



Shropshire Supports Refugees

SHROPSHIRE SUPPORTS REFUGEES (SSR) OPERATES IN A NUMBER OF WAYS;

- The primary purpose is to provide a forum (in the form of a Facebook group) where the community can offer help, advice, goods, services, support and opportunities to refugees and migrants who have come to live in our county. The group also offers the refugees and migrants a way to request help, support or things that they may need to make their integration and adaptation to our society a little easier and smoother.
- The group and Facebook (FB) page is managed, monitored and assistance is facilitated by SSR from 8 am until 11pm most days
- Volunteers and befrienders are recruited and matched to families or groups.
- Local residents collect goods for the arrival of new families, and money is raised to buy essentials for the families arriving.
- Shropshire welcome hampers are assembled with local produce bought and donated for each family arriving.

SSR ALSO ORGANISES EDUCATIONAL AND THERAPEUTIC EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES, HELPING THE SYRIAN FAMILIES CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER, KEEPING THEIR TRADITIONS AND CULTURE ALIVE.

- SSR host EID parties, and Christmas, run workshops and social groups, along with education days and English classes
- SSR have taken families on day trips and shown them around the county
- SSR react to requests for help- everything from attaining Visas, to helping with driving lessons and flea infestations

WAYS THAT WE HAVE DELIVERED SUPPORT DIRECTLY TO THE FAMILIES:

- 12-week programme of Saturday socials at the Wildlife Trust, Shrewsbury.

Family group sessions where all the Syrian families came together for 12 weeks on a Saturday. Parents learned English, took part in a 6-week stress management course, gained a food hygiene certificate, a first aid course and had support from various organisations that came and spoke to the. Children were entertained by 7 local artists and a forest school

- A weekly craft and chat group for women has been running consistently.
- A Thursday night English class held at the University with good attendance.
- A bike project which ensures all of those who want a bike have been given one. This is ongoing.
- Children were assisted to attend a summer school at a prestigious local international school

- Children were offered a day a week at a local football holiday club
- A weekly women's group occurs on a Monday, where we get together with British ladies, sing, dance, cook, learn new skills and try out new experiences like art opportunities and talks. Their physical needs are met by healthy eating and half an hour of Zumba. Volunteers look after the babies whilst the women do the Zumba.
- Informal English classes are held on a Wednesday morning to support the women in various homes.
- We have a qualified English teacher who helps 4 children that are struggling with education on a Saturday morning.

SERVICE DEVELOPMENT:

Another important role that SSR has developed over the past year is working closely with the Syrian resettlement Officer to facilitate other services in order to access the families and vice versa. Some of the services which SSR have worked on and are scheduled are:

- Strengthening families
- Healthy child
- CCG
- Schools
- Library services
- Safe space
- Sexual health services
- IAPT
- Developed a permanent role for a refugee school officer, to start with the arrivals of new families.
- Community arts development officer

By working in this way, the families have been able to meet service representatives, develop a relationship and we have had 3 successful self-referrals within 2 months

THE ORGANISATIONS WHO SSR HAVE WORKED WITH IN THE PAST YEAR:

These organisations often let us use their premises for free or a greatly reduced fee. We have worked on projects with our partners or are in the process of developing projects together.

- THE WILDLIFE TRUST
- THE WIGHTMAN THEATRE
- THE HIVE COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER
- THE FOOD HUB
- THE SHREWSBURY FOOD BANK
- THE BAPTIST CHURCH
- THE QUAKERS
- THE UNI
- ENERGIZE
- FRESHE
- WEM WELCOME GROUP
- REFUGEE ACTION
- SOCIAL SERVICES

- HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS
- ENGAGE
- STORAGE KING
- THE GATEWAY
- TAPI CARPETS
- FLICKS IN THE STICKS & ARTS ALIVE

ORGANISATIONS THAT SSR HAVE DEVELOPED RELATIONSHIPS WITH TO ENHANCE OUR SERVICE, LEARN FROM AND SHARE EXPERIENCES:

- WOMEN AND CHILDRENS CENTER IN BIRMINGHAM
- CITY OF SANCTUARY
- REFUGEE WEEK COUNCIL (REFUGEE COUNCIL)
- 300 ONLINE GRASS ROOTS ORGANISATIONS WHO HELP REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS
- REFUGEE ACTION

TRAINING WE HAVE BEEN ON / CONFERENCES WE HAVE NETWORKED AT:

- TREE OF LIFE
- REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT TRAINING (COUNCIL)
- WELLBEING MASTER CLASS
- MENTAL HEALTH MASTER CLASS
- WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH FOR REFUGEES CONFERENCE

ACCOLADES

Mayors award from two mayors- one for Amanda, and 3 of the interpreters; Kariman Yakhoul, Abd Ennebly & Aisha Ennebly.

MEDIA

- Amanda was on the panel of 'an evening with rural women' hosted by Pentabus held at the museum

<http://www.pentabus.co.uk/evening-rural-women>

- We took part in the national conversation on immigration

<http://nationalconversation.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Shrewsbury-Report.pdf>

- We were proud to be one of Matthew Crampton's partner organisations representing Shropshire.

Matthew filled the main tent with 3500 people in the summer of 2017, and mentioned us and our work.

<http://thetransportsproduction.co.uk/parallel-lives>

- A few of us took part in a video designed to celebrate acts of kindness

'My radical act of welcome'

<https://youtu.be/IMcUf9xRFcM>

- The craft and chat group SSR set up took part in a national project.

<http://threadbearingwitness.com/category/stitch-a-tree>

- SSR Placed Shropshire on the map by Amanda being nominated to appear on the "Amnesty international map of inspirational women with a suffragette spirit"

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/suffragettespirit>

VOLUNTEERS AND BEFRIENDS

- SSR now have 810 people in the closed FB group.
- SSR has enabled approximately 90 people to help and assist the families in various ways.
- SSR had 35 volunteers who helped on the wildlife trust project.
- 29 volunteers who help sort stuff we have collected.
- 12 volunteers who help on the women's group.
- 6 members of a 'City of Sanctuary' group.
- 5 people working on hampers.
- SSR work with 5 interpreters.
- SSR have worked with 7 artists.
- SSR have approximately 20 Family befrienders at present who have visited families at some point.