

Message from our Patron



Shappi Khorsandi

Being a refugee can be a heartbreakingly lonely and bewildering experience. My native Iran has one of the highest populations of refugees in the world and, in Britain, I have experienced a very tolerant and compassionate attitude towards exiles like my family. Providing refuge for displaced peoples is the mark of a civilised nation. I am delighted to be a patron of Barnet Refugee Service in order to support the wonderful work they do with very vulnerable people in our community.

Being
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Foreword from the Chairman



The influx over the last few years of EU citizens and economic migrants from around the world, attracted by a booming economy with severe skills shortages, has hardened the attitude of the indigenous population towards incomers. The situation can only deteriorate as the economy retracts.

Regrettably those fleeing persecution and looking for asylum here are grouped together in the mind of the public with those coming to this country to improve their lives. It is to be hoped that our political leaders will give the highest priority, when rationing immigration, to refugees who arrive having fled from persecution, torture and abuse.

You will see from this Report that we have had another very busy year supporting our clients with an expanding range of services to meet

the needs of asylum seekers and refugees. Our thanks and appreciation are owed to our dedicated team of professionals and volunteers under the inspirational leadership of our Director Nazee Akbari.

Refugees come to organisations like BRS having fled persecution and hoping to find asylum in this country and to rebuild their lives.

They carry with them memories of persecution, torture and abuse. They have left behind broken families, broken lives and broken dreams. The pain is clearly to be seen on their faces and in their demeanour. It is too easy to overlook the impact of their painful histories on their young children and their children still to be born.

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Children are amazingly resilient or, we should say, are amazingly resilient on the outside. Refugee children carry a unique burden, often having to take on responsibilities far too early in their lives as translators and emotional supports for their damaged parents and witnessing the painful effects of exile and the consequent loss of human dignity.

How much worse for those refugee children who arrive as unaccompanied minors in a strange land where everybody is a stranger.

Because young children quickly learn English and integrate with others at school, it is easy to assume that "all is well" with them.

Barnet Refugee Service recognises that many of these children can be very emotionally damaged and that it is vital to provide them with discrete professional support to ensure that they can go on to achieve their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. To this end we have committed ourselves to building a Youth Support Project in a non-clinical environment and based around leisure activities.

This is an ambitious and major project for us and whilst developing it we will all work hard to ensure that we continue to provide the existing advice and support services that our clients depend on us for.

Peter Salomon
Chairman

Message from the Director



Once again it is my pleasure to present our Annual Report. Now in its 6th year as an independent charity, Barnet Refugee Service has continued to meet the challenge of providing a professional, accessible and supportive service for refugees and asylum seekers in our community. This would have been impossible without the continuing support of our friends, volunteer workers, donors and funders, for which we are most grateful.

This year, like all other organizations working with this client group, has had its challenges and difficulties, but also has been generally successful. We expanded our

services, in particular our youth projects. The number of individuals and families using our services went on growing, alongside our reputation. Our clients and their needs are our main priority and we have learned and continue to learn so much from them.

Despite these achievements, we remain anything but complacent. The recession is affecting funding opportunities and there appears to have been a drop off in new grants, charitable trust funding and the traditional local charitable bodies that BRS has successfully targeted in previous years. We are therefore re-doubling our efforts to identify new funding opportunities and partnerships. I am greatly indebted to the funders who have supported us now for a number of years, and also to the other funders listed at the end of this report who have supported BRS this year.

BRS's effectiveness is a tribute to its very highly skilled and committed staff and volunteers. We are proud of the tremendous care and commitment they all provide and wish to acknowledge them all for that dedication.

I would also like to thank all supporters and friends of the BRS who give donations and help us in achieving our aims. I particularly would like to express my gratitude to those who have asked their friends and family to donate to BRS for birthdays or other occasions.

I particularly like to express my deep gratitude to our Chair, Peter Salomon, who has been a body of such strength to me during this challenging year and for his endless enthusiasm to continue his kind and active support.

Last but not least, my deep-felt appreciation goes to the Board of Trustees and the Management Committee who have given me and the team ongoing support and motivation. Their presence has ensured the continuing provision of an proficient, transparent and accountable service to those we seek our help, allowing us to meet the goals that we originally set for our organization.

