



Refugee Week Roundup



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All of our regional offices have been celebrating Refugee Week across the country. In Bristol, we extended the week to a longer celebration - Bristol Refugee Festival. Wolverhampton ACH also held many events to enjoy their Refugee Week. Here is a summary of all the things Ashley Community Housing have done towards Refugee Week.

Bristol:

Celebrating Sanctuary

Celebrating Sanctuary was held on 9th July in celebration of Bristol Refugee Festival. The day consisted of great music, food, stalls and much more. It was a family friendly event, and was held on Queen Square in Bristol - the sun was out which made the day even better! Ashley Community Housing had a stall set up there. This had information about us, interactive activities and sweets to enjoy. We've put together a short video of our day which you can see on our YouTube site.



Bristol Refugee Festival Bike Ride

As part of our contribution towards Bristol Refugee Festival we gathered together tenants, staff and volunteers to cycle 18.2 miles from Bristol to Saltford and back again. We set off on the 10th July from Felix Road in Easton towards our destination of a riverside picnic spot near Saltford, Bath. Our journey took us along the Bristol to Bath cycle path and fortunately the sun was out for our 45-minute ride there. In total, 18 people took part in our bike ride, allowing a large mix of individuals to come together, some who possibly wouldn't have previously.

Apart from Ashley Community Housing tenants and staff members, we were also happily joined by some volunteers from Neighbourly and the Bristol Bike Project. This was an appreciated effort and made the day even more enjoyable. The Bristol Bike Project were also there to give a bike safety demo before we set off.

The ride there was fun but a bit tiring, luckily, we arrived to find some of our staff members had started a BBQ and picked a great location near the canal. The sun was still shining which allowed us to all eat lunch together and some people even went for a swim!

After filling up and cooling off, we decided to play some games to get everyone to join in. One of our tenants suggested a game he used to play called the 'vegetable game'. This gave way to a lot of laughter! The boys also had a football so were playing together with that which was great to watch.

When it was time to leave there had been a lot of friendships made and Ashley Community Housing feel we achieved our goal of getting everyone together for an afternoon of fun. The ride home was still lovely as the weather had kept up, and it was more downhill!

Here at Ashley Community Housing, we encourage our tenants to get involved with their local communities and try to engage the public to join in with our events, like the cycle ride. If you would like to suggest a similar get-together with us then please contact matthew.rogers@ashleyhousing.com



Wolverhampton:

This year's Refugee Week was a lot of fun! At ACH Wolverhampton, we were able to put on events on every day of the week, which gave our tenants and staff a wide range of activities to be a part of. These ranged from art classes in the local art gallery to a visit to Stratford upon Avon where we got to go on boats on the river and listen to Inua Ellams, a refugee, perform his spectacular poetry and listen to his incredible story.

In between this we had a cinema event, a football tournament and many more! The variety of events we put on allowed for all participants to do something they enjoy. It was wonderful to see that the refugees and asylum seekers living in Wolverhampton were so eager to join in these events with the wider community. It was a wonderful example of the willingness of refugees and asylum seekers to contribute to this community to make it a better one.

Also, seeing the range of activities from sport to art and how they brought out the individual talents and interests of the participants was a brilliant reminder of the individuality, creativity and value that refugees and asylum seekers bring to our community. Seeing the acceptance and togetherness of the community as a whole, without any barriers, was truly inspiring and we are glad to have been a part of this. We are very much looking forward to next year and know that our tenants and learners will be too!

Birmingham:

There is always some great competitive spirit amongst the various ACH offices and Refugee Week continued this! Staff and tenants from both the Birmingham and Wolverhampton offices joined together to play a friendly football tournament in celebration of Refugee Week.

It was a great day with such a mixture of people involved. The tenants really enjoyed themselves and the staff too! The result came in after several matches, that the winners of the tournament were... ACH WOLVERHAMPTON! You can see the trophy below:

