, helping families reunite and embark on a new chapter in a foreign land. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mercy Mission for its impactful role in bringing families together and contributing to the positive transformation of lives. We also extend our appreciation to all other donors who have joined hands in this endeavour, affirming the power of unity and compassion in creating a brighter future for those in need.

"I attached a picture that includes three of them looking to their bright future. My wife is studying hard to become a doctor in the UK and contribute to the health and wellbeing of the UK citizens and my children are looking forward to getting admission to school."

"Today was a unique day in our family, it was the very first time that I saw a different kind of smile and happiness on the face of my children, thank you so much for making them all happy again, today. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to NCG as a great charity supporting refugees and to Mercy Mission for their financial support"

"The financial support you have availed to us to purchase my wife and daughters' flight ticket allowed our family to get together sooner than expected for which we remain grateful and appreciate you and all those who helped our family reunite"

World Mental Health Day

NCG, an active participant within the Barnet Wellbeing Hub, played a pivotal role alongside many other organisations in organising the 2022 World Mental Health Day event, which unfolded on the 13th of October. Guided by the theme set forth by the World Federation for Mental Health, 'making mental health and wellbeing for all a global priority,' the event served as a platform to address critical issues related to mental health on a global scale. The event's objectives included several significant aspects, including raising awareness of mental health disparities within diverse communities, delving into the complexities linked to the Cost of Living and its potential influence on mental well-being, and introducing essential mental health and financial support services available within the Borough. During the event, NCG took the stage to deliver a presentation spotlighting the profound impact of barriers on the mental health of asylum seekers and refugees.

We also discussed the emotional and mental support initiatives we have set in place, along with our Psychosocial Therapeutic activities tailored for refugees and asylum seekers. The occasion offered an invaluable opportunity to shed light on the critical link between mental health, refugees, and the broader community. By fostering understanding and collaboration, we collectively strive towards a future where mental well-being is universally prioritised and supported.



Volunteering Project

Volunteers are the backbone of our organisation and play an indispensable role in our daily operations. They generously donate their time, skills, and compassion to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our client group and empower them to build brighter futures. Each volunteer brings unique talents and experiences, enriching the support we offer and fostering a sense of community among those we serve. During 2022-2023, NCG enlisted a total of 98 registered volunteers, with more than half of them originating from our client group. Among these, 67 actively participated in a wide spectrum of endeavours. This encompassed offering Advice and Guidance, teaching ESOL, taking part in the Mums and Tots' Group, extending Mentoring and Counselling, contributing to the Women's and Youth Groups, tending to Gardening project tasks, assisting with administrative responsibilities, providing interpreting services, contributing to strategy development, crafting activities, and evaluating the quality of our services. This rich diversity of involvement vividly highlights the programme's capacity to cater to the unique needs of the refugee and asylum seeker community.

In order to measure the satisfaction of our volunteers and evaluate the effectiveness and influence of NCG's Volunteering Programme throughout the duration of 2022-23, we conducted an evaluation survey. The results of the survey were overwhelmingly positive, with 62.86% of respondents expressing high satisfaction with their overall volunteering experience at NCG, 57% feeling highly supported by NCG management, 77.14%, feeling valued as members of the organisation and 73% of respondents expressing a high likelihood of recommending NCG's volunteering opportunities to others. The active participation of volunteers played a pivotal role in NCG's expansion of services, enabling us to connect with a broader range of beneficiaries. By relying on the dedication of these volunteers, our organisation managed to optimise its limited resources, leading to a more efficient and effective provision of services to refugees and asylum seekers. In this context, we would like to take a moment to express our sincere gratitude to all the individuals who contributed their hard work and dedication. In addition, we extend our appreciation to our funders, the European Fund AMIF and The Mercers Company, for their crucial financial support.



Farida Stanikzai
Operations Manager



Benefits for Refugee Volunteers

Participating in volunteering opportunities holds immense significance for the integration and resettlement of refugees. Frequently arriving with skills and credentials that aren't acknowledged in the UK, refugees benefit greatly from volunteering, as it enables them to acquire experience, secure references, and enhance their mental well-being, all the while addressing the challenges they face due to a loss of identity. Moreover, this process aids them in reconstructing their lives and serves as a stepping stone towards finding employment, thus contributing to their positive integration.

During 2022-2023 more than half of our volunteers came from our client group. Our evaluation survey results for this period indicated that NCG's Volunteering Programme has particularly positively impacted refugee volunteers. A remarkable 90% of refugee volunteers reported gaining valuable experience that would aid them in securing paid employment. This highlights the practical benefits of the programme in enhancing the employability skills of this specific group. Moreover, 93% of refugee volunteers expressed a stronger sense of community belonging and increased confidence in the UK work environment. These outcomes reflect the positive social integration and personal growth experienced by refugee volunteers through their participation in the programme.



Transition to Paid Employment

It's important to highlight that NCG's assistance went beyond volunteering, with the organisation helping 13 individuals to obtain paid employment in the course of this reporting period. This accomplishment serves as a testament to the concrete results and tangible influence of NCG's endeavours. The smooth transition of volunteers from unpaid roles to paid positions underscores the programme's efficacy in fostering career development and offering avenues for individuals to enhance their situations. Additionally, this achievement underscores the valuable contributions refugees can make to society.

