

NEST

Our New Evidence Search Team (NEST) has 36 registered volunteers of which about 20-30 are currently active. This fluctuates seasonally due to a large cohort of student volunteers. Both the University of Leicester and De Montfort University recruit for NEST, particularly the Pro Bono working group at the University of Leicester. The British Red Cross have referred an average of 3-4 cases to NEST per month, with seven referrals made in March 2018. NEST are seeking Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) registration which will allow registered volunteers to advise on Asylum and Protection issues for specific cases.

FOOTBALL

Our Saturday football session started last year under People's Project. The sessions are a great way of helping people to settle into their local community and to meet others with similar experiences. We now often have up to 40 young men playing on a Saturday morning and Leicester City Football Club not only provides a coach, but also helps us fund a second pitch to cater for such a large group. We are also grateful to LCFC for running the new Soccerise class at our drop-in. It's great fun, and is attended by both men and women. We are enjoying the benefits of exercise for both mental and physical well-being in a very entertaining way!

BIKE SCHEME AND APPEALING 4

We've given out ten bikes, each with a helmet, lights and lock. These are provided to the most needy people, as identified by the Red Cross.

Appealing 4 has been revamped, and we are now sourcing items via our Facebook page and other channels.

TRAINING

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our organisation, and we've provided a wide range of training opportunities for them including courses on First Aid, Food Hygiene, Permaculture, Safeguarding and Good Governance.



ENGAGING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

This remains an important aspect of our work, and in addition to regular visitors to our drop-in (two a week on average), we continue to deliver talks and attend events. This year we've welcomed a group of 15 clergy, helped educate reporters at BBC Radio Leicester about the challenges faced by RAS, talked to trainee social workers and a host of other visitors. Two asylum seekers have participated in multi-agency forum (MAF) meetings, highlighting the problems they continue to experience and taking the opportunity to engage with decision makers. Our new RAS ambassador team has attended a health promotion event, spoken to staff at the Leicestershire Aids Service and accompanied us on various school visits. We've delivered talks to four different schools over the course of the year, including a workshop for around 100 6th formers at English Martyrs Catholic School.

TRIPS

We all love getting out and about, and this year we've added some new outings to our regular ones. Trips have included:

- A day out on Skegness beach
- An afternoon at Billesdon village
- Bradgate Park to see the deer
- Three visits to Hollywood Bowl
- Wembley Stadium for England vs Slovenia World Cup qualifier, thanks to free tickets from the FA
- Riders Basketball game and U23 football match at King Power Stadium

UNIVERSITY OF SANCTUARY

The University of Leicester (UoL) is a key partner, and launched its initiative to become a University of Sanctuary in October 2017 with a well-attended event that included poetry and music. The aim is to 'learn, share and embed' in making Leicester a University that welcomes asylum seekers and refugees through 'fostering a culture of welcome and inclusion'. A key goal is to reach out and work with communities across the city and beyond. Numerous events have been held, including a talk from Growing Points and a talk on MOOCs (massive open online courses), which helped UoL explore diverse ways of offering refugees and asylum seekers access to education. UoL is offering free places on the ELTU's full time English Language Pre-session programme and over RAS 25 students are currently on the different modules. UoL is now the process of agreeing access to further full time and distance learning programmes.

De Montfort University is actively involved in supporting RAS in various ways and is also seeking to become a University of Sanctuary. We look forward to working with both universities as they make this journey in the coming year.

AND FINALLY...

