

Impact Report

2017-2018



Our Goals



Safety: We provide a place that feels welcoming and safe for asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol to meet and socialise.



Solidarity: We contribute to strengthening communities in Bristol through seeking out and facilitating social engagement, educational and volunteering opportunities in the wider community for asylum seekers and refugees. We aim to be a member led organisation.



Action for Change: We aim to promote and protect the human rights of asylum seekers and refugees. We work to strengthen the visibility, voice and representation of asylum seekers and refugees in local affairs in Bristol and raise awareness of asylum seeker and refugee issues.



Highlights of 2017/18

April

Offices moved to St Pauls Learning Centre (SPLC)

Training for asylum seekers and refugees in Food Hygiene

May

Trip to We the Curious for families

Crowdfunder for Early Years Project raised over £30,000

June

BRR Members spoke at Refugee Festival launch event at Arnolfini

BRR and Pride Without Borders stalls at Celebrating Sanctuary

July

Early Years Project and some ESOL classes moved to SPLC

Pride without Borders took part in Bristol Pride with fantastic outfits

August

A day out to the beach for 100 members

Training for volunteers (ASP and BRILL)

September

New partnership with International House, offering IELTS course for asylum seekers and refugees

BRR featured in UNICEF Great British Welcomes

October

Trip to Bristol Zoo for BRR families

AGM featuring VOICE members speaking about Asylum Support Project

November

Staff and volunteers received Mental Health First Aid Training

Big Give fundraising event for Asylum Support Project

December

Thought-provoking Human Rights Day event

BRR Special Christmas gathering at Assisi Centre

January

UK Youth Project Workshop to develop training for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

Volunteer Thank You Party

February

Learning Visit to Wolverhampton Refugee and Migrant Centre

Worked with external evaluator on Report on Advice and Advocacy functions

March

New ways of working developed in Advocacy team in response to members changing and increasingly complex needs – new volunteers recruited and new training delivered



Chair's Report

At BRR we have had another year which we can take pride in: continuing to provide a wide range of support and social opportunities for members. As ever, these are challenging times for refugees and for refugee charities. Nationally, the austerity agenda means that funding is hard to come by and more competitive. We need to do more to raise our income from supporters.

The public shock over the Windrush scandal means that broader questions around immigration and asylum, including indefinite detention, now have a wider audience. There is a possibility of getting a hearing on issues like destitution and family reunification.

The Board has welcomed new members: Irene Zikusoka, Helena Milton-Thompson, Negla Abdul Hadi, Christina Stokes and Ayan Farah. We said goodbye to Mahmoud Matan, Asia Yousif and our stalwart Treasurer, Glenda Roberts whom I thank for their hard work on behalf of BRR. Thanks also to Director Beth Wilson as well as our brilliant staff, volunteers and members, who together make BRR the fantastic organisation it is.

During the past year we have had extensive discussions over the future direction of BRR. We have become increasingly conscious of the needs of a wider range of migrants beyond refugees as defined in the Refugee Convention. Staff and members will work together to adapt services appropriately.

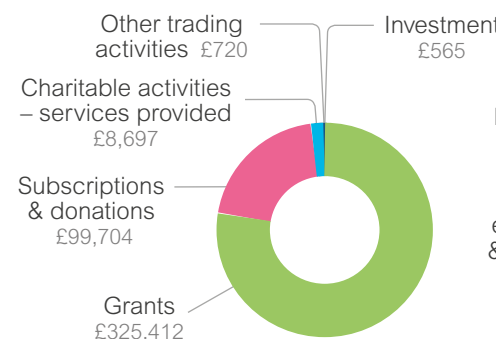
Chris Bertram, Chair of Board of Trustees

Financial Report

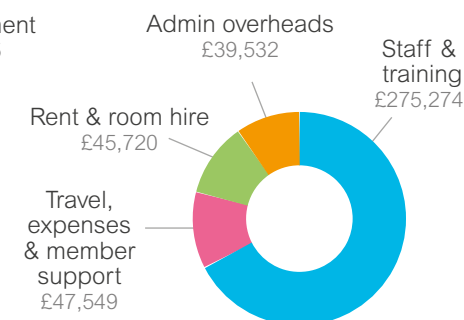
In 2017-18 BRR generated funding of **£488,412** and spent **£408,075**. The income received included £69,134 raised in the previous year. Most of our funding came from trusts, foundations, and Bristol City Council, while **£99,704** of our funding came from individual donors, an increase on the £69,134 raised last year. All funding received has been vital in ensuring that we can continue to be here for our members. We would like to thank all donors and funders for supporting us.

Further detail on 2017-18 finances can be found in our Annual Accounts 2017-18, which are submitted to the Charity Commission, and are freely available on our website.

Where did our funds come from?



Where did they go?