We extend a special appreciation to Farida Stanikzai, our Operations Manager, for her exceptional dedication that has led to the success of our volunteering programme.

13

**Volunteers got into
paid employment!**

"As a refugee coming to the UK, it is a great opportunity for me to be part of such a great organisation who have not only helped me but other refugees"

"NCG helped me to complete the Level 2 Teaching Assistant Diploma. I successfully completed the course. NCG then registered me with a job agency and provided me with a reference. Now I work full time in a primary school"

List of Volunteers 2022-23

Trustees

Ponusamy Karunaharan
John Conor Doyle
Dr. Sanjiv Ahluwalia
Golnar Bokaie
Dr. Penelope Anne Trafford
Fanta Sheriff
Esmond Sidney Rosen
Geethawathy Thirusaba-Nathan

Client Advisor

Alaa Alibrahim
Farhad Farewar
Najma Al-Nadhari

Legal Advisor

Pegah Tamkinfard

Counsellors

Khadijah Rahimi
Yasmin Sher
Zara Tylor Jackson
Zohreh Irvani
Haulah Zacharia
Zahra Alam

ESOL Teachers

Dinaz Bomanji
Elizabeth Morrell
Ehsan Lavipour
Faarid Hashim Patel
Flora Jacobs
Helen Stone
Helen Halpern
Helen Wiseman
Jenna Dean
Oma Almagor
Linda Carey
Liz Johnson
Martha Kontoghiorghie
Peter Bezuidenhout
Ros Staines
Rosemary Biseo
Ruth Kitching
Shelly Fennell
Anita Kanani
Azize Bozkurt
Bernadette Steiert
Carole Dukes
Sima Rutherford
Simon Tabbush
Uliana Yaskiv

Mentors

Ahmed Omiyma
Akinsanya Kemi
Al Jasem Mohammad
Amir Karimzada
Angelina Nocolaou
Charlotte Westbrook
Chorouk Elkosbi
Gisa Duggan
Caroline Farah
Fuad Trayek
Hessa Nasser
Zeinab Hindawi
Huda Shoudob
Martha Jary
Madiha Sultan
Inesa Mazitova
Sara Metz
Mohamed Ahmed Narmien
Mohammad Aljasem
Diana Niazi
Sara Salehzehi
Shermin Nikravesi

Women's Group

Tanya Novick
Kathy Lichman
Anhita Mollajan
Fouzia Arouche
Mozghan Parsapour
Mastura Noorallam
Jennifer Yvonne Albert
Laura Rojan Akturan
Elsa Shamash

Yoga Instructors

Judy Sampath

Mums and Tot's Group

Mojgan Rabiee
Golafshan Karami
Freshta Ahmadi

Youth Work

Maria Pitsini
Reza Nourmand
Mohsen Sanjaghi

Gardening

Mohammad Bahmaninejad Fard
Gulseka Satar
Mahjabeen Saboor
Mozghan Parsapour
Mastura Noorallam
Vegeun Boick

Interpreters

Alaa Alibrahim
Sayed Ashna
Ammar Bajboj
Thoraya Dujaili
Moussa Ahmad Diabi
Fatemeh Mir Sadeghi
Molouk Vakili
Adila Badri
Yohannes B Kidanemariam
Qais Sahar
Nida Zwak
Mohammad Hussein Idris Abbaker
Mohammad Said
Alaa Alibrahim
Farhad Farewar
Mohsen Sanjaghi
Parwaneh Sultani

Volunteers Party 2023



We make a living with what we get but we make a life with what we give!

A VERY BIG THANK YOU to all our volunteers!

Jasmine Women's Group

For the 15th consecutive year, the Jasmine Women's Group has continued to flourish, solidifying its position as one of our most sought-after activities. The group's overarching aim is to create a secure and inviting space for refugee and asylum-seeking women, fostering social integration and overall well-being. Every Friday from 10:30 to 12:30, the group convenes at the Sacred Heart Church in Mill Hill, maintaining its focus on providing our clients with a 'safe space' to connect, establish friendships, gain empowerment, and gain insights into life in the UK.

During the 2022-23 period, a total of 120 refugee and asylum seeking women from various nations actively engaged in 34 sessions organized by the group. Many of them travelled from different parts of London to attend these sessions. Typically, each weekly session saw the participation of 15 to 20 women representing a diverse array of countries, such as Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Congo, Albania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Syria, Ukraine, and Ivory Coast. It has been a great joy to observe the remarkable transformation of these women as they have gained confidence, improved their English proficiency, and acquired new skills through our wide range of activities, outings, and workshops. Similarly, we arranged a diverse selection of psychosocial activities and workshops. These covered a broad spectrum of subjects, such as arts and crafts projects, jewellery crafting, card-making, traditional doll creation, yoga sessions, and IAPT workshops.