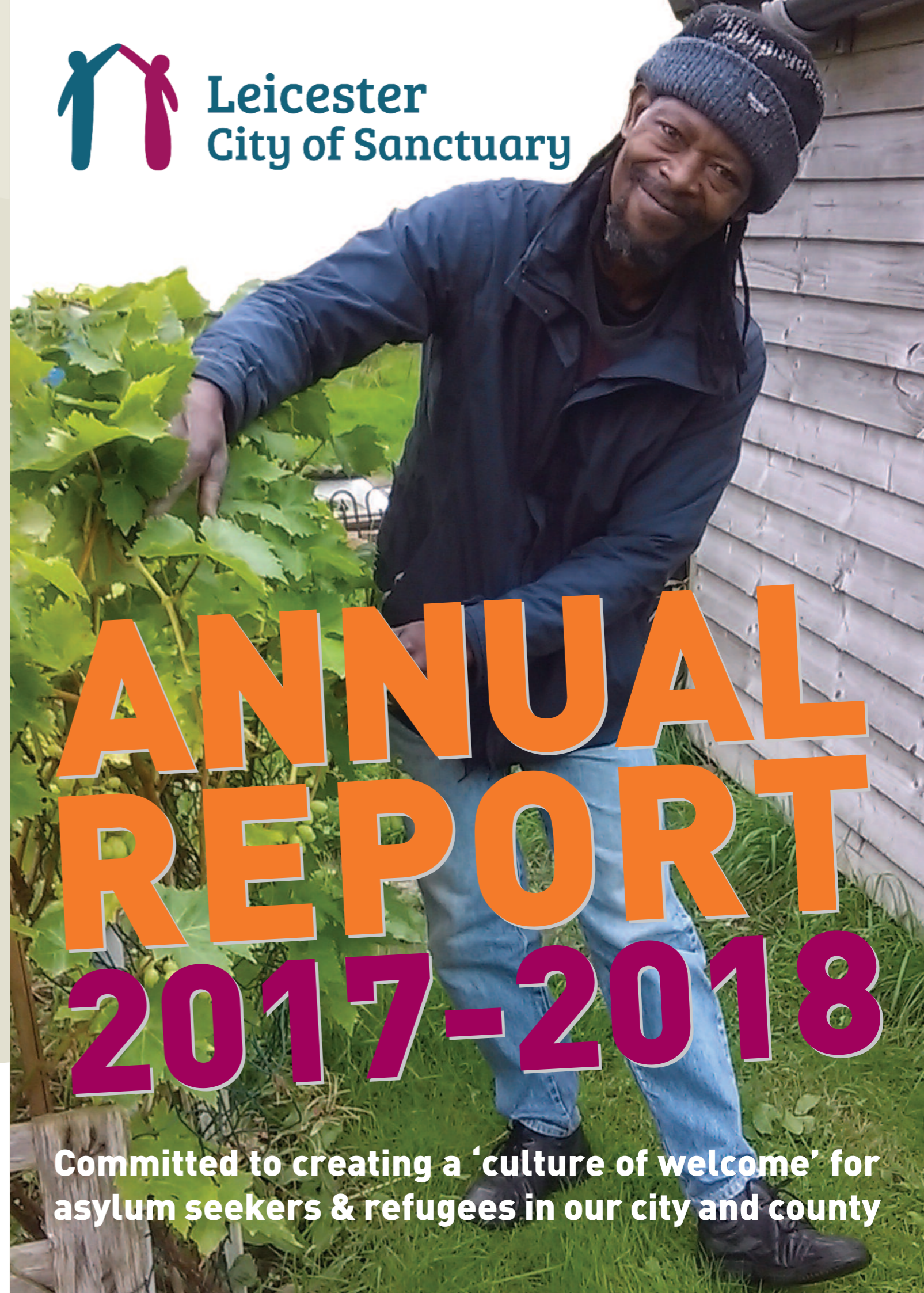
Thank you to everyone involved with LCoS for your support and goodwill. There is so much goodwill in our charity that it's incredible. It comes from the people who volunteer and give their time and energies, including our incredible RAS volunteers; from the organisations who are inspired by our message and want to collaborate; from our supporters who donate money, toiletries and other items; and the companies and grant givers who recognise our need and provide our funding.

Thank you all for making our charity such a success.

Shali Bullough - LCoS Co-ordinator



Leicester City of Sanctuary



ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

Committed to creating a 'culture of welcome' for asylum seekers & refugees in our city and county



If you would like to know more Shali Bullough Leicester City of Sanctuary, contact us via:
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Facebook: www.facebook.com/eicestercityofsanctuary

LEICESTER CITY OF SANCTUARY CHAIR'S REPORT 2017-2018



The Coordinator's report tells a very encouraging and positive story of the past twelve months in terms of the work we do and the many different people involved. This is by far the most important thing to talk about, and it is especially good news to see how many refugees and asylum seekers are choosing to get involved. This part of the Annual Review tells the story from the trustees' perspective, who are legally responsible for the good running of our charity.

