

DEVON AND CORNWALL REFUGEE SUPPORT



WE ARE OPEN!

Following almost two years of operating as a remote service, the doors are finally open again for our service users to meet with a caseworker or find out about our activities in the city.

Our drop in is open on Mondays and Thursdays, with the number of service users coming to seek advice and support increasing each week. While the pandemic presented the difficulty of transitioning to a remote service, it also showed how communication with our service users could be improved. Due to this the freephone and WhatsApp numbers are still available for service users to book appointments with caseworkers and seek advice.

ACTIVITIES

Our activities calendar has expanded to include a wider variety since our re-opening at the end of January.

English classes are continuing to be run three times a week by our team of dedicated volunteers; the music group has started again on Tuesday mornings; a 5-a-side football team meet every Wednesday and a new monthly cycling group tested the trails around Plymbridge for the first time last month.

With many other projects in the pipeline, we are looking forward to introducing more service users to what we can offer them in Plymouth.



WELCOME

DCRS exists to provide advocacy, advice, support, education and a welcoming communal space for asylum seekers in the region. Our aim is to promote independence, prevent destitution and encourage integration of our service users into the local community. We are a charity that purely exist on the donations from our supporters.

DONATE

Please visit

localgiving.org/charity/dcrs/

Alternatively, you can send a direct debit to
Sort code: 08-92-99
Account number: 65216402

NEW STAFF

The team has expanded post-pandemic to reintroduce volunteers, old and new, to the auxiliary roles designed to support the casework staff. We have had two new additions to the team; Mariam Eri is our most recent addition to the casework team and Craig Walker is covering as the Activities Co-ordinator.

To volunteer with us visit
www.dcrs-plymouth.org

OUTREACH AND CHANGE

Our casework team, in a joint effort with Refugee Support Devon, Give Back, the Red Cross, Provide Devon and Plymouth Hope, have been conducting an outreach programme in Tiverton. This is to ensure that newly arrived asylum seekers, who are currently being accommodated in a hotel, understand the asylum process and can access necessary services. Many asylum seekers before being dispersed into more permanent accommodation by the Home Office will be placed in temporary accommodation. Despite Plymouth being a dispersal city, Tiverton is currently the only hotel in Devon and Cornwall. We have signed up 40 new service users who will be able to contact us on our triage line for

support. Rachel Moss, a social work student who has been on placement with us for the past six months, is co-ordinating the project.

FUNDRAISING

In February, Plymouth College raised over £5,800 for DCRS in a charity cycle event. The goal was to cycle the distance from Tunisia to Plymouth in 24 hours, chosen as it is a common departure point from the African continent for those seeking asylum in Europe.

A massive thank you to all of the students that took part in the cycle and to those who donated to their amazing effort. If you would like to donate too, head to our website or use the sort code and account number below.

A.R.E HOUSE

When an asylum seeker has their asylum claim refused, and they have exhausted all possible avenues to appeal the decision, they become A.R.E (Appeal Rights Exhausted). At this point, they have no right to rent; no right to work and are no longer entitled to asylum support. They are therefore destitute, and at severe risk of exploitation, which can push some people towards crime, and in turn the prison system.

Of known outcomes of asylum applications in 2020, 70% of initial asylum applications have either been withdrawn or refused (Asylum Statistics, House of Commons Library 2022). A claim can be refused for many reasons outside of whether there are genuine grounds for asylum. These include unsuitable legal representation or advice and the inability to provide sufficient evidence.

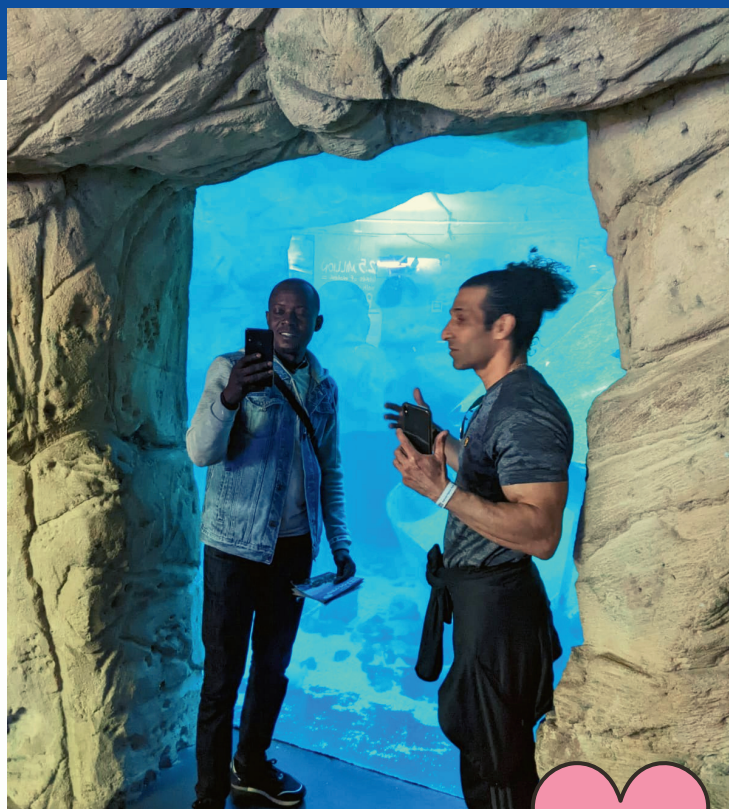
An individual has the right to apply for asylum again in order to present new material that has not been considered before. Without housing or an income, trying to access legal representation is nearly impossible. Many of our service users have difficulty engaging with this process due to rough sleeping, without their basic needs for food and housing being met. The purpose of the A.R.E House is to meet those needs, allowing service users with grounds for a Fresh Claim to prepare their case to give them a second chance. Once a Fresh Claim is submitted, they are again entitled to asylum support while their claim is being decided.

FRESH CLAIMS

PROJECT

In tandem with the A.R.E House proposal, our volunteer immigration solicitor George Rosenberg provides pro bono advice to service users who are looking into a Fresh Claim. Alongside the difficulty of being homeless, there is a significant shortage of legal representation in the South West. Fresh Claims are less favoured by solicitors due to their complexity and the lack of funding covered by Legal Aid. This can therefore make finding legal representation even more difficult. George is helping counteract this problem by packaging a Fresh Claim for a solicitor to then take forward. This makes it significantly more likely a solicitor will take on one of our service users cases. Early intervention following the refusal of an asylum claim can quickly regularise the immigration status of one of our service users and avoid unnecessary lengthy periods of destitution.

THANK YOU to all of our donors for your continued support that allow us to continue the invaluable work we do for asylum seekers and refugees in Devon and Cornwall.



TO DONATE www.dcrs-plymouth.org

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