

Bristol Refugee Rights



Impact Report

2018/2019

Safety • **Solidarity** • **Action for Change**



Director's Introduction

"I am extremely proud of the progress we have made as an organisation and the impact we have had on individual lives"

Welcome to Bristol Refugee Rights' Impact Report for 2018/19. In 2019, BRR's doors have been open for 13 years. During that time BRR has developed into the largest provider of services to asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol. This is the final report relating to our 3 year Business Plan 2016-2019 and once again I am extremely proud of the progress we have made as an organisation and the impact we have had on individual lives.

At our AGM in 2018, Legal Members of BRR voted wholeheartedly in support of a change to our Charitable Objects, allowing for an expansion in our membership to include other migrants. This was in recognition of the fact that many other migrants are suffering from the hostile environment and face difficulties as a result of the potentially precarious nature of having any status other than British citizenship.

Following on from the constitutional change in 2018, we have developed a new vision for the organisation and a new Strategic Plan for 2019-2022. Throughout this report, we have sought to put the last year in the context of our plans for the future, as it helps to explain the decisions that we have made and our direction of travel.

Despite changes, BRR continues to be a place of solidarity and trust. We also continue to strive to be a member led organisation and to prioritise welcome, safety, wellbeing and equality. Services we provide are unique, holistic, complimentary and integrated. Our unique advice service continues to work alongside other services to prioritise preventing homelessness and destitution. In 2019 we reviewed our values as an organisation and agreed to adopt six going forward: Respect; Shared Humanity; Integrity; Collaboration; Empowerment; and Innovation.

I personally would like to say a huge thank you to all of the people that make BRR the amazing organisation that it is and without whom, the achievements of the last 3 years would not have been possible: staff, volunteers, trustees, members, partners, funders and supporters.

Beth Wilson, Director

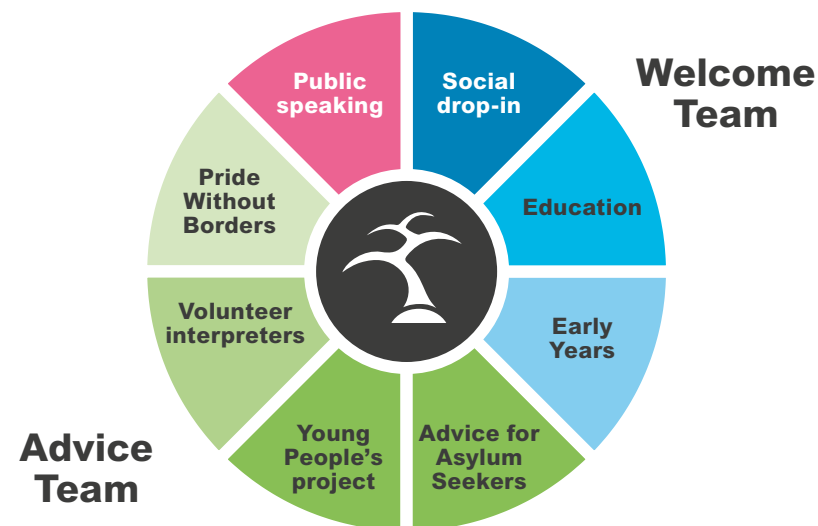


A Year of Change

Over the year we reorganised services into two teams: Welcome and Advice. This was in recognition of the equal importance of both elements to our service delivery.

As project funding came to an end, we took the opportunity to change the names of some services - simplifying the names and making sure they clearly describe what they are doing. That's why BRILL has become Education and, instead of Advocacy and information desk and Asylum Support Project we now have one Advice Team.

We added a new project to our services in November 2018 – our Young People's project. The aim of this project is to work in innovative ways with young people and the local authority to achieve better long term outcomes for 16-25 year olds with insecure immigration status.



Early Action

We believe we can significantly reduce the crises experienced by people in the asylum system by reaching them as early as possible in their asylum journey, and as soon as possible when problems arise.

Over the year we became a partner in a national project: The Early Action Charter Programme. Working with Refugee Action and six other local charities across England, we are transforming the way we support people through the asylum process. We want to ensure that people seeking asylum are able to navigate the asylum application process more confidently, by having information and resources as early as possible and by continuing to offer good quality and timely advice.

Our overall aim is early identification of need. Members will be able to access the right service at the right time. That means being proactive rather than reactive; focusing on prevention, de-escalation and identifying and learning from interventions that have the most impact.