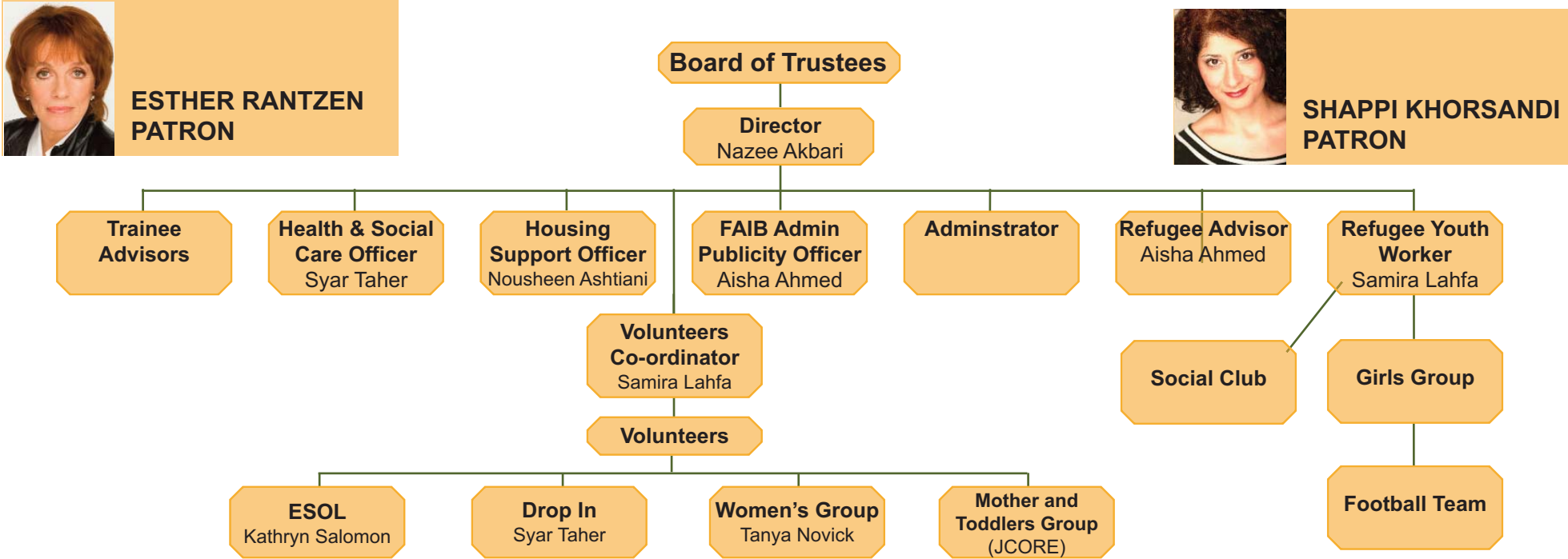
Nazee Akbari
Director

Organisational Chart



Trustees serving in 2009/10 were:
 Peter Salomon (chair)
 Ponusamy Karunaharan (treasurer)
 David Levey (Secretary- Co-opted May 2009)
 Tirza Waisel
 Mildred Levison (resigned Aug 2009)
 Tanya Novick
 Roger Selby
 Kamran Saedi (Co-opted May 2009)
 Shubhi Raymond (Co-opted May 2009)

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



Our Staff



Nazee Akbari
Director



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



Samira Lahfa *Volunteering Development Coordinator (since December 2008)
Refugee Youth Worker*



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



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

Case Study 1

Mrs. Y is from Syria. In 2007, she joined her husband on a Family re-union visa. She was a victim of domestic violence. Her husband has threatened not to sign her application for ILR and will have her deported back to Syria if she reports him. The whole experience has left Mrs. Y very traumatized, depressed and anxious.

BRS referred Mrs. Y to the high risk domestic violence team at Barnet Council and they were able to get an injunction against the husband. An appointment with an immigration solicitor was arranged for her, who later on applied for Indefinite Leave to Remain on the grounds of domestic violence. A referral to a counseling service was also made. We negotiated with her landlord for her to stay in her accommodation. We supported Mrs. Y through our Drop In centre as she had no recourse to public funds and therefore was not entitled to claim any benefits. We got her to attend BRS women's group where she socialized with other women.

In August 2009, Mrs. Y was granted ILR in the UK. We assisted her claim the benefits she was entitled to and has settled down. Mrs. Y is now pursuing a career in teaching.

'You helped me to have my life back!'

Director's Report

Annual Report for the year 2009-10

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

Introduction

Barnet Refugee Service is situated at:

Hyde House

The Hyde

London NW9 6LH

Telephone 020 8905 9002

Fax 020 8905 9003

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

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

Registered Charity 1107965

Company Ltd by Guarantee 5243595

Incorporated as company September 2004

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

Financial Statement

A summary of our audited accounts for the year ending 31st March 2010 can be found on page 23.

The Board of Trustees are satisfied with the performance of the charity during the year and the position at 31 March 2010 and consider that the charity is in a position to continue its activities during the coming year, and that the charity's assets are adequate to fulfill its obligations.

It is the policy of the trustees that reserves to cover three months operating costs plus potential redundancy liabilities be built as soon as is practically possible. The minimum reserves will be two months operating costs.

Current Funding

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

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

Our History

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

Our Ethos

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

Statement of values

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

Barnet Refugee Service will challenge discrimination and lack of opportunity in its own policy and practice and will help other organisations and individuals to do the same.

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

Our Vision:

Through its work BRS envisages:

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

8. A more powerful voice for refugees and asylum seekers in Barnet and neighbouring boroughs.

Our Objectives

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

Fundraising Strategy

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

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

Director's Report

Our Fundraising in 2009/10 will focus on securing funds to make Volunteer Development Coordinator role into a full time position and recruit an additional part time advisor. We will seek funding for the continuation of our Refugee Youth Worker's post and develop our youth activities further focusing on projects supporting emotional wellbeing of young refugees. We will take part in partnership bids to expand our services.

Donations

We raised nearly £600 this year at our Brent Cross collection day in November 2009. Thanks to the generosity of the public and the hard work of our dedicated volunteers.

