

Training Workshops & Courses

Child Protection Training

For any organisations working with children, child protection training and policies are absolutely crucial. Nottinghamshire Community Foundation is holding the following course so book your place(s) now

Getting Started - Safeguarding Children

Child Protection Awareness Training
International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Road,
Nottingham, NG1 3FN

On Wednesday March 12th 2008, 10am - 1pm

Free of charge

Contact:

Karen Vardy, Nottinghamshire Community Foundation

Tel: 01623 620202

Fax: 01623 620204

Email: karen@nottscf.org.uk

Website: www.nottscf.org.uk

The Basis Project

**Enabling refugee community organisations (RCOs)
to develop and grow.**

The Basis Project is a 5 year BIG Lottery funded project that aims to help RCOs strengthen their financial sustainability. In the East Midlands the project is being delivered by Refugee Action and will provide support to RCOs in different ways depending on the needs of your organisation, for example, through the use of: information products and toolkits; one to one support, group training; networking, mentoring; seminars and events.

If you want to get involved then you need to contact.

Tel: Modupe Odifa: 0116 2616211

Email: Modupeo@refugee-action.org.uk

NETWORK NEWS

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum

Families granted Indefinite Leave to Remain

(Case Resolution Programme)

BIA's (Home Office) plan to clear a backlog of unresolved asylum cases (estimated at 450,000!) by 2011, is already showing results in Nottingham.

City Council have been told to expect 159 families whose case are several years old, to get ILR by mid-March this year – instead of being spaced out over the whole year. These are all families who were sent Legacy Questionnaires last year. Some single people are also receiving ILR letters.

It's not possible to complete a questionnaire from the internet; they have to be sent out by BIA. However it's very important that asylum seekers make sure that BIA have their current address. BIA say that most other 'old cases' have now been assigned to special case-workers who will be making decisions, possibly without more questionnaires being sent out. So we can expect more than the initial 159 families to get ILR over the coming months and years.

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Housing

When they receive the letter granting ILR, the family will have 28 days before their NASS support and NASS accommodation ends. Then they will become 'Statutorily Homeless', which means that the City Council has a legal duty to find them a home.

Having to provide for 159 families, in addition to other families being granted asylum this year, will put a strain on City Council's housing stock. **So the following plans have been made:**

1) COUNCIL HOUSES

- a. Some NASS houses run by Refugee Support (aka 'Refugee Housing') belong to the City Council. Families in these houses will be able to stay in the property and sign a **tenancy with Nottingham City Homes**.
- b. If they don't want to stay in that house but move somewhere else in Nottingham, Housing Aid will help them to bid for another property. But they will need to find a property within the 28 days. **If unsuccessful**, they will need to sign up for the 'NASS house' or be homeless.
- c. If they are **successful** but the new house is not ready for them to move into, they will have to move into **temporary accommodation** which may be in a family hostel.

2) Houses belonging to Refugee Support & Priority Properties

Families will not be able to stay in these houses long-term. The City Council is planning to do a deal with RS & PP to take over these houses for up to 6 months to allow time for families to find alternative accommodation.

Advice & Support

Before their Decision Letter arrives, all families should be visited by someone from the City's Housing Aid team who will ask them to think about their future housing options.

Refugee Support has a contract with City Council to provide advice and support to the families as soon as they get their ILR letter. This will include assistance with applying for State benefits eg. Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, Child benefit /Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit – to cover the new rent.

Families are of course also welcome to come to the Refugee Forum if they would like more advice or if they hit problems.

Appointments can be made to see:

1. Janet and Yvonne – Benefits Advisers
2. Fiona – Housing, Education, Health, Social Services.
3. John – Work and training
4. Tenant support team – for longer-term assistance with setting up their new home.

Volunteer Van Driver Wanted

Someone who can legally drive a van is wanted to drive once a week to pick up food from Birmingham for the Destitution Food Group. This would help a lot as the food in Birmingham is donated.

The person in question will probably be a Red Cross volunteer, so subject to their usual checks. If several people apply, there could be a rota. There will be volunteer help with loading and unloading.

Please contact Bill billwaltonuk@yahoo.com

Team Cooking Co-ordinator Wanted

A Team Cooking Co-ordinator is wanted for the Destitution Group's Saturday Kitchen at NNRF.

The Food Group not only distributes food to take away, but also serves a tasty meal to destitute asylum seekers who come on a Saturday morning. **Would you like to co-ordinate the cooking?**

The present co-ordinator has been cooking every Saturday for around 15 months and would now like to have some Saturdays free for other things, although he will miss the weekly group experience. He plans to continue working elsewhere in the organisation.

We could have either one co-ordinator or several working alternate Saturdays. So you don't necessarily have to commit to every week.

Skills required: An ability to cook tasty and varied food, from different countries. Flexibility of approach, sensitivity and a sense of humor will make the job easier. There are two other cooks in the team: one from Eritrea and one from Ethiopia. We do have some laughs as well. There are lots of skills remaining with them - for example, the other two cooks are good at predicting how much food needs preparing.

The Saturday group opens around 10 when people start to assemble. We eat a buffet-style meal from midday, and around 12.30 the food distribution (for taking away) begins. Preparation time begins around 9am and clearing up time ends around 2pm

The cook may be required to cook meat, but obviously if someone would like to do it and only cooks vegetarian or vegan I am sure this could be accommodated as both the other cooks make halal and non halal dishes.