This has been our first year as a CIO, following the vote taken at last year's AGM. This change in status has enabled us to do a number of things which would previously not have been advisable, including moving from being a group run entirely by volunteers, with both the advantages but also drawbacks that provides, to one which can reliably employ staff. It also coincided with the stepping down of our Volunteer Coordinator, Mick Walker, although I'm pleased that Mick has agreed to stay on in the management team in a redefined role with a particular emphasis on public speaking and advocacy for all we stand for. Our thanks are due to Mick, not only for his many years' working with us in a wide range of roles, latterly as Coordinator, but also for being willing to say on until the end of August to give us time to establish a succession policy. I'm also grateful to Shali for being willing to step up and lead the team as interim coordinator from that point until permanent arrangements could be made, and to the rest of the team for their part in carrying the work over that period.

A small sub-group of trustees carefully explored all the options for creating paid roles, which resulted in two posts being competitively advertised at the end of the year, with interviews in the first week of January. As a result, we were able to confirm Shali Bullough as our first employed Coordinator, with effect from 1 February 2018. Thanks are also due to Tarjinder Wilkinson, who held our interim Finance Officer post, but felt the call to return to teaching, which she has done since Easter. During Taj's time our financial procedures increased by leaps and bounds – which was entirely necessary for an organisation in receipt of significant sums of grant funding. Following a competitive interview process for a new employed Finance Officer, we appointed Alex Jakeman in mid-March, and he is already proving a worthy successor in the role.

The review also confirmed changes our structure, consistent with advice received from VAL and discussed at last year's AGM. Trustees remain legally responsible for and have strategic

oversight of the work. Our paid staff (Coordinator and Finance Officer) working together with designated key volunteers form a Management Team, which is accountable to the trustees for the operational work of LCoS. The former 'steering group' is now re-designated as an Operational Team and brings together representatives of the various strands of our work for the purpose of liaison and communication. Volunteers continue to meet regularly both in the areas of their volunteering and the larger groups hold regular volunteer meetings. As a charity with membership, all volunteers may become members of LCoS, but that is separate from any roles they may hold in the organisation's work.

Due to increased activity it was agreed that Trustee meetings should increase to every two months, and in fact we will have met seven times in the year. Mark Wilkinson and Jenny Dnes were co-opted as new trustees in October, having served a probationary period since the AGM. We have been very conscious of the need for trustees to be actively involved our organisation, and as such have drawn up a Code both new and existing trustees indicating what is the expected commitment in terms of both time and engagement.

Although our main focus is on our own geographical community, we should never forget we are part of a national movement with shared values and aims and I have been very grateful for the support of national City of Sanctuary chief officer, Sian Summers-Rees throughout this period of local change and development – indeed Sian took part in the appointment process of our two employed staff. It is therefore especially appropriate to welcome Ben Margolis, City of Sanctuary's new regional support officer, in succession to Colleen Molloy, who now assumes different national duties for City of Sanctuary. We look forward to working with Ben as he grows into his new role.

Finally, I'd note that after three years as a trustee, Annie Merton has stated she will be stepping down. Annie has served as vice-chair over this period and has consistently offered wise support and practical help, not least in leading the working group on paid staff during the past year. The charity owes her a huge debt of gratitude and I am personally very thankful for all her support and wish her well in whatever life brings next.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial situation is good, with funds of over £53,000 on 31 March 2018. Income was up by over £14,000 year-on-year. Donations held up well during 2017/8, and we were also awarded six new grants, ranging from £1,000 to £10,000 each. These were given for specific purposes and are being spent accordingly. Overall, income was over £66,000.

Expenditure fell by about £20,000 in 2017/8, totalling just over £52,000. The scale and range of activities that were undertaken during the year was significant and the bulk of expenditure was on room hire, travel, food, and paid posts. The strength of our financial position means that we are starting the 2018/9 year in a good position to maintain current activities and to take advantage of any new opportunities which may arise during the coming year.