We cannot name the countless individuals and organisations who have given their generous support in so many ways. Without their goodwill we would be unable to provide our vital emergency support. We received over £8000 cash donations from many individuals, organisations and faith groups. We would particularly like to thank North Western Reform Synagogue for their massive appeal for both money and gifts in kind. We also received over £350 from Waitrose, the Supermarket, through their Community Matters scheme which was used towards our ESOL classes.

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

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

Background to our work

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

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

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

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

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

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

Director's Report

London Legal Support Sponsored Walk



Heavy rain was forecast, but despite this 10 volunteers set off on a 10k sponsored walk early in the evening of 18th May. Their good intentions were rewarded as the weatherman turned out to have got it wrong and the weather was ideal for walking.

Our walkers joined around 4000 others raising money for legal support. There were teams from most of the big London law firms. Our team all set off from the Royal Courts of Justice but by the half way mark had divided into the slow group and the quick group. The slow group were taking more time to enjoy some of the best views on this really picturesque route which took in the Temple, the north and south Embankments, The Millennium Bridge, Tate Modern, Parliament, Horse Guards and Lincolns Inn.

Apart from enjoying a beautiful walk, our team raised around £1,700 from their generous sponsors despite the very difficult economic climate. The money will help towards our work on behalf of asylum seekers facing the danger of deportation.

Case Study 2

The female client suffers from Multiple Sclerosis. She has difficulty going up and down the stairs. She walks with difficulty around the House due to this substantial neurological disability, which restricts her movement.

The occupational therapist recommended that a floor lift is installed in her house. The client believed this would take a large area of space in her living room and most of the bedroom. The client requested a stair lift which she felt would better meet her need, however this was refused.

After discussion with the client and occupational therapist, Barnet Refugee Service supported her in raising funds to purchase the equipment that would allow her greater mobility. The action we took to advocate for the client involved gaining support from the medical team (GP, Occupational therapist) who later decided that there was no risk to the client in using stair left.

The next step was to request permission from the Housing Association to install a stair lift.

Once this was granted an application was made from Grants Unit in the London Borough of Barnet. BRS managed to successfully obtain a grant of £ 1,420.00 to enable our client to purchase Stair lift and live a better quality of life.

Director's Report

Advice



We provide advice, information and support to refugees and asylum seekers on a variety of issues, promoting equal access to services, particularly health. We have seen 832 clients which includes 477 new clients and handled over 5100 enquiries including 1340 cases during the last year. (Please see charts on page 12).

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

Outreach advice clinics

Our team of advice workers offer outreach clinics in 6 locations across the boroughs of Barnet and Enfield.

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

Health work

Much of our work is directly health focused such as the advice work where we saw clients with over 360

health related enquiries. Our health focused activities include:

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

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

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

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

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

Health Access Workshops

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

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

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

Health Promotion workshops

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

Director's Report

Housing Support Service



Barnet Refugee Service, the Barnet Housing Service and The Supporting People Program piloted a partnership program to ensure that all refugees/asylum seekers receive the help and guidance they need to succeed in living independently and fully participating in the society they live in. This partnership program started in September 2007. This has been an extremely successful service. Nousheen Ashtiani, our Housing Support officer, spends 4 days a week at BRS and 1 day a week at Barbara Langston House, North Finchley. During the past year this project dealt with 155 clients with over 1000 enquires supporting refugees and asylum seekers with their practical issue and in particular housing. This pilot project has been extended for another year with the aim to make it into a permanent position.

BAN (BME Advice Network)



BRS is a member of this successful BME Advice Network. Led by AdviceUK and funded by London Councils as a partner BRS received funding and has recruited a part time refugee advisor since November 2008. BAN is an integrated network of quality assured advice services delivered by and for people from London's migrant and refugee communities. All BAN member services are quality assured, including services with a Community Legal Service Quality Mark or registered with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner. BAN currently has 45 members, 19 of which comprise a sub-



group delivering the London Councils funded Access Improvement Project.

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

Meeting our targets

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

- 832 clients accessing advice services
- 5100 advice enquiries
- 652 advice outcomes
- 922 client visits to emergency support drop in services
- 12 training sessions to statutory agencies and refugees/RCOs including:
- 9 health promotion workshops
- 9 workshops on accessing health, housing and welfare benefits
- 267 clients accessed our service through Barnet College and Southgate College Drop in surgeries .
- 18 users accessed employment and volunteering opportunities including 1 trainee advisers
- Over 45 women registered with our Jasmine in partnership with Arts Depot
- Over 200 young people involved with our successful Youth Work project in partnership with Paiwand Afghan Association
- Successful ESOL provision in partnership with St. Matthias Church
- Successful Roots & Wings Girl's group work in Partnership with Arts Depot
- Successful Mothers & Toddlers Group in partnership with JCORE
- In house legal advice in partnership with Barnet Law Service and Duncan Lewis Solicitors
- 170 clients attended our Immigration Drop in with visiting solicitors

- 39 clients attended our Welfare Benefit Drop in with visiting solicitors
- 35 clients attended our Housing Drop in with visiting solicitors

Refugee Awareness training

During 2009/10 we have delivered 6 refugee awareness training including 2 Mental Health Awareness to professionals. This is a central part of our strategy to ensure that appropriate and accessible services are provided to refugees and asylum seekers in Barnet and that professionals from those service providers know how to best help them. In an environment of media hostility it is even more important that we are able to deliver this training to front line providers to put asylum seekers' needs, rights and entitlements in to context.