Women's Group Team: Elsa Shamash, Kathy Lichman, Rojan Akturan, Jen Albert, Muzghan Parsapour, Mastura NoorAlam

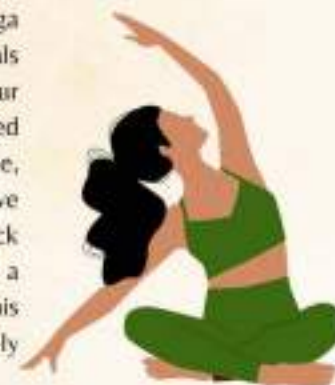
"When I am down, this is the place that cheers me up"

"Can't wait for Friday to join the Jasmine group".

We extend our sincere gratitude to Tanya Novick, our dedicated women's Group Coordinator, to the Sacred Heart Church in Mill Hill for their generous hosting, and above all, to the Jasmine volunteers – Elsa Shamash, Kathy Lichman, Rojan Akturan, Jen Albert, Muzghan Parsapour, and Mastura NoorAlam, whose commitment and efforts have been pivotal in making this project a success.

Yoga Sessions

Over the last year, we conducted a total of 17 yoga sessions with an average participation of 20 individuals per session. As an integral component of our therapeutic support, these yoga sessions are designed to offer a holistic healing experience, foster resilience, and empower refugees and asylum seekers who have faced trauma and displacement. We collected feedback from 16 consistent participants who had completed a minimum of 6 sessions, and the results affirm that this activity is among the most well-received, positively impacting participants' mental well-being by 87%.



Happy 96th Birthday, Elsa!



On 2nd June 22 the Jasmine Group came together to celebrate a remarkable milestone – the 96th birthday of one of its most devoted volunteers, Elsa Shamash.

Elsa's journey to the UK began at a tender age when she arrived as a refugee child. Born in Charlottenburg, Germany, she spent her early years there alongside her father, mother, and older brother. As a Jewish child residing in Nazi Germany, Elsa encountered the harsh realities of antisemitism from neighbours, classmates, and teachers. Following the infamous Kristallnacht, her parents persevered in their efforts to escape, and it was on the occasion of her brother's Bar Mitzvah that they received news that both children had secured a place on the Kindertransport. On March 2, 1939, Elsa and her brother embarked on their journey to England through the Kindertransport initiative, establishing a new life in the UK.

Throughout her years in the UK, Elsa has devoted a considerable portion of her time to supporting refugees. Her commitment to this cause is particularly evident through her over-decade-long involvement as an active volunteer with our Jasmine Group. Elsa's contributions have been invaluable, and her dedication has left a positive impact on countless individuals she has supported.

On this special occasion, NCG wishes to extend heartfelt gratitude to Elsa for her unwavering support. Her selflessness and dedication have touched the lives of many, and we are deeply appreciative of all the lives she has positively influenced throughout the years.

Donations



Throughout the period of 2022-23, our organisation was humbled to receive a total of approximately £54,350 in generous contributions from individuals, organisations, and faith groups. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every supporter who played a vital role in enabling our work. Among these, we express special recognition to an anonymous donor who granted us with a generous gift of £4,375. The generosity of Mr. & Mrs. Demashkieh's £10,000, Latter-day Saint Charities' £1,000, Cllr Humayune Khalick's £2,700, Mr. Husayn Kassai/Quench's £2,000 contribution, Churches Together's contribution of £1,582, and Hoffman-Bokai Solicitors' donation of £1,924.40 greatly enriched our initiatives.

In the sphere of food donations, the kind contributions from various churches, mosques, synagogues, and food banks have played a pivotal role in enabling us to distribute food parcels to destitute asylum seekers. We extend our deep appreciation to Mrs. Jodi Mishcon for her unwavering support through the Big Shop Appeal for New Citizens' Gateway, which remarkably raised £14,726.

The spirit of giving was also evident during our end-of-year celebration, as we received numerous gifts from diverse sources, including faith groups, Goods for Good, the Young Barnet Foundation, and thoughtful

members of the public. To all these contributors, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for making the event truly special. Additionally, we offer special recognition to faith groups, local businesses, and individuals who lent their support through financial contributions or donations in kind. The list includes Kol Nefesh Masorti Synagogue, CJ & JD Novic, Russell & Cohen, Imperial College Union, Nisa-Nashim, St. John's United Reform Church in New Barnet, the Iyengar Yoga Group, New North London Synagogue, Barnet Refugee Welcome Board, The Sacred Heart Church Mill Hill, Personal Improvement Ltd, St. Mary at Finchley, Manor Drive Methodist Church, Trinity Church Colindale, Masorti Judaism UK, Khawateen (Association of Asian Muslims of North London), Mitzvah Day, Hampstead Garden Suburb, Kew Gardens Community Access Scheme, Better World Charity, Sebby's Corner, Age UK Barnet, The Hygiene Bank Barnet, Care4Calais, Young Barnet Foundation, Colindale Food Bank, Burnt Oak Women's Group, Burnt Oak Community Food Bank, and many others. While it is challenging to place an exact value on all in-kind donations, we estimate their cumulative retail worth to exceed £60,000.



Once again, we extend our profound gratitude to each and every supporter, organisation, and individual whose compassion and commitment have been instrumental in driving our mission forward. Your contributions have made a tangible impact, enhancing the lives of those we serve.