Pete Hobson – Chair of Trustees 2017-18

The full Trustee body for 2017-18:

Pete Hobson (Chair) • Annie Merton (Vice-Chair)
Mike Alexander (to 20 August 2017) • Sam Javid
Golden Ngwenya • John Ssekindu • Mark Wilkinson
Jenny Dnes (from 4 October 2017)

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

DROP-IN

Our Wednesday drop-in sessions continue to be very popular, with 80-100 attendees each week. The drop-in helps to prevent isolation and promote wellbeing by providing opportunities to make friends, meet new people to take part in a variety of activities. A recent independent Red Cross survey took direct feedback from 143 individuals and 121 (85%) reported a reduction in isolation and increased social networks as a result of attendance at the drop-in.

The Red Cross attend our Wednesday sessions regularly, tackling casework and helping our people with various problems. As part of our ongoing partnership, we also host life skills and CV workshops delivered by the Red Cross, with 34 people benefitting last year. The feedback has been very positive on the value of these workshops in giving people information on how to rebuild their life in the UK and helping them to understand their options related to work, training and learning.

Our welcoming team has registered 134 new people, and collaborations with other organisations have allowed us to offer more activities and opportunities for our people.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

One focus this year has been on our pre-schoolers with the addition of a designated play corner, thanks to the tireless efforts of Maggie Edginton and her dedicated team of three RAS volunteers. We regularly cater for up to 15 toddlers and their carers at the drop-in. The play area is set up in the same way each week, so that the children know what to expect. We have sourced a good range of age appropriate play items and books and the children are now very eager to come. We have noticed a great improvement in the behaviour, socialisation skills and language skills of the pre-schoolers at the drop-in since we introduced a designated play corner. We have also enjoyed new children's activities, including two sponge play sessions, kindly led by TurnedOnItsHead.

After the growth in services/activities and the structural changes we implemented last year, the focus this year has been to consolidate and to find a way of continuing to provide all the new things we enjoyed last year without the £50,000 funding from the People's Project, which ended in May 2017.

I'm pleased to say that we've been successful. The new systems and efficiencies set up last year have saved us enormous time and energy, and we're continuing to offer all the new activities, some in partnership with other organisations. We are grateful to Soft Touch, who now run and fund the cooking group set up under the People's Project, and to Writing East Midlands, who have funded a 2nd round of tremendously popular creative writing classes.

In addition, we've even managed to add a couple of new activities, including Soccercise, a novel and hugely enjoyable aerobics class run at the drop-in by Leicester City Football Club, which uses footballs and music to improve fitness.

Our team of refugee and asylum seeker (RAS) volunteers has grown, and they now represent more than half of our drop-in volunteers. Anyone who's been to our drop-in recently will know it's no longer a case of running things for our people, it's a case of running things with them. They are our most valuable resource, and we couldn't function without them.

In fact, the amazing energy and commitment of our RAS volunteers inspired a new project this year – the development of a RAS ambassador team to welcome visitors at our drop-in and to represent us at talks and events.



GIFT TABLE AND GIVE-AWAYS

The gift table has become a regular feature at the drop-in, thanks to significant donations of toiletries and other items from our supporters, and to our ability to source a range of items free of charge from Giving World. Over the winter we distributed 50 new coats retailing at about £100 each as well as hats, scarves, socks and gloves, in addition to the usual toiletries. With summer on the way, we are now distributing sun hats and swimming costumes to our pre-schoolers.

ENGLISH CLASSES

184 people attended our English classes last year. In addition to our Women Only group in Booth Hall, we offer seven other classes in partnership with Leicester University at their premises at the English Language Teaching Unit. As well as specific groups at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels, provision now includes a 1-1 pronunciation session, a reading circle and a special class for those who need a high IELTS level.

THURSDAY IT AND SEWING IN BOOTH HALL

Our computer drop-in provides access to a suite of laptops which are used mainly for internet browsing and word processing. There are refreshments and a volunteer available to help with any problems or to help teach computer skills.

The sewing group also meets on Thurs afternoon in the same room, offering people the chance to learn tailoring and dress making skills. In addition to sharing her skills, our sewing teacher, Rosalind Matthew, has sourced four sewing machines to give away to her students over course of year. Ros is now stepping back and Mandy Beech will be taking over. A huge thanks to Ros for setting up the dress-making class and to Mandy for taking it forward next year.