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

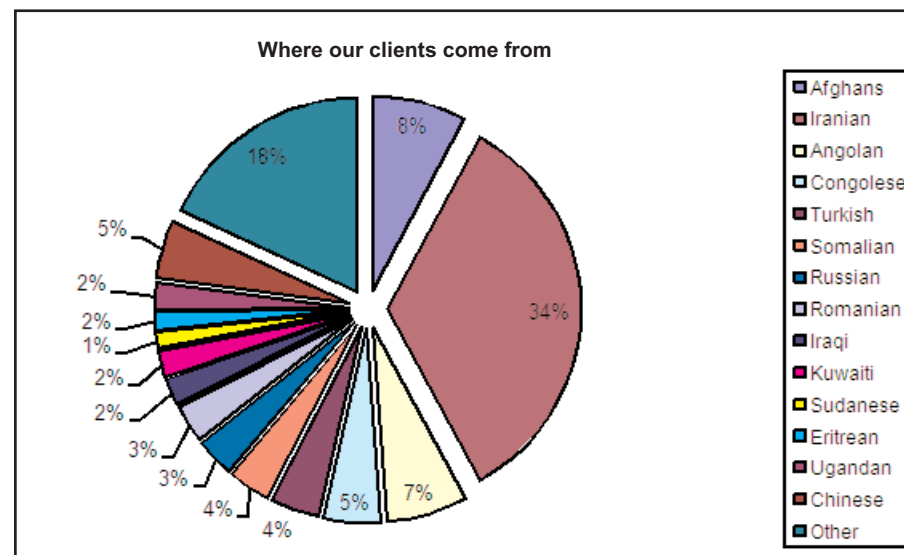
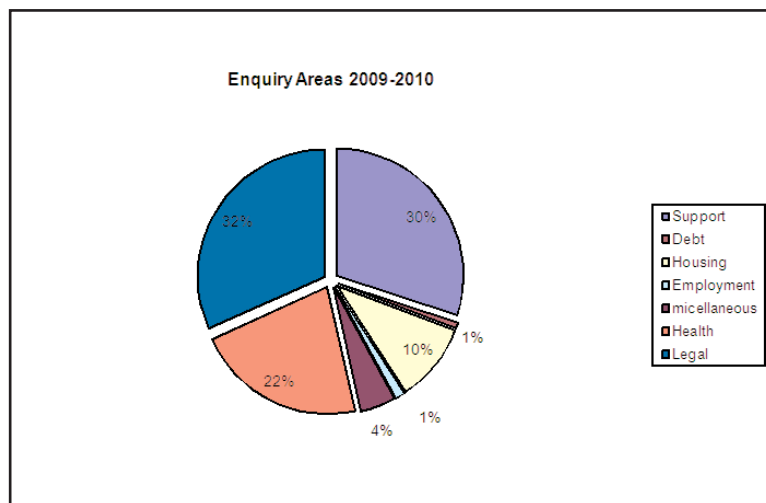
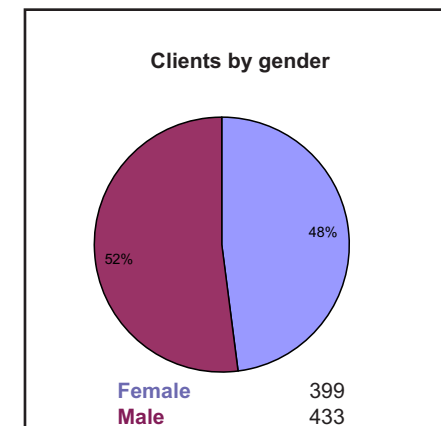
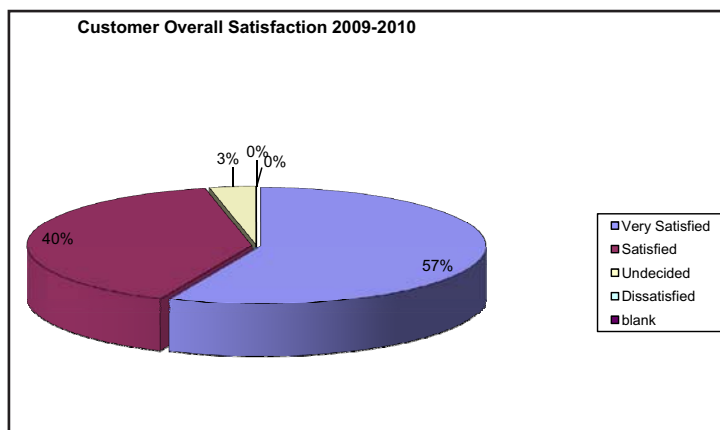
In House Training: We are able to draw on our existing courses and extensive expertise, to develop courses that cater for organisations with specific training requirements. We discuss their areas of interest and the skills requirements of their staff with our expert trainers, who will be able to pinpoint their needs and define a solution. Up to 20 staff can be trained at one time, at a location of your choice. It is particularly useful for organisations with a regular intake of new staff, with similar levels of experience or training needs, or organisations with offices throughout the country who wish to draw their staff together for training at a central location.