If you are interested in email: dunedin10@yahoo.co.uk or Bill: billwaltonuk@yahoo.com or you can discuss this further with, Richie McCance, the present team cooking co-ordinator, will be glad to have a chat about things on **0115 97801254**



Proposed changes to Section 4 Support

The BIA (Border and Immigration Authority) have been looking at Section 4 support and put forward some proposals for changes to the support. The suggested amendments include:

1. A six monthly provision for a phone card
2. One £250 maternity payment
3. Weekly vouchers to buy clothes for children
4. Extra weekly vouchers for pregnant women
5. Travel allowance to healthcare appointments and to register the birth of a child

NONE of these are available yet and the Home Office are still in discussion about which of the above will actually be introduced.

Women's Voices



Refugee Council have launched a series of online podcasts of refugee women telling their stories. A different story will be added each week sharing the experience of women of all ages that have overcome torture, rape and serious human rights abuses and subsequently sought refuge in the UK.

The podcasts can be downloaded at:

[www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/
vulnerablewomen](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/vulnerablewomen)

Stop Press

School Allocations... School Allocations... School Allocations

Has your child been refused the school of your choice?

If so, you need to act quickly.

If you want help to make an appeal then contact

Fiona at the Refugee Forum.

Ring: 0115 941 5599 for an appointment.

OICS Project At NNRF (Immigration Advice)

The OICS is an organisation that regulates immigration advice that is given out by the not for profit sector. It makes sure that people have had training and are supervised appropriately.

Every Monday and Friday afternoon (2-4pm) advisers working as part of the forum's OICS project will be on hand to provide advice on a number of issues

What can we advise on?

1. Explaining the asylum process
2. Referrals to solicitors
3. Explaining what options people have available to them, once they are refused
4. Explaining refusal papers
5. Complaints regarding individual solicitors
6. Travel Documents (please refer people here rather than to an advice session)
7. Facilitating people to look for further information
8. Citizenship Form

Nottingham Refugee Week 2008 16th June – 22nd June

National Refugee Week is a UK wide festival that celebrates the great contribution made by refugees to UK life and promotes understanding of why people become refugees. Every year hundreds of arts, cultural and educational events are organised across the country.



We would like to invite all community organisations & groups to a planning meeting to discuss the programme for this year's activities in Nottingham. If you have any ideas for arts and cultural events that your group would like to organise then please come along to the meeting:

Nottingham Refugee Week 2008 Planning Meeting
Wednesday 26th March, 10.30 - 12.30, Cecil Roberts
Room, Central Library, Angel Row, Nottingham

If you cannot make the meeting but would still like to be involved or kept informed then contact: Stuart on 07891 701133 / stuartbrown236@btinternet.com

Volunteers Wanted

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum

Do you have a couple of hours to spare weekly or fortnightly? Would you like to get involved in a new venture to provide advice and assistance to refugees and asylum seekers? We are looking for people who live in Nottingham and won't leave over the holiday periods.

This is a real opportunity for RCO members to gain knowledge of immigration laws and services, as well as gaining experience of providing advice.

We are currently looking for volunteers to get involved in two new projects:

OISC Advisors (Monday and/or Friday 2-4pm)

This involves meeting clients on an appointments basis, to:

- explain immigration issues,
- help clients organise their legal paperwork and understand the asylum process
- complete administrative/citizenship forms,
- liaise with solicitors.

Volunteer advisors work towards accreditation at OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner) Level 1.

All training will be provided and you will be supervised by someone who is already accredited to Level 1.

One Stop Shop Advisors (day and time to be determined):

Volunteers will meet clients on an appointments basis to provide advice and practical help for a number of issues, including housing, access to GPs and other health services, form filling and general assistance.† This post will be working with our current One Stop Shop advisor to support her role.† You will be assisting both refugees and asylum seekers.

Both posts provide an excellent opportunity to gain an insight into asylum issues and would suit anyone with an interest in legal affairs/social justice.† You will be dealing with a wide variety of clients, many of whom can become quite emotional and so the ability to relate with empathy and understanding is very important.

No experience necessary as full training and supervision will be provided for both posts.

If you would like to know more about either post, please email volunteer@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk or contact Charlotte Robinson, Centre Manager, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum on 0115 9415599 / 07769 673308

Marriage and Immigration

In 2005 the Home Office introduced the need to take the Life in the UK test or an ESOL class with a citizenship module before people would be allowed to apply for citizenship.

In April 2007 this was extended to those applying for Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK.

In December the government announced that this would now be extended to all foreign nationals seeking to join their husband or wife in the UK.

This WILL apply to adult dependents of refugees and dependents of those granted Humanitarian Protection (HP).

According to a report by NCADC (National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaigns) if you are a refused asylum seeker you may be able to take your case to the European Court of Human Rights.

There are 3 key requirements that you must satisfy before being able to apply

1. Victim of violence of one or more articles of the Convention
2. Must make sure all avenues and options in the UK have been pursued first
3. Must make application within 6 months of the conclusion of any other court proceedings

Please see the NCADC briefing dated 4/12/07



This Newsletter contains information on asylum & immigration matters, and local information that we hope will be of interest to refugee communities in Nottingham.

We would like to include news from different community organisations in future Newsletters. If you have things you would like to share with other groups or events to advertise, please send them to us at Nottingham & Notts Refugee Forum: tina@nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk