

Refugee Week Conference 2016

Each year Refugee Week recognises the contribution of refugees to the UK through a week of national celebrations combining art, culture and education. The yearly conference, held in London, is an opportunity for organisations around the country to come together and discuss how they will be preparing for Refugee Week. The conference also allows attendees to go to a number of workshops which help to develop skills in engaging others with Refugee Week and increasing awareness of this national event.

We were lucky to attend this year's conference where we were able to share knowledge and gain some new ideas about this year's Refugee Week theme of 'Welcome'. The CEO of the Refugee Council Maurice Wren introduced the event and spoke about the shift in public opinion towards refugees:

"Why did public opinion move? Because we've been active." This idea of being active is a key part of our approach to Refugee Week 2016 in which we hope to welcome our tenants to their respective cities of Bristol, Birmingham and Wolverhampton through guided city tours.

Refugee Week 2016 is also a great opportunity for us to focus on encouraging our tenants to take care of both their physical and mental wellbeing. Introducing tenants to local community groups, projects and organisations which focus on wellbeing not only supports integration, but also further supports this year's Refugee Week theme of 'Welcome'.

ACH's Bristol support worker Rachel Sharp praised the conference as she prepares for this year's Refugee Week in Bristol:

"The conference was a brilliant opportunity for skills swapping, networking and ideas shopping! The workshop on engaging "fence-sitters" was particularly beneficial as I now feel confident that I can engage a wide audience with our essential refugee resettlement work."