Director's Report

Customer satisfaction Survey

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

Through out 2009/10 we randomly selected clients who had used our services and gave them a questionnaire. Over all 95 questionnaires were distributed out of that 30 were returned. According to the CLS / CDS Client Feedback Guide a normal response is between 25 – 30 %. Our response therefore is a healthy 30%. Out of the 30 questionnaires returned 57% felt 'very satisfied' with our services 43% felt the service they received improved their case. To access the full report on our client evaluation please contact our office adviser.



ESOL Classes

ESOL Classes

We hold classes at 3 levels, pre-Entry, Entry 1 and Entry 2 with 5 teachers and 4 helpers. There are on average 25 regular attenders (with many more people on the register.) Because they have so many problems, it is hard for a lot of our students to attend regularly. Our students have made it clear to us how very much they value our classes.

This year we have lost one of the founding teachers, Sandra Green, who has retired. Her experience, help and enthusiasm were invaluable and she will be sorely missed.

Our specialised sessions for expectant mothers using the BRS Maternity Pack are much appreciated.

We face many challenges in the coming year, both with funding and because the ESOL departments in Further Education Colleges are being cut. The reduction in the number of FEC ESOL classes available from September 2010 will mean that there will be greatly increased pressure on classes provided by charities such as ours. The need for our classes is increasing.

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



Our ESOL team. Standing from right to left: Ros Staines, Elizabeth Perrot, Brenda Edo-Ukeh, Mariya Bhandahari. Sitting from left: Sandra Green, Vivian Chapman, Kathryn Salomon(ESOL Coordinator) and Samira Lahfa (Volunteers Coordinator)

Case Study 2

A student came to us with no English and without literacy in her own language. She has been in our class 1 since June 2008 and has shown enormous determination to learn English, even though she has been hampered by ill health. She had to demonstrate progress in English in order to gain British Citizenship, which she was granted recently!

**"I want to thank you.
I want to thank you for the food and
for the English classes.
I want to thank you."**

Women's Group (Jasmine)



Our women's group continues to flourish in partnership with arts depot. It continues to meet, based at the artsdepot, on Tuesdays to participate in the arts programme led by Poppy Szaybo. To enhance appreciation of colour/landscape/art/garden to use in work at artsdepot, the Jasmine group had 14 outings throughout the year visiting places and exhibitions such as British Museum's Garden & Cosmos exhibition, Hampton Court Palace and

Marianne North Gallery, Kew Gardens.

At the beginning of the period, there were about 10 participants each week from a "pool" of about 20. Towards the end of the year, this "pool" increased to 25 (Jan '10) with almost maximum attendance.

With these numbers, we have reached saturation point in using the artsdepot. There is further potential from within BRS's other projects, especially from the English classes, who have quite a number of younger women who would benefit from the social aspect of Jasmine in particular, most of them being very isolated but there is a problem



***" I feel more integrated, less isolated,
the group is my family now!"***

A women's group member

with younger women being able to attend with nowhere to leave their small children. We continue to receive referrals from outside agencies including social services and Mental Health unit as well as friends of participants.

The continuous cultural programme has facilitated the participants' sense of achievement, working together towards a goal, team-work as well as individual effort. It has helped them learn about British & each other's cultures, foster understanding and co-operation and improved their understanding & use of English. It has given the participants positive activities to be involved in, to share experiences, make new friends, improve language and communication skills, learn new skills, raise aspirations and confidence & reduce isolation.

All participants can fully contribute, despite any language barriers they may have. We feel we have had a successful year and our special thanks must go to The Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust who supports this project, the artsdepot, our dedicated volunteers and in particular our Women's Group Coordinator Tanya Novick.

FORUM FOR ADVICE

Forum for Advice and Information in Barnet

Forum for Advice & Information in Barnet (FAIB) is a consortium of local providers of advice and information aiming to work together to improve services for residents of London borough of Barnet.



This forum aims to include advice and information services both large and small. Smaller "hard to reach" groups such as refugee community organisations are invited to attend and participate in the forum and to access the training events FAIB provides. Initially led by CommunityBarnet, this consortium was set up in 2008. The consortium managed to get one year funding from Awards for All where, BRS, as the lead organization managed it's part time publicity officer for the period of one year.

At present the consortiums' affairs are being managed by BRS by providing a dedicated volunteer until more funding is attracted.

The Little Treasures

The Little Treasures-Mums & Tots Group for Asylum Seekers & Refugees In partnership with the Jewish Council for Racial Equality (JCORE), this project consists of organising a weekly group for asylum seeker and refugee mothers and toddlers. It is held at West Hendon Community Centre and includes a pre-school activity. The main focus of all activities will be on health related areas which are needed in order to tackle inequalities. Healthy food will be provided to eat in and take home.



Women attending the group will gain a much needed lifeline - a powerful support network of peers who really understand their situation.

The children will gain safe and stimulating learning through play.

JCORE provides help to Barnet Refugee Service and the New North London Synagogue Destitute Asylum Seekers drop in. Both charities know of isolated women who lack access to support services because of having young children and would thrive from a group such as this. Referrals will also come via health visitors, ante natal clinics and word of mouth as is the case with other projects. e.g. BRS Women's Creative Group.