Christmas Gift Donations for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Embracing the spirit of giving during the festive season, our Youth Action Group embarked on a heartwarming activity by donating Christmas gifts to refugees and asylum seekers. This act of compassion not only spread holiday cheer but also resonated with the essence of solidarity and kindness. Throughout the joyful month of December, the Youth Action Group worked tirelessly to assemble and prepare 168 gift parcels. These thoughtfully packed parcels were brimming with toys, school bags, and stationery – a collection designed to bring joy and comfort to those in need. It is a gesture that carries profound significance, reflecting a genuine desire to make a positive impact on the lives of asylum-seeking children. The result of this inspiring effort came to fruition on the 17th and 23rd of December, when the gift parcels were warmly distributed to asylum-seeking children residing in contingency hotels. The expressions of delight and gratitude on their faces mirrored the success of our mission. In this venture, we are indebted to the unwavering support of our partners. The generosity of Goods for Good, the Young Barnet Foundation, Sebby's Corner, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Trinity Church North Finchley, and the United Synagogues played an instrumental role in making this initiative a reality. Their donations not only contributed to the material contents of the gift parcels but also helped bring smiles, happiness, and a sense of belonging to the refugee and asylum-seeking children. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all those who played a part, big or small, in this meaningful effort. Your contributions have undoubtedly made a lasting impact on the lives of these young individuals, instilling a sense of hope and warmth during a time that can be particularly challenging for them.



Small Grants for Individuals

Refugees, especially destitute asylum seekers, often represent some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society. Many of these people lack access to any form of assistance, and even those who are eligible may still find themselves living below the poverty threshold. We are pleased to announce that we have received a generous contribution of £10,550 from Mercy Mission UK to support family reunions. Additionally, we have received £3,500 worth of vouchers from Chipping Barnet/The Trussell Trust Food Bank, aimed at aiding desperate individuals and their families who have nowhere else to turn and have lost all hope. We would also like to express our deepest appreciation to the following individuals and organisations: Mark Novick, the Shamash Family, The Harris Family, Suleman Sharjeel, COSARAF, the Young Barnet Foundation, St. John's United Reformed Church, Second Chance C.I.C, Ruth Hayman Trust, and numerous individual donors. These small grants have covered expenses related to education and training, household essentials, emergency shelter for domestic violence survivors, medical and mobility costs, IT equipment, and basic living expenses. On behalf of our clients, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of them for their unwavering support.

Sowing Seeds Gardening Project

As part of our unique Ecotherapy initiative, we have been running an attractive gardening project (Sowing Seeds) that aims to enhance the overall mental and physical well-being of refugees and asylum seekers. By engaging in stimulating outdoor activities within a serene green environment, we provide them with a nurturing space for self-discovery and personal growth.

From April to October 2022, we organised a total of 43 enriching sessions, with an additional 11 sessions dedicated to outdoor cookery in the garden. Through these sessions, we witnessed the transformation of 170 participants, with 38 individuals participating consistently and enthusiastically.

The evaluation of this popular programme confirmed:

100% of the participants confirmed that by engaging with others in the garden, they were able to make friends and find someone to talk to when they felt low. This indicates that the gardening project provided a supportive and social environment for participants, helping them to form connections and combat feelings of loneliness or sadness.

89% of the participants felt that the garden became a shared space where they could meet people from different countries. This suggests that the gardening project promoted cultural diversity and provided an opportunity for participants to interact with individuals from various backgrounds, fostering a sense of inclusivity and community.

84% of the participants expressed pride in sharing their culture and food. This finding highlights that the gardening project encouraged





participants to share their cultural heritage and culinary traditions, creating a space for cultural exchange and appreciation. **89%** of the participants confirmed that spending quality time outdoors, working with the soil, and connecting with nature contributed to their well-being. This indicates that the Ecotherapy aspect of the gardening project positively impacted participants' mental well-being, suggesting that being in a green environment and engaging in outdoor activities had a therapeutic effect.

84% of the participants reported that gardening activities such as digging, planting, and watering contributed to improving their physical health. This suggests that the physical activities involved in gardening, such as moderate exercise and manual labour, had a positive impact on the participants' physical well-being, promoting fitness and mobility.

In conclusion, the outcomes of our gardening project under the Ecotherapy programme have proven to be transformative for our participants. By creating an inclusive space for healing, resilience, and community-building, we have empowered individuals to embark on a journey of integration and holistic well-being.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our funders who have backed this initiative, as well as to Farida Stanikzai, our Operations Manager, and our committed volunteers, all of whom have played an indispensable role in the success of this project.

Residential Mental Wellbeing Programme

Continuing its sixth annual tradition, NCG successfully organised another weekend residential retreat in August 2022 as a part of our Emotional Support Project. This event took place at Bore Place Farm in Kent, a historic and serene location spanning 500 acres of lush green landscape. This venue provided a peaceful escape for 24 clients, allowing them to pause from their daily routines for introspection, connection with nature, and participation in various additional activities.

Engaging in activities within a calm atmosphere provided participants with valuable benefits. This environment also prompted them to freely express emotions, creating a space for both sharing and acquiring methods to improve their mental and physical well-being. The inclusion of therapeutic activities such as nature walks, music, dance, storytelling, meditation and cooking sessions allowed participants to discover their strengths and aspirations.