The Early Action Principles



Participatory
Service Design



Experimentation



Services
that Empower



Belief in
Long-Term
Change



Collaboration



Chair's Report

“A combination of determined fundraising and restructuring of our services has meant that we have been able to continue our work for asylum-seekers, refugees and other migrants in precarious situations”

This has been a challenging year for Bristol Refugee Rights and for the charity sector as a whole. We faced a difficult funding environment alongside increased demands on our services. Although things have looked daunting at times, I am proud to be able to say that under the leadership of our Director, Beth Wilson, our members, volunteers, staff and supporters, have done a superb job in pulling us through.

We faced a particular threat to our advice services, including the unique service we offer in the area of asylum support. I am pleased to say that a combination of determined fundraising and restructuring of our services has meant that we have been able to continue our work for asylum-seekers, refugees and – thanks to having expanded our aims at the last AGM - other migrants in precarious situations.

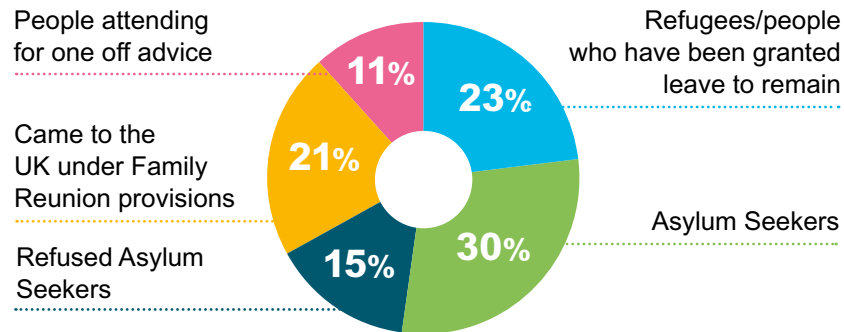
In partnership with our members and staff, we have adopted a new Vision and Strategic Plan for 2019-22. This stresses participation, inclusion, the delivery of high-quality services, whilst giving voice to the concerns of members and enabling them to access their rights and entitlements. Our innovative Early Years Project, which does so much to help the children of our members overcome the disadvantages they face, received a positive OFSTED report in February and the team there deserve our congratulations. We continued to do great things through classes, through public speaking and interpreters, and through our ground-breaking Pride Without Borders project; in addition to providing a place of safety and welcome for members every week.

Finally, we need to say a big thank you to those trustees and staff who have moved on after years of dedicated service. In particular, Tony Jaffray who led our advocacy services for several years. We wish him well for the future. We would also like to thank long-term trustees: Richard Henderson and James Jatta, who have stepped down from the Board. New people have joined the Board: Mano Candappa, Natasha Carver, Christina Stokes and Maria Williams who bring a range of expertise from education, law and finance.