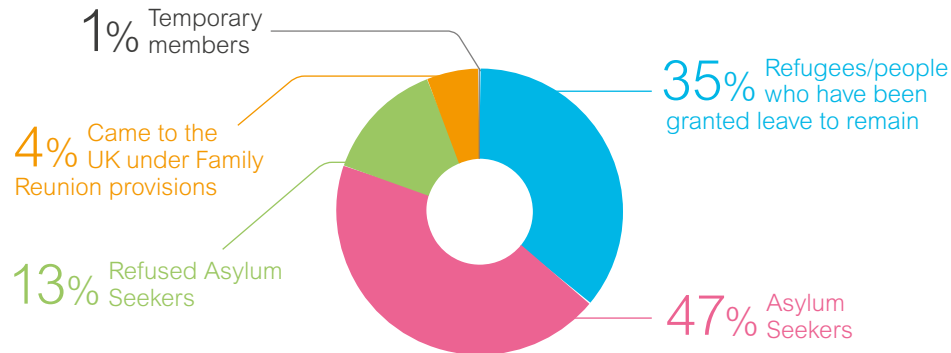
Public Benefit

BRR is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and abides by the requirements set out in BRR's Constituting Document. Trustees reviewed their compliance with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Commission. Our Annual Report indicates how BRR meets the public benefit guidance.

Further information can be found on our website: bristolrefugeerights.org

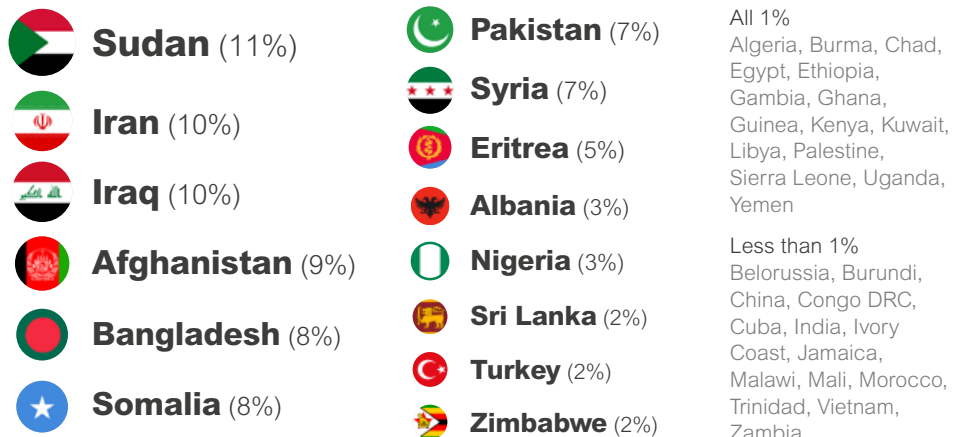
Impact Summary

Status in the UK of our Members



Based on monitoring all members who visited us during 1 week in March 2018

Country of origin of new Members



Gender of our Members



27% of members identify with having physical or mental additional needs.

1

Providing a community hub for appropriate services to those most in need

I am glad to be part of this Centre.
It makes me feel like I'm home



Welcome Centre

Was open 3 days a week,
47 weeks/year

9,772 visits made
in total

207 came through the
doors each week

411 new members
visited from
44 different countries

Regular drop-in sessions
provided by Stand Against
Racism & Inequality, ACH Himilo,
The Haven, British Red Cross,
Fountain Solicitors, Inner
City Health Improvement
Team, Assertive Contact and
Engagement Service



Pride Without Borders

26 Pride Without Borders
sessions held

15 LGBT+ members
regularly attended

Early Years Project



4 sessions per week

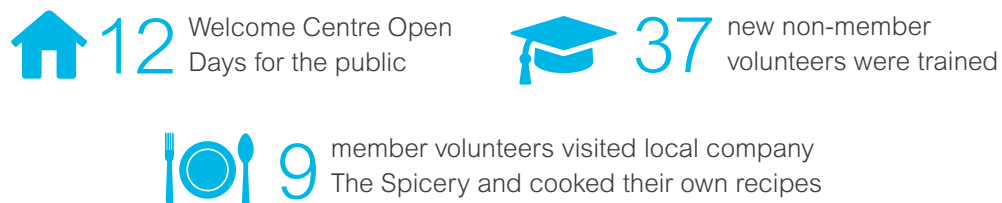
49 new children registered
with the project

113 different children
have benefitted

1,265 visits in total with
an average of
27 child places used each week

2 Asylum seekers and refugees better integrated into Bristol

I'm happy with BRR Centre because I get more support and I feel better now, thanks BRR



English classes

299 students attended classes

138 new students were assessed and registered for English classes

69 students moved up at least one level

17 classes each week, 44 weeks of the year

64 certificates of attendance were awarded

Coding lessons in computer classes for first time



Early Years

Continued to develop partnership with St Pauls Children's Centre

Family Support Worker sessions were embedded into our Thursday lunch sessions, providing support and sign posting to local Children's Centre services