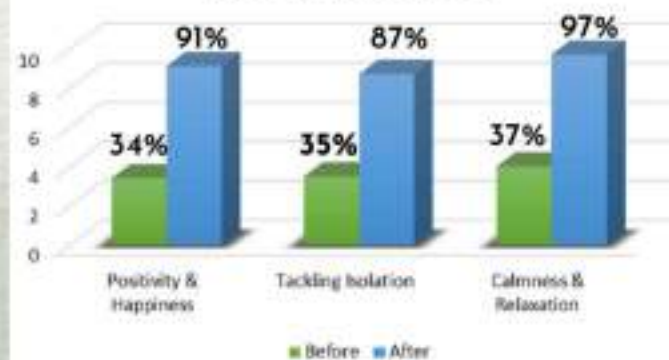


"Wow!!! Such a great event, it was a great educational and recreational holiday for me after 8 years."



The feedback received from participants underscores the affirmative effect of this initiative and its beneficial impact on the mental well-being of socially marginalised refugees. Significant improvements were observed, including a major rise from 34% to 91% in participants' positive emotions and an improved sense of happiness and well-being. Similarly, a remarkable increase, from 35% to 87%, was noted in participants who reported feeling less isolated due to the sharing of life experiences, challenges, and personal narratives. An impressive rise, from 37% to 97%, was observed in participants' accounts of positive effects on their mental health, citing increased relaxation and revitalisation following engagement in the diverse range of activities provided. This activity was a true achievement and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to NLCF, our funding partner, as well as our dedicated Operations and Therapeutic Services team, along with all the volunteers who generously contributed their weekend to ensure the success of this project.

Clients' Mental Well-Being Improvement Before and After Attending Retreat Sessions



The Occupational English Test (OET) Classes

In the face of the prevailing public perception that refugees and asylum seekers might burden the UK system, we hold a strong belief that many of these individuals arrive with valuable skills and qualifications that can make substantial contributions to the country, given the appropriate support. This is particularly relevant when considering the challenges the NHS encounters due to a shortage of medical professionals. We firmly believe that assisting refugees with medical backgrounds in integrating into the NHS system not only benefits the nation but also aids these individuals in reclaiming their identities, thus positively impacting their mental well-being.

As an integral part of our Afghan Project funded by the European Fund (AMIF), during the period of 2022-23, we collaborated with the Association of Afghan Healthcare Professionals (AAHPUK) to offer a comprehensive 26-week Occupational English Test (OET) course. With 11 individuals participating each session spanned 5 hours per week, with the overarching goal of assisting Afghan refugee doctors and individuals with medical expertise to overcome linguistic barriers.

“
The style of teaching was very unique, and the tutors were very professional and supportive. I had an amazing experience once I pass my exam, I am planning to do my PLAB 1 and 2.
”

The OET is a specialised assessment designed to evaluate the English language proficiency of healthcare practitioners, including doctors, nurses, and other medical professionals. It is tailored to assess their communication abilities within a practical workplace context.

To gauge the effectiveness of our project we conducted post-course evaluations utilising questionnaires and interviews with the participants. The outcomes were reassuring, as participants reported significant enhancements in their speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills relevant to their medical field, with a rise from 47% before to 71% after the course. Furthermore, 67% expressed readiness to undertake the OET examination.

Collectively, the collaborative effort between our project, AAHPUK, and NCG bore fruitful results, as it enabled Afghan doctors and medical professionals to elevate their English language proficiency and gain the confidence necessary to pursue the OET examination. This activity undeniably contributed to their professional growth and amplified their potential for success in their healthcare careers.

ESOL Project

ESOL classes play a crucial role in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers, offering them the essential language skills they need to thrive and successfully integrate into their new communities. Throughout the 2022-23 session, we provided informal ESOL classes, both in person and online, to a total of 138 students, at various levels ranging from Pre-Entry to Entry 3. Our team of 18 dedicated and qualified ESOL teachers worked tirelessly to deliver these classes. Through interactive lessons and practice exercises, our students develop the necessary skills to communicate effectively, access education, seek employment, interact with the local community, navigate daily life with confidence, and achieve overall social integration. We believe that our classes offer more than just language lessons – we also provide a sense of safety, belonging, and comfort.

We understand that measuring progress and impact can be challenging due to the informal nature of these classes and the varying attendance of students. However, we took a representative sample of 84 students for evaluation. This involved checking their progress records, conducting interviews, and engaging in discussions with some of our teachers. Based on the findings of this evaluation, we observed notable improvements among our students. 8% of students showed progress in their writing skills, 14% in reading, and 31% in listening skills. Furthermore, the evaluation also confirmed a 22% general improvement in students' overall English language proficiency and skills.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated volunteers and sessional teachers for their unwavering commitment. Our gratitude also goes to our ESOL Managers, Theodore Wang and Intisar Abdul Nabi, who have



shown exceptional dedication in managing this project. Furthermore, we would like to express our thanks to our funders, The City Bridge Trust and the European Fund (AMIF), for their generous financial support.



ESOL Teachers Team:

Sitting right: Ros Staines, Linda Carey, Orna Algarom, Ruth Kitching

Standing right: Ehsan Lavipour

Standing Left: Shelly Fennell, Helen Stone.

