

Mariam Sayed

Mariam has been a tenant with Ashley Community Housing since October 2016. Originally from Eritrea, she lived in Saudi Arabia where she worked as an event organiser before coming to the UK.

When she came to ACH, she wasn't confident in speaking English and needed some help getting set up in the UK. She was able to boost her confidence with courses in Health and Social Care and IT, and was linked up with other local groups who could help point her in the direction she wanted to go.

She completed an Enterprise course, during which she looked into how she might achieve her ultimate ambition of opening her own business, selling traditional Eritrean food and desserts. She has decided to start by holding coffee mornings to gain some more experience and build up interest in her work.

'Mariam was quiet to start with but worked really well with her peers, which helped build her confidence,' says our Training Manager, Jane Franklin.

Mariam has also been studying ESOL, and having started at entry level 3, she has already moved on to level 1. She got her first job in Bristol, working part-time at Primark. In addition to this, she has volunteered regularly with Refugee Women of Bristol, and helped out with a Somali Kitchen pop-up this July.

She is now moving to London with her sister, and our support and training teams all agree that Mariam's great enthusiasm for learning and ambition to succeed will help her go far!

'Many thanks, you gave me power. This is my family. Every time I came in I know I am safe. Always you are smiling.' - Mariam

"[Ashley Community Housing] are like my family, I don't feel like I'm alone here." - Mariam



Ashley Community Housing was established in 2008 as a social enterprise specialising in the economic, social and civil integration of refugees through accommodation and community based training support. We have successfully resettled over 2000 individuals from refugee backgrounds in this time.

We employ 60 staff and operate in the West of England and the West Midlands as a strategic partner for local authorities and government prime contractors. Through the establishment of our subsidiary training arm 'Himilo Training' we are committed to supporting refugees through work experience, language training, IT literacy and employability skills.

Our #RethinkingRefugee programme is considered outstanding and reflects our commitment to making sure refugees become part of society rather than remaining marginalised and under-employed.

If you would like to find out more about Ashley Community Housing's work with tenants and learners in the West of England and the West Midlands call 0117 954 0433, email matthew.rogers@ashleyhousing.com or visit www.ashleyhousing.com