Bristol Library Service donated dual language books for families

3 Being a member-led organisation

BRR is an important part of my life

40 new member volunteers trained

20 different members have participated in the monthly Member Consultation Group

4 Trustees out of 11 were of refugee background



86 members volunteered with different BRR projects over the year (+ 123 non-member volunteers)

12 members volunteered as community interpreters in 11 different languages

4 Asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol have improved wellbeing

Thank you for all the services for my depression and anxiety. Also for looking after my daughter. I have no-one else but BRR is everything

67% said BRR's most important service was a place to meet people



95% said that coming to the Welcome Centre makes them feel better

Early Years Project



Staff received training from Children's Scrapstore to improve outdoor provision

'Parent Ambassadors' used to promote outdoor play and communicate with parents

5

Reducing the impact of poverty and destitution for asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol

I am very happy with BRR, the service is good and I get lots of support with food and clothes. Great hospitality



92 meals cooked and served every week



40 people used the free shop weekly



21 bags of food & toiletries given to destitute members weekly



22 people had their hair cut each weekly

6

The human rights of asylum seekers and refugees are promoted and protected

I always look forward to coming to the Welcome Centre because all the volunteers and workers know my name and call me by my name and it makes me feel special and puts a smile on my face. And I am given advice and support not only on my asylum matters but other things I face personally as well. Thank you



Advocacy & Information Desk (AID)

389 members were assisted during 985 interviews

84 destitute people received support and information

94% said since going to AID they have felt more supported

88% said AID helped them to understand the asylum process



Asylum Support Project

139 members were supported by the project

66 people were awarded people awarded basic Home Office support

8 volunteers passed Pre Action Protocol training to work on new project in 2018/19

13 appeals – all of which were successful!

92% said they found the information received useful



Community Engagement

Promoted human rights through members being central to Human Rights Day 2017 attended by 89 people

29 members spoke at **35** public events

Members spoke at various events during Bristol Refugee Festival

Animated films project with Bath Spa University

External Training

With St Pauls Children's Centre delivered joint training session to other Children's Centre managers

Provided training to Homestart and City of Bristol College about impact of being an asylum seeker/refugee on young children

Trained doctors of tomorrow on understanding asylum seeker and refugee lives and experiences

BRR volunteer interpreters trained medical students in good use of interpreters

Contributed stories to Social Workers Without Borders book

Safety



Aliya

Aliya is a young mother who was isolated when she first came to the UK. She had no experience of English and she lacked confidence. She received formal schooling in her home country only up to age 13. Despite these challenges she was determined to make a good life for her son. Her support worker introduced her to BRR. Aliya said that joining BRR was like, "opening the door to friendship."

At first she was very nervous about trusting anyone but that changed. She said "I thought Bujar wouldn't be safe without me. Then after spending time here I saw the security, the love, care and equality and how you treat and care for all the children here. This is the best place to start trusting people to take care of my son. It is a lovely and safe place."

With her son settled she then enrolled in BRR's computer class; although she had never used a computer in her life. Her only access to technology had been through a smart phone. She wanted to learn because she felt it was the only way into future employment.

"The teachers were really helpful, good and patient at explaining things and helping me to start"

Within a year, Aliya has flourished. She has become a volunteer at BRR helping in the main hall which helps her with her English. She has developed computer skills through learning Word, UK email, PowerPoint, Excel and now is developing skills in Python and Java Script.

Solidarity



Imran

Often the image we have of people fleeing persecution is of young able people. But sometimes it is people who have had a long successful career in their own country who are forced to flee. Imran had worked in the police before becoming a successful film maker and his wife was a teacher. It was his filming role which forced him and his wife to leave their country when they might have been thinking about retirement.

They made a claim for asylum before arriving in Bristol. But their initial asylum claim was refused just before Christmas and they were faced with the likelihood of homelessness. This was in addition to Imran's wife being quite unwell following a serious stroke; she is now disabled. They had no funds left, no family in the UK, and no legal representation. As Christmas converts the time of year was especially important to them.

Despite there being just days until Christmas, Imran and his wife were able to seek help from the Advice and Advocacy team. Within one week the Advocates had obtained a legal aid funded lawyer who started a fresh claim. Our Asylum Support team, with the help of a second lawyer, prevented the eviction and secured their financial support.

Whilst their new asylum claim is still ongoing they have become part of the BRR community, Imran is volunteering every week. Whilst their life is not what they had planned (they had to watch their daughter's wedding on a mobile phone) the support BRR has given has provided them with strength to overcome the many unseen challenges.

