

Support for destitute asylum seekers

SWVG helps prepare asylum seekers for life in Britain



The status of asylum seekers in this country has been a topic of political debate, to say the least. But only last month Pope Francis blasted the “fanaticism of indifference” that greets migrants seeking a better life, while condemning opposition to rescuing people in small boats in the Mediterranean. Most if not all of us will never have to go through the long, stressful and complex process of seeking asylum. Life as a refugee is a constant waiting game, overshadowed by uncertainty and the ever-present fear of being sent back to what you have struggled so hard to escape. In Britain the number of asylum seekers awaiting a decision has increased greatly during the last 10 years, with the

numbers growing as the impact of climate change is felt, while the persecution of minorities swells in many countries. So our Covenant With the Poor’s appeal today is in support of the work of the Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group (SWVG), which in very simple ways brings light and relief to individuals and families waiting to learn their future.

SWVG was formed 20 years ago. It provides practical, emotional and financial support to refugees and asylum seekers who are housed in the Southampton and Winchester area. Its clients are mainly asylum seekers who are awaiting decisions on their applications.

Their support is provided by trained volunteers, who work on a “one to one” basis with an individual client or family; support the men housed in hotels in Southampton with desk based support; offer activities; offer individual and group English classes; campaign for a compassionate asylum system and seek legal advice for individuals.

SWVG’s expectation is that most asylum seekers will get leave to remain and sanctuary in the UK, and therefore need to become independent and integrated into local society. Three-quarters of initial asylum decisions in the most recent year granted refugee status, humanitarian protection or alternative forms of leave to remain. The same has been true in recent years.



Wifi access is desperately needed in order to access teaching materials and to study effectively. Asylum seekers often lose their phones during their stressful journey to escape persecution. SWVG helps by giving them cheaper phone models. While it puts on lots of activities themselves, SWVG also asks local clubs to recruit asylum seekers as part of their group. In one case, a local flute choir accepted a budding flautist who is seeking asylum. Individuals then get invited out as part of group activities so they learn to integrate. SWVG’ philosophy is that **everyone** seeking asylum deserves respect, dignity and compassion. Thank you for your support.



Please give this important project your support—you can donate by bank transfer:

Account Name: CDP St Peter & The Winchester Martyrs. Account No: 00890996

Sort Code: 30-93-04

Please reference ‘CWP’ when making payment

Object of funding	Support for Activities that help integrate asylum seekers into the society that they will encounter if and when residence is granted.
Beneficiaries	Asylum seekers being supported locally by SWVG
Amount requested	£4,000
Programme location	Southampton & Winchester
SWVG website	https://swvg-refugees.org.uk/