

PARISH MISSION-GIVING FOCUS QUARTER FOUR

Worthing 4 Refugees welcomes refugees from all nations to Worthing, creating a culture of safety, integration and justice for refugees and displaced people.

During this quarter we shall be supporting Worthing 4 Refugees through prayer, building awareness of their work and with fund-raising activities.



Save the Date

Saturday 25th November 1pm-4pm

An Afternoon of International Music, Dance and Food will be held in St Mary's Church Hall, tickets £5 plus a collection for Worthing 4 Refugees at the event. Tickets will be on sale from the parish office soon, keep an eye on the weekly newsletter for more details. This is going to be a fab event, don't miss out!

An Introduction from Worthing 4 Refugees – how it started and what they do

Worthing 4 Refugees was formed in 2016 by churches in Worthing, registered as a charity and then became a Community Sponsorship Group that could resettle Syrian refugees under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. Resettlement requires a team of dedicated volunteers, people who will offer practical help with warmth, welcome and hope for the future. Starting a new life in a different culture can be very challenging, and sometimes there is much heartache for all that has been lost, and the ongoing pain of bad news from back home. It can take 5-10 years to fully start a new life and to integrate into a new culture, particularly if it is very different from your home culture.

In order to support a resettled refugee family (not the Ukraine scheme), a Community Sponsorship Group needs £4500 per adult per year for 2 years, property for 2 years, and access to English lessons (8 hours per week for 1 year). For all our refugee work we need translators, care support (e.g. case workers supported by volunteers), befrienders, access to trauma counselling, and any other support that enable the family to begin a new life here. There is much to do at the outset: opening a bank account, registering with GP surgery, dentist, optician, schools/college/pre-school, applying for benefits, knowing the area, learning to use public transport, filling in endless forms, learning English. As time goes on, there is more of a focus on befriending, integrating into British life, planning pathways to employment, and troubleshooting.

In May 2017 our first refugee family arrived, and we have been supporting them since then. They are grateful to be here, very warm-hearted, and doing well as they have settled, integrated and learned to speak English.

During 2018 we welcomed a second refugee family, and in 2019, a third family came. During the pandemic, integration and language learning became challenging to say the least!

More recently, when the Taliban took control of Afghanistan, Afghans were brought to the UK by the British government for resettlement. Initially housed in hotels, these refugees are gradually being resettled in their own homes as housing becomes available.

Also, in 2022, as Ukraine found themselves at war, the government created a new way for refugees to flee to the UK: being guests within homes. As the scheme is different, our support has been more flexible, offering support to start a life in the UK (registering with services, opening a bank account etc.), and providing a monthly venue for information, opportunities to meet other Ukrainians, and for hosts to meet other hosts. At that monthly drop-in, we are also able to give out free SIM cards, signpost to English lessons, help with form filling and connect with other professionals for troubleshooting.

Now in 2023, we support refugees and asylum seekers from all over the world. Worthing 4 Refugees continues to keep informed of refugee issues around the world, and in touch with other UK-based refugee charities and organisations that promote the needs of refugees. We also work closely with local authorities (both borough and council), other local agencies and groups.

Vision Our vision as a group of churches and people of goodwill is for the Worthing area to be a place of welcome, safety, integration and justice for refugees and displaced peoples.

Ethos Our ethos is drawn from a Christian tradition (remembering Jesus himself was a refugee) which cares for all people, especially those in need of shelter, food, clothing, and support as a result of being displaced or circumstances beyond their control.

It says in Isaiah what it really means to worship God:

- Remove the chains of prisoners who are chained unjustly
- Free those who are abused
- Share your food with everyone who is hungry
- Share your home with the poor and homeless
- Give clothes to those in need

Our faith is our motivation, not our hidden agenda.

Values

- Empowering and supportive
- Loving and relational
- Family and communities
- Respect and graciousness
- Listening and learning
- Professional and caring
- Available and boundaried

Mission Creating communities of welcome where internationally displaced people and families can thrive. Worthing 4 Refugees has a mission to:

- Provide person-centred support
- Create integrated communities and networks
- Mobilise the goodwill of Worthing Churches and the community to connect with displaced people.

Scope To bring together expertise, Christian concern, and people willing to champion the needs of refugees/displaced people in the Worthing area.

How you can help

There are many ways you can help Worthing 4 Refugees support these vulnerable families. You will find more information on our website where you can also sign up to receive newsletters and/or prayer updates. Our newsletters often include specific requests for help, so they are a good way to keep in touch with current needs.

www.worthing4refugees.org.uk

Prayer Points for Worthing 4 Refugees

- That Worthing would be a place of welcome, safety, integration and justice for refugees and displaced people.
- For new refugees arriving in this area, that the charity would be able to provide appropriate support.
- That all refugees may integrate well into our community.
- For the ongoing housing needs of the refugees we support, including prayer for new host families for Ukrainian refugees.
- For refugee children starting school or changing schools, that they may settle well.
- For the charity's drop-in sessions, that they would provide refugees with support and friendship.
- That adult refugees in need of further training may be found suitable courses.
- For our volunteer English Language teachers and for wisdom in discerning future possibilities for English Language learning.
- For the W4R team as it experiences larger numbers of refugees arriving.
- For those refugees working towards British citizenship.
- For the health and wellbeing of the refugees we support.
- For wisdom and guidance for lawmakers considering legislation affecting refugees.
- For all refugees fleeing war and natural disaster.
- For the annual Refugee Week, and the charity's involvement in it – that any events planned would kindle greater compassion, empathy and kindness towards refugees and asylum seekers.