Action for Change



Drita

Drita came to UK in 2014. She feared for her life and had seen others in her situation killed. She imagined that she would join her partner when she arrived in UK. But she was left stranded, alone in a foreign country unable to speak English. With a young child, she knew that learning English would be tricky but she found out about BRR's free drop in English classes with the essential childcare.

After 2 years of attending English lessons she went on an interpreting course run by BRR's VOICE Project. Soon after she started volunteering as an Albanian interpreter; helping other asylum seekers and refugees at the Welcome Centre. Next she went on a 6 week public speaking training course with VOICE Project. Her first public speaking experience was on December 10th: Human Rights Day 2016.

Since then Drita has spoken at 23 events including demonstrations, public meetings, newspaper and radio interviews and trainings for medical and social work students. She says,

"I never thought I would be able to do such things as interpreting or public speaking and especially in another language! It makes me feel I have some power within me."

Whilst her asylum claim is still ongoing all of these activities have kept Drita strong. She hopes that she will be able to go to University and wants to work for a charity which will help and support women who have experienced abuse.

Support us

Bristol Refugee Rights is a charity reliant on the support of our donors and funders. To set up a regular donation, make a one off donation, or fundraise for BRR, please visit: localgiving.com/charity/brr

£7 helps a destitute asylum seeker with food and toiletries for a week

£35 gives a disadvantaged child a safe place to play and learn whilst their parent obtains essential support

£100 supports an asylum seeker to have English language tuition for 6 months

Contact us

Bristol Refugee Rights
St Paul's Learning Centre
94 Grosvenor Road
Bristol
BS2 8XJ

☎ 0117 914 5480

✉ info@bristolrefugeerights.org

➦ bristolrefugeerights.org

🐦 [bristolrefugeer](https://twitter.com/bristolrefugeer)

f [bristolrefugeerights](https://www.facebook.com/bristolrefugeerights)

Registered Charity no: 1126646

Registered Company no: 5669208

Patrons: Canon Dr John Savage CBE and Caroline Beatty

Sign up to BRR's Supporter's Newsletter via our website

Partner feedback

I very much value the work that is done and the thoughtfulness that is brought to bear on the work

Trauma Foundation South West

Using the space at your Welcome Centre has been an incredible help for us. It is great to be able to share experiences

British Red Cross

Our funders

We want to say a huge thank you to all those who funded our work in 2017/2018 or donated to us (including those who prefer not to be named); to those who make regular donations, contributed to our Crowdfunders and those who regularly donate to our destitution supplies (Redland and Central Quakers; Church of the Latter Day Saints; St Bonaventures Church).



New Beginnings

A B Charitable Trust

Eddie Byers



Bar and Jim Maggs Charitable Trust

Thank You

To all those who have supported us and enabled BRR's activities in 2017/18, we would like to say a huge Thank You. In particular, Thank You to:

Partner organisations and those organisations who work with us

British Red Cross, Refugee Women of Bristol, Bristol Hospitality Network, Borderlands, Bristol Signing Support Group, Bristol City of Sanctuary, The Haven, Aid Box Community, Migrant Legal Project, Fountain Solicitors, St Paul's Nursery and Children Centre, St Paul's Learning Centre, Malcolm X Community Centre, Bath Spa University, Bristol ESOL and Employability Network, Scrapstore, Trauma Foundation South West, ACH Himilo, University of Bristol including The Botanical Gardens, International House, Orchard Community Nutrition, Books for Amnesty Bristol, Bristol Zoo, We the Curious, St George's Concert Hall, Stationery World, Deighton Peirce Glynn, Asylum Support Appeals Project, Fare Share, Breadstore, Bristol Bike Project, Coexist, Bristol Early Years Teaching Consortium, Bristol Library Service, Social Workers Without Borders, The Spicery, Stand Against Racism and Inequality, Avon and Bristol Law Centre, Barnardo's, 16-25 Independent People, Refugee Council, Cranfield Trust and Bristol Energy.

Individuals who have worked for us and with us

We employed 22 people at the end of 2017/18 and recruited 2 new roles during the year. A special thanks to those who helped provide cover during the year and staff who left during the year: Emily Tsang, Gillian Davies, Laura Todd and Mohammed Osman. Thank you also to Jess Bailey, Will Barnard, Julian Guy and Jane Emanuel.

Each and every one of our amazing volunteers

Our fantastic volunteers and member volunteers who give so much; those who teach and support the learning of members; those who give information, advice and support; those who make the Welcome Centre the lovely and supportive place it is; those who work with our youngest members and their families; our interpreters who are an invaluable resource for all our projects; Pride Without Borders volunteers for being so compassionate and flexible; those who help organise trips; those who help support fundraising and with social media; those who are Trustees; and those who help behind the scenes – there are too many of you to name!

Photography © Sally Collister & Andy Morgan. Design by Chris Woodward.