We are not isolated
any longer...
My child is a lot happier...
A group member

DROP IN

Drop In for destitute asylum seekers

Our Drop In is run as usual at St. Matthias Church Hall near our main office in Rushgrove Avenue, Colindale.

This essential project has continued to flourish with 1100 visits last year. Our Drop in is currently providing emergency food and clothing to destitute asylum seekers and an advice clinic. It is also a forum for our clients to meet others.



During the year food was donated from numerous churches, temples and synagogues. This service has been funded by kind donations of individuals and local faith groups. We continued receiving left-overs or sample from our local Salisbury's store under the banner of 'Local Charity Supported by Local Stores'. For our Drop in we are receiving fresh sandwiches from Pret a Manger at Euston Station branch and bread from Daniels Bakery in Temple Fortune.

Our special thanks also go to our local bakery and grocery stores in Egware, Orli Café and Yarok, for their ongoing support.

I do not have any income, no work permit... this place is my only hope to survive..



Multilingual Wellbeing Service (MWS)

Following several discussions with local refugee communities and based on the evidence collected by Barnet's Community Development Worker (CDW) Programme Barnet Refugee Service alongside four other independent voluntary sector providers, Farsophone Counselling Service, Chinese Mental Health Association, Afghan Association Paywand and Somali Family Welfare Association set up an innovative consortium model of partnership working across mother tongue mental health support called Multilingual Welfare Service (MWS).

The target will be BME communities particularly those impacted by higher deprivation environments to improve understanding and access to emotional resilience and wellbeing services.

Supported by CommUnity Barnet and Barnet PCT, the consortium is in the process of forming as an independent charity.

Youth Activities



Our youth activities in partnership with Paiwand Afghan Association continue to flourish. The aim of this project is to develop youth activities in the borough for young refugees and asylum seekers, including unaccompanied minors, who have unique needs, many being isolated and facing linguistic and cultural barriers, as well as a level of hostility. Their needs are largely unmet by existing services, as teachers and social workers can only do so much. A safe place where they can meet, build social networks, and learn skills is considered crucial to create stability in their lives and build self-confidence.

Initially funded by Edward Harvist Charitable Trust we managed to attract funding from Barnet Integrated Youth Support Service Voluntary Sector to continue this worthwhile project we also managed to get small grants from the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust as well as Youth Opportunity Fund.

To address the needs, our Youth Worker developed a variety of projects during the past year and set up new and fruitful partnerships. We have had participation of over two hundred young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds



North London Global Gathering

The Social evenings at the North London Global Gathering have become more and more popular. There are over 100 young people registered with us from a wide range of backgrounds. The aim is to provide young refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived young people the opportunity to make friends, learn English, try something new and enjoy positive activities in a safe environment where they make the rules. Some of the activities that are enjoyed include: football, basketball, arts and crafts, Ninetendo Wii, internet, cooking, board games, table football, table tennis and pool. The group have also applied for funding for extra projects and activities as well as create and design their own football team kit, G.P. All Starz, to play against other youth teams.

Projects



National Portrait Gallery – Chasing Mirrors

Led by the Afghan Association Paiwand a project was set up with the National Portrait Gallery. The project targeted Arabic speaking communities and only 3 Boroughs were chosen to be involved: Bar-



net, Brent and Harrow. The 6 week project based at the Grahame Park youth centre introduced the young people to the concept of portraiture and exploring their identity through creative activities and photography. The project included a trip to the National Portrait Gallery and the use of a studio to create their own artwork. October to January 2010 the Exhibition with all 3 Boroughs pieces were displayed. It was an excellent turn out and the young people were very proud of their involvement.

Rolling Base Bus

The Social evening has also welcomed the Rolling Base Bus for 6 weeks which has worked with the young people on t-shirt design, DJ'ing, fitness through rowing machines and films.

Music

In partnership with Rithmik (youth and connexions music project) young people have learnt how to work with musical equipment, singing and writing their own songs/raps. One of the young people wrote and performed the music for the DVD 'Here I am'. More music will be incorporated into the North London Global Gathering in the coming year as well as the Girls Group.

Youth Activities

Fun activities

Despite limited funding this year the youth groups have managed to apply and successfully receive a Youth Opportunity Fund Grant which allowed for many fun trips throughout the year:

Thorpe Park, Bournemouth, Finchley Youth Theatre, the National Portrait Gallery, Hyde Park Winter Wonderland Ice Skating, Alexandra Palace Ice Skating and Wembley Park.



**"I had the best day
of my life"**

A 12 year old boy
(from Afghanistan)

MC GiGi (Multicultural Girls Group)

In partnership with Refugee Youth Project Barnet Refugee Service have set up and are running a Girls Group for females aged 13 to 18 from BMER communities. Despite an excellent start with the 2 pilot sessions for the Girls Group, the subsequent sessions have shown very poor turnout. This could be due to a number of factors including the difficulty in getting females from BMER communities out of their homes after dark in the winter months, the role females play in the family at home, helping their parents and looking after younger siblings. Promotion of the group has taken place in schools, colleges and other community organisations. The young people have undertaken a project in which they will promote the Girls Group to other schools in order to increase numbers. They have worked really hard to produce a presentation. During the session they have cooked, participated in arts and crafts, danced and had discussions on different topics.