Sitting Left: Intisar Abdul Nabi (ESOL Manager), Nasrin Mehrzad, Flora Jacobs

Not in the picture: Bernadette Steiert, Carole Dukes, Dinaz Bomanji, Elizabeth Morrell, Faarid Hashim Patel, Helen Halpern, Helen Wiseman, Jenna Dean, Liz Johnson, Mariha Kontoghiorghie, Peter Bezuidenhout, Rosemary Biseo, Anita Kanani, Azize Bozkurt, Sima Rutherford, Simon Tabbush, Uliana Yaski

Trinity College ESOL Classes

In addition to our regular ESOL curriculum, since 2017 we have also had the privilege of being an accredited centre for Trinity College ESOL. As part of this programme, we successfully conducted 10 hours per week of hybrid ESOL sessions specifically designed for 10 refugee students. These sessions culminated in the Trinity exam, which all 10 students took and passed. We are proud to announce a 100% success rate for this activity. We express our sincere gratitude to Sara Hessabi, our ESOL Trinity teacher, for her loyal dedication throughout the past several years.



100%
Success!

"My teacher helped me to learn Zoom. I have a disabled child. I join the online class. It is very good. I do not want to miss it".

"I like my class and my teacher. I want to come every day, one day a week is not enough".

"Before I had big problems. I needed an interpreter, but now I can talk to my GP, I can make appointments, and talk to my children's teacher. I am very happy".

ESOL Satisfaction Rate



Mothers & Toddlers' Group

Our Mothers and Toddlers Group, in collaboration with the Hyde Children Centre, had yet another fruitful year catering to the linguistic and social requirements of mothers with preschool-aged children. Over the course of this year, 8 -10 mothers, accompanied by 10 - 12 children, regularly attended the ESOL class at Hyde Children's Centre. While the mothers partook in English lessons for practical, day-to-day usage and essential subjects, their children enjoyed a secure, welcoming, and supportive environment under the care of a qualified nursery teacher and two assistants.

The mothers who participated in these sessions exhibited a strong motivation to acquire English language skills. The teaching and learning experiences within the group substantially contributed to enhancing the mothers' English proficiency and promoting socialisation and companionship. The entertaining activities in which the children engaged supported their physical, social, and psychological development, preparing them for nursery. Our nursery teacher followed the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, fostering the early learning of children through a variety of enjoyable activities such as storytelling, crafting sessions, singing, and sensory play. During the final 15 minutes of the session, mothers joined their children for a group activity, singing Nursery Rhymes or playing games in English, benefiting everyone involved. The evaluation results from the NCG Mothers and Toddlers Group affirm the program's effectiveness in addressing the specific needs of ESOL parents.

"My teacher is very kind and my child's teacher is very patient."



"I am happy with my class teacher and my child is learning nursery rhymes."



A significant 88% of participants reported improvements in their language skills, with 74% experiencing heightened confidence in speaking English and overall satisfaction with the learning environment while their children received care. Furthermore, 97% expressed a high level of satisfaction with the ESOL teacher, providing further validation of the program's success. We extend our gratitude to all the staff at Hyde Children's Centre, as well as the dedicated volunteers and ESOL teachers who contributed to the success of this project. A special acknowledgement goes to an anonymous donor whose consistent financial support has been invaluable.

Citizenship Workshops

In line with our integration support package, we delivered a series of 7 Citizenship workshops for a group of 48 participants. With financial support from the European Fund (AMIF), we were able to cover a wide range of topics including Education, Health, Introduction to the UK, and British values. Our primary objective in conducting these workshops was to offer our clients a better understanding of local customs, traditions, and societal norms. By doing so, we aimed to promote cross-cultural understanding, encourage mutual respect among the participants and encourage integration.

To evaluate the effectiveness of our workshops, we administered both pre- and post-questionnaires to all 48 participants. Based on the data collected, we found that 71% reported an increase in their knowledge of the topics covered during the workshops. These topics specifically included Education, the Healthcare System, the UK System, and British values. In addition, 75% expressed their satisfaction with the workshops, indicating that they found the sessions beneficial and relevant to their integration process. This feedback validates the usefulness of our workshops in helping participants navigate their integration journey successfully.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to our facilitators and volunteers, and also extend our gratitude to the European Fund (AMIF), our funder, for their crucial roles in ensuring the success of this activity.

"I have 2 children who go to secondary school, I found the education workshop very useful, I was confused about Sixth form and GCSE, and now it is clear to me."



"I found all the workshops very useful especially the health one. I was confused about which number to dial when I got sick and need help. Also, now I know that I can ask my GP to book an interpreter for me as I am not happy taking my friend with me all the time"

Case Study 1



Uliana Yaskiv

Volunteer ESOL teacher

For approximately a year, I had the pleasure of working as an ESOL teacher at New Citizen Gateway, where I had the opportunity to teach and support English language learners from a variety of backgrounds. As a DET student, I started off as a helper in one of the ESOL classes and was later given an opportunity to volunteer as an ESOL teacher. This opportunity has not only allowed me to increase my abilities, but has also introduced me to new experiences and challenges that have aided my professional and personal development. As an ESOL teacher, my primary responsibilities involved creating and delivering successful English language classes that were suited to the needs of my students. I used a variety of interactive teaching strategies, such as group exercises, discussions, and multimedia resources, to engage students and facilitate learning a new language. In addition, I established a pleasant classroom environment,

encouraging inclusivity, cultural awareness, and respect among students.