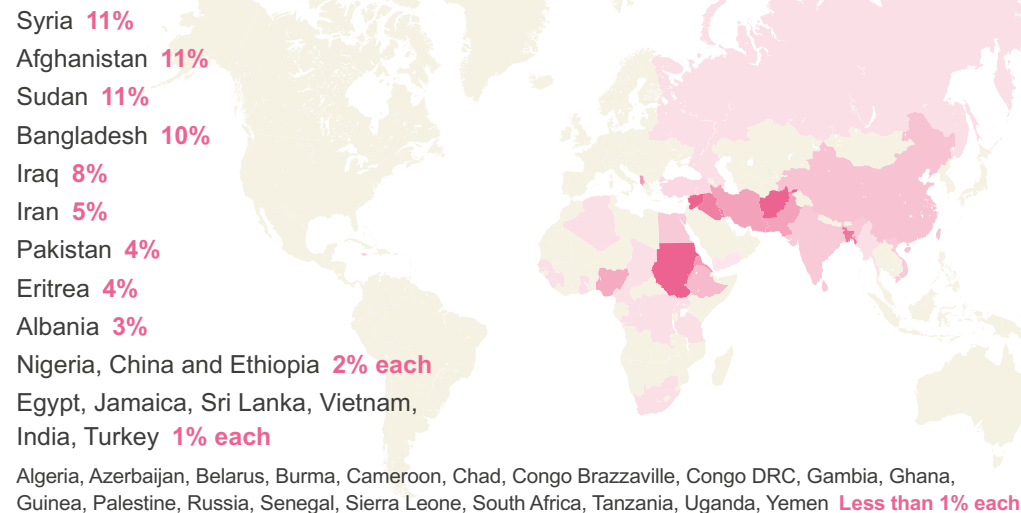
Chris Bertram, Chair of Trustees

Impact Summary

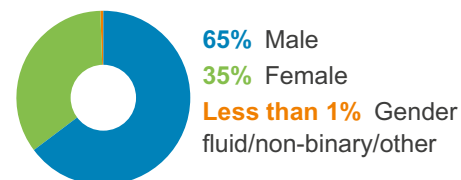
Status in the UK of our Members *



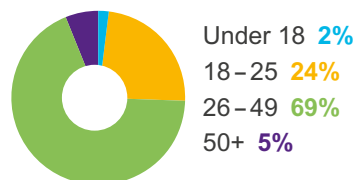
Country of Origin of new Members **



Gender of our Members **



Ages of our Members **



*Based on monitoring all members who visited us during 1 week in March 2019

**Based on new members who joined BRR during 2018-19

1

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



Welcome Centre

Open 3 days a week

49 weeks of the year

10,459 visits

made by 1147 different people

428 new members

visited from at least 46 different countries

213 people

came through the doors each week



of members said that they found it easy to get the support they needed at the Welcome Centre



Pride Without Borders

41 members

attended meetings
(with an average of
15 attending each meeting)



Early Years Project (EYP)

4 sessions

on average per week

190 sessions

held in total

94 children

benefitted from the project including
55 who registered for the first time

34 children

attended regularly

4 regular volunteers

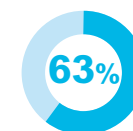
and 6 key staff

OFSTED inspection

February 2019 confirmed that the
EYP continues to meet the requirements
of the Voluntary Childcare Register

Parents are able to reserve
a guaranteed space

1 x per week



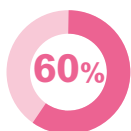
of members using the crèche
also rely on staff and volunteers
for advice and support

"I really appreciate all your help and support"

2 Asylum seekers and refugees are better integrated into Bristol



Welcome Centre



of members found more information about other support services or activities through BRR



Education

13 classes per week

for 44 weeks per year (Pre-entry to Entry 3, IELTS and computer)

369 members

engaged with our Education programme (classes/trips/partnership courses)

275 students

in total attended classes / 168 new students during the year



of students said coming to classes made them feel more confident speaking English



of students said that our Education programme has helped them to go to College



Early Years Project

74% of people

using the crèche said that it helps prepare their child for nursery or school

Referrals to Home-Start and Baby-Bank this year mean more families are having access to support and equipment they need

Two Family Support Workers

from Central Bristol Children's Centre continue to come to weekly 'Families Together' sessions in the main hall, providing additional support and referrals to parents



Employment Pathways Project

49 individuals

visited at least 1 employer to find out what work is like in the UK

99 different individuals

benefitted from the project

3 Being a member led organisation



BRR has a Board of Trustees made up of a maximum of 12 elected Trustees



of Trustees are of asylum seeker, refugee or migrant background

A Member (beneficiary) Consultation Group are consulted each month on governance and operational issues. Their views are fed into the decision making process.

21 members

have participated in monthly Member Consultation Group Meetings

23 new member volunteers

were trained

61 members

volunteered with different BRR projects during the year (+ 85 non-member volunteers) including 1 regular volunteer in the advice team of refugee background.

18 members

volunteered as community interpreters in 11 different languages

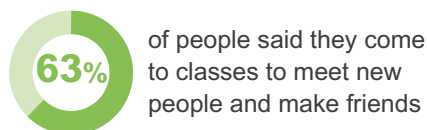
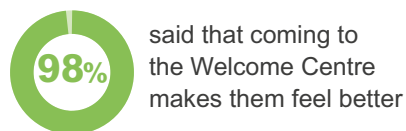
Hassan's story

Before Hassan claimed asylum he studied and worked as an engineer in the UK. However on a visit to his home country he was imprisoned and tortured. He managed to return to the UK and claimed asylum. This meant he could no longer work or rent a house. He and his wife and children were made homeless and were housed in temporary accommodation by Bristol City Council. It took over a year to get the accommodation for asylum seekers that they were entitled to. This caused a lot of problems for the family; they went through some desperate times.

When Hassan found out about BRR he signed up as a volunteer interpreter; he also joined the public speaker training course which helped him gain back some confidence. Now that he has been granted refugee status he is able to