Media project

In partnership with N'Able (Youth Offending Service), Afghan Association Paiwand, Finchley Youth Theatre and Youth and Connexions a 10 week media project took place in the Autumn. The aim of the project was to work with refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived young people from different backgrounds in order to learn about filming process. Through fun activities, celebrations and a trip a DVD was produced.

'Here I am' DVD looks at the experiences young people from the group have living in the UK and coming from another country. The DVD is a very positive piece of work highlighting the fun and vibrant nature of the North London Global Gathering and the young people themselves. We hope to distribute the DVD to social services, as well as other youth groups and schools.

Youth Activities

Roots and Wings

In partnership with the Arts Depot a group of young people meet weekly to attend free arts projects for refugee, asylum seeking and newly arrived young people aged 13 to 19. Over the past year, 22 young people came to the Roots and Wings youth group, from countries including Iran, Kenya, Nigeria, Korea, China, Singapore, Georgia, Romania, Hungary, Iraq and Pakistan. Between April 2009 and March 2010 the group worked on music production, street dance and theatre, leading to the creation of a short dance film in July 2009, a dance performance in December



2009 and a theatre piece using their dance skills and their different languages in April 2010. The sessions were led by professional artists and facilitators supported by artsdepot's Outreach Officer and our Youth Worker, Samira Lahfa. The group has also seen three exhibitions and five live performances at artsdepot. 12 young people have achieved the Bronze Arts Award in that time and seven have gone on to work on their Silver Award.

'We should have Roots and Wings because it gives a chance for people from other countries to live a dream, it's a dream come true'
Participant, aged 17

Barnet Eagles Football Club

As a reward for an excellent football season, the Barnet Eagles football team, a team of young refugees, asylum seekers and newly arrived young people, visited Lee Valley National Park to enjoy raft building and a BBQ.

Due to limited funding for the team this year it has been difficult to secure pitches and a coach for this season. Working in partnership with Housing Plus at the beginning of the season meant ex-professional footballers from Fulham and West Ham were at the team's disposal for training sessions and general support. The Barnet Eagles have successfully completed the football season by finishing 3rd in the West End League and winning all their matches. The young people are eager for funding to be found for next year in order to improve their skills and chances at winning the cup.



Barnet Sports Volunteer of the Year Award

Hussain Nazari, our football team volunteer, has received Barnet Sports Volunteer of the Year Award as well as Pro-Active London Award for Sport and Physical activity Volunteer of the Year 2009.

Nadia Williams (*Olympic Triple Jumper*) and Hussein Nazari



End of Year Party 2009

Every year Barnet Refugee Service organises a party for our client families.

The party offers a rare opportunity to those seeking asylum or recently granted the right to settle here, to have a few hours recreation and socialising.

Father Christmas gives presents to all the children. For many of them these will be the first presents they have received in a long, long time.

Once again this year's party was organised in partnership and with the generous support of North Western Reform Synagogue (Alyth) and



St Matthias Church. The party was held at St Matthias Community Centre, Colindale on Tuesday 22nd December 2009.

Around 150 clients attended at least half of whom were children.

There was food, entertainment including a



Bollywood dancer, a children's' club as well as Santa Claus who handed out presents to the kids. There were gifts for adults as well. We were privileged to have the help of over 30 volunteers without whose participation none of this would have been possible. The volunteers worked very hard and effectively together to facilitate the smooth running of the party. The partnership between St Matthias, BRS and Alyth



worked well with a great deal of input and collaboration from all three groups.

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



I didn't want it to finish...

It was fun...

A 9 year old participant

Volunteering

Barnet Refugee Service (BRS) supports clients to develop personal skills that will help them towards full integration and independence. One of the ways in which we achieve this is to support them to become volunteers as a step towards further education and/or employment. With the support of Lloyds TSB this project is running successfully helping our client for a positive integration.

The volunteers at Barnet Refugee Service are an asset to the team providing a wide range of support, expertise and knowledge. The volunteers provide support in every aspect of the services we provide: ESOL, Mother and Toddler Group, Drop-In, Office admin, Women's Group, Girls Group, North London Global Gathering, Football Team and interpreting.

I found my identity again...

There have been a number of training sessions taking place for Barnet Refugee Service volunteers internally and externally. Volunteers from a variety of projects took part in a First Aid training organised by the British Red Cross, as well as training organised by the Citizen's Advice Bureau on welfare benefits, housing and immigration, and Safeguarding and Child Protection training at Barnet Council.

There has been ongoing support to the volunteers in various posts, including one-to-ones, group supervisions and observations. Some of our volunteers have also managed to secure volunteer placements in other organisations such as Farsophone Counselling service and CommUnity Barnet.

Awards

Volunteers are celebrated and recognised for their efforts to support Barnet Refugee Service and this is why so many of our volunteers have received Barnet Community Volunteer Awards. 16 volunteers met with the Mayor of Barnet to be awarded a certificate of appreciation for completing over 100 hours of volunteering in the Borough of Barnet.