I am really grateful for the opportunity to have contributed to my students' language learning journeys and to the organization's aim of encouraging language competency and cultural exchange. The experience has been enriching, and I am appreciative of the organization's assistance and mentoring.

Case Study 2



Helen Halpern

Volunteer ESOL teacher

My grandparents came to the UK as refugees at the beginning of the 20th century, so I think I have always felt a connection with refugees. I remember that my grandfather carried a dictionary with him – obviously, there was no Google Translate then! The grandparents and parents of many of my friends had also sought refuge in the UK and I heard a rich variety of ways of speaking English as I was growing up. In my career, working as a doctor and medical educator, I came across many asylum seekers and refugees as patients and as professional colleagues. These experiences highlighted the vital importance of being able to communicate in the language of the host country, but also that good communication is not just about the language itself. It also includes understanding and respecting each other's cultures and in being creative in how we learn to interact.

When I retired just over a year ago, I wanted to use my skills in new ways to give something back to the community and to support people new to life in the UK. My students come from a wide range of backgrounds and countries. Three things that they have in common are gratitude to the UK for offering them a place of refuge, frustration at the amount of time it takes to jump through all the administrative hurdles, and a determination to learn English. New Citizens Gateway (NCG) is the most amazing organisation. It treats everyone with respect and kindness and makes all of us feel individually valued. As a teacher, I have always felt well-supported with access to resources and opportunities for ongoing training.

Case Study 3

MP is a refugee from Afghanistan. A single mother of three children, she has faced many challenges in her life. She had a difficult childhood in Afghanistan, where she wasn't allowed to go to school and was married off at a young age. Her life took a tragic turn when she saw her husband get killed in front of her and her three young children, who were 3, 5, and 7 years old at the time. This traumatic experience caused a lot of difficulties for her and her children's mental well-being. Despite the challenges, MP managed to leave Afghanistan, but her mental health was greatly affected by the events she went through, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In the UK, she had to deal with various problems while still struggling with her mental health issues. MP's psychiatrist referred her to NCG because of her high anxiety levels and PTSD. Our team assessed her situation, and we offered her two sets of 12 counselling sessions in her native language through our bilingual counselling service. She also actively participated in our English classes (ESOL) and conversation café to learn English, even though she was illiterate in her own language. Remarkably, she made significant progress and became skilled in English. She regularly attends our Jasmine Women's Group sessions and finds joy in our yoga classes. MP is now an advocate and expresses her support for children's rights through her artwork.

"NCG is an amazing organisation that welcomes people like me who are in tough situations. It's like a safe place where I can find hope when I'm feeling down. The staff and volunteers at NCG are always friendly and they make us feel less alone and anxious. They help us connect with others in the community and slowly become a part of life and culture in the UK.

I really enjoy the NCG allotment – it reminds me of my village and being there makes me feel calm and peaceful."

Case Study 4

Ms. X is a single mother, an asylum seeker, battling mental health issues and navigating the weight of multiple cancer diagnoses. With the responsibility of nurturing three bright young boys, her journey was marked by stress and the pressing concern for her children's welfare. The boys had endured a year without education while residing in a London hotel, awaiting a looming transition by the Home Office to dispersal accommodation. Their journey took a turning point when the family was relocated to Barry House Hotel. In addition to securing school placements, the adviser assisted the children in obtaining Zipcards for convenient transportation, allowing them to commute with ease. Recognising the importance of sustained health access, an HC2 card was procured for Ms X, ensuring her continued access to essential healthcare services and medication. NCG's proactive intervention bore fruit in the form of transformative outcomes for Ms X and her boys. The boys thrived in their new educational settings, showcasing remarkable performance and the promise of A's and A* grades in their exams. However, with the prospect of a new home, the children still awaited placement in a school. This is when Ms. X reached out to New Citizens' Gateway (NCG) seeking guidance and support. Swift and determined,

the NCG adviser took immediate action by engaging with the Southwark Admission Team. The response was encouraging, resulting in the swift placement of the boys in schools conveniently situated near their new residence. This initiative not only ensured the continuity of their education but also alleviated the mother's concerns. The ongoing relationship between NCG and the family revealed a heart-warming success story. Ms. X expressed her gratitude and contentment, embracing the positive impact on her family's overall well-being and educational prospects. This case serves as a testament to the unwavering commitment of NCG to advocate, empower, and uplift those in need, ultimately fostering brighter futures within the community.