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

The Mayoress of Barnet Gladys Coleman and Fahimeh Afshinrad



Barnet Volunteers Award Ceremony 2009

Barnet Volunteers Award Ceremony 2009, community Barnet. From left to right: Ali Salehi, Sandra Green, Fahimeh Afshinrad, Vije Depala, Freshta Khandehari, Razieh Niroomand and Samira Lahfa (Volunteer coordinator)



Our Volunteers

Web Design/Support

Vi Bang
Korosh Jabbari
Ali Sarshar

Publicity and Graphic Design

Rana Aliakbar

Research

Nicholas Wood

Drop in volunteers

Abdulwahab Moghrabi
Julie Bompela
Vijah Depala
Peter Salomon
Tanya Novick
Suhad Adam
Lilian Chadwani
David Levey
Ladi Shriu
Ahlam Ahmed
Emir Arif
Shirin Arif
Alpha Jalloh

Volunteer Advisers /

Trainee Advisers

Sawsan B T Ali
Raham Mohsenpour

Admin and Office Support

Volunteers

Raziah Noromand
Rahela Amiry
Ladi Shiru
Fatemeh Beagzadeh

Freshta Khandahari
Derya Altun
Monique Ebrahimnia
Elisabeth Mulugeta

Statistics

Raham Mohsenpour

Women's Group

Tanya Novick
Elsa Shamash
Zahra Miraslani
Suhad Adam
Elsa Shamash
Zahra Miraslani
Suhad Adam

Football

Hussein Nazari
Ali Salehi

ESOL volunteers

Kathryn Salomon
Sandra Green
Elizabeth Perrot
Ros Staines
Deena Joy Kestenbaum
Brenda Edo-Ukeh
Vivian Chapman
Shirley Sebastian
Penny Rae
Freshta Khandahari
Mariya Bhandahari
Barbara Goldstein
Yasmin Khan
Fawzy Partridge

Finance and book keeping

Fahimeh Afshinrad
Daniel Moukoury

Mother and Toddler Group

Louise Morris
Katja Goldberg
Sarvenaz Alaei

Youth Work Volunteers

Ida Karimi
Nagia Abucar
Kamran Saedi

Volunteer Interpreters

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



BRS Volunteering Award Party 2009

Case Study 3

Daniel Moukoury



Working at Barnet Refugee Service has given me the confidence I really was looking for both in my professional and my personal life. Since I joined Barnet Refugee Service as a volunteer, I was already enjoying working with the member of staff and other volunteers. London is all about getting a job in a sector you are really willing to work in and I feel as I have a big advantage in applying for vacancies. Being assisted with much more experienced volunteers and BRS member of staffs, I have been able to deepen my knowledge in different tasks that I have volunteered to carry in or outside the office. That is why my strong involvement in volunteering has helped me to reach the highest level of my personality and has helped me to ameliorate my inter-personal skills.

My duties at BRS involve; looking after its financial books (bookkeeping), assisting the coordinator and the director, office tasks and other unattached tasks (such as social evenings and drop-in). Throughout my time at BRS I have already received three certificates of achievement, two by the Mayor of Barnet (David Coleman) and one from the director (at the end of the year).

Working at Barnet Refugee Service has helped me to well understand the concept of refugees and asylum seekers and that has changed my view at other people from other backgrounds, especially from those who are in a complicated and unfortunate position.

Financial Information

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2010

	2010 Unrestricted Funds £	2010 Restricted Funds £	2010 Total £	2009 Total £
Income resources				
Incoming resources from generated funds				
Voluntary Income	17,075	12,783	29,858	23,253
Grants	2,000	69,831	71,831	94,061
Interest receivable	128	-	128	760
Incoming resources from charitable activities	-	74,484	74,484	74,384
Total incoming resources	19,203	157,098	176,301	192,458
Cost of charitable activities	20,225	154,497	174,722	187,909
Governance costs	89	2,453	2,542	3,084
Total resources expended	20,314	156,950	177,264	190,993
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources - before transfers between funds	-1,111	148	-963	1,465
Gross transfers between funds	-	-	0	0
Net movement in funds	-1,111	148	-963	1,465
Total funds at 1 April	26,256	25,000	51,256	49,791
Total funds at 31 March 2010	25,145	(25,148)	50,293	51,256

Trustees Statement

These above accounts have been extracted from the accounts prepared by Ashley Nathoo & Co and were approved by the Trustees of Barnet Refugee Service on 19/06/2010 . The full report will be submitted to the Charities Commission and to Companies House in due course. If copies of full report are required they may be obtained from the Director of Barnet Refugee Service.

Peter Salomon
Chair

Partnership organisations

Advice/ support agencies

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

Employment, Training and Education

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

Health

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

Refugee Organisations

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

Umbrella bodies/ 2nd tier organisations

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

Volunteering

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

Partnerships

58. Barnet Refugee Forum
59. BAN network (BME Advice Network)
60. Forum for Advice and Information in Barnet (FAIB)
61. Chinese Mental Health association
62. Somali Family welfare association
63. JCORE

Young people

64. 331 Young people's Centre
65. Children's Fund
66. Children's Panel Refugee Council
67. Youth and Connexions Service
68. Refugee Youth Project
69. Arts Depot
70. Ijad Dance Company
71. Afghan Association Paiwand