**BARNET REFUGEE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For the year ended 31st March 2023**

	2023 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:				
Donations and Legacies	350,264	654,825	1,005,089	894,921
Investments	2,630	-	2,630	60
Other	-	-	-	60
TOTAL	352,894	654,825	1,007,719	895,041
EXPENDITURE ON:				
Charitable Activities	135,569	843,581	979,150	902,894
Total resources expended	135,569	843,581	979,150	902,894
Net Income/(Expenditure)	217,325	-188,756	28,569	-7,853
Transfer between funds	29,930	-29,930	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	247,255	-218,686	28,569	-7,853
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:				
Total funds at 1st April 2022	111,015	458,776	569,791	577,644
Total funds at 31st March 2023	358,270	240,090	598,360	569,791

Financial Information



Elif Kayikci
Finance Manager

This statement has been extracted from the accounts prepared by Knox Cropper Chartered Accountants and were approved by the Trustees of Barnet Refugee Service on 28/09/2023. The full report will be submitted to Charities Commission and to the Companies House. Copies of full report can be obtained from the Chief Executive Officer of Barnet Refugee Service.

Geetha Saba-Nathan
Treasurer

Thank you to our Partners and Collaborators 2022-23

2second Chance C.I.C.
Advice UK
Afghan Association Pawiand
Age Concern
Age UK Barnet
Alyth
Association of Afghan Healthcare Professionals -UK
Association of Asian Muslims of North London- Khawateen
Atta & Co Solicitors
Barent Social Prescribing Service
Barnet 0-19 Early Help Service, Family, and Children's Services
Barnet Citizens Advice
Barnet Council
Barnet East Locality Team
Barnet Education and Learning Service
Barnet Federated GPs
Barnet Healthwatch
Barnet Homes
Barnet Libraries
Barnet Mencap
Barnet Multi Faith Forum
Barnet Recovery Centre
Barnet Refugee Welcome Board
Barnet Social Services
Barnet Southgate College
Barnet Wellbeing Hub
Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust
BBC Children In Need
Better World Charity
Brook
Bore Place
BOOST
Bread n Butter
Breaking Barriers
Brent Council
British Red Cross
Brunel University
Burnt Oak Women's Group
Cambridge University
Camden Council
Camden Social Services
Care4Calais
Central and Northwest London NHS

Centre Point
Child Poverty Action Group
Childs Hill Primary School
Chipping Barnet/ The Trussell Trust Food Bank
ChickenShed
Citizens UK
Churches Together
Claremont High School
CNWL Talking Therapies Service Brent
Colindale Communities Trust
Colindale Food Bank
Colindale Library
Community Focus (ARTiculate)
Community Barnet
Cophall School
Coram
Dahlia Project
Delivery Unit
Doctors of the World
Dr Azim and Partners
Duncan Lewis Solicitors
Early Help HUB (West) Family Services
Early Help HUB(South), Family and Children's Services
ECPAT UK
Finchley Reform Synagogue
Flying Seagulls
Foundation Trust
Freedom from Torture
Friendship Centre
Gail's Artisan Bakery
Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group
Give Together
GlaxoSmithKline
Good for Goods
Greater London Authority (GLA)
GroundWork London
Haringey Council
Helen Bamber Foundation
Hendon Jobcentre
Hendon School
Hestia
Homeless Action Barnet
Home-Start Barnet, Brent, Enfield & Harrow

Hopscotch
Inspire Care
Inclusion Barnet
Iyengar Yoga Group
Jewish Volunteering Network
Kew Gardens Community Access Scheme
King's College London
Kol Nefesh Masorti Synagogue
LDS Charities Friendship Centre
Let's Talk IAPT
London Faith and Belief
London Youth
Masorti Judaism UK
Meeting Point
Mercy Mission
Meridian Wellbeing
Metropolitan Police
Middlesex University
Migrant Help
Migrant Voice
Mind in Barnet
Mitzvah Day and Hamstead Garden Suburb
National Zakat Foundation
Never Such Innocence
New North London Synagogue
NHS Foundation Trust
Nisa-Nashim
North Locality Link Worker
North London Hospice
Northwestern Reform Synagogue
Onwards and Upwards (Leaving Care Team)
Persian Advice Bureau
Personal Improvement Ltd
Project Seventeen
Refugee Action
Refugee Council
Refugee Support Network
Ruth Hayman Trust
Salvation Army
Schools and Early Years, Family Services, Barnet
Sebby's Corner
Shabbak Festival
Solace Women's Aid

St John's United Reformed Church New Barnet
St Mungo's
St Raphael's Family Well-Being Centre
St Mary at Finchley
The Association of Jewish Refugees
The Bernard Charitable Trust
The Betty Messenger Foundation
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
The City College
The Everglade Medical Practice
The Ex- Detainee Project
The Faith & Belief Forum
The PhotoVoice Project
The Flying Seagull Project
The Hyde Children's Centre
The Hyde School
The Hygiene Bank Barnet
The Mosaic Room
The Network
The Northern Ireland Education Authority
The Sacred Heart Church Mill Hill
The Tavistock & Portman NHS
Transitions Living
Trinity Church Colindale
Trinity Church North Finchley
Turning Point
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
University of Oxford
Victim Support
Volunteering Barent
Watling Park School
Wessex Gardens Primary School
West London Welcome
Westminster LAC & Leaving Care Service
Yoga Headspace
Young Barnet Foundation
Young Roots



Get Connected, support the cause:

www.ncgateway.org.uk

 @NCGateway

 @NCGateway

 @NewCitizensGateway



We Stand With Refugees



We Stand With Refugees

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•



Artist: Alina Dafaalla
A refugee woman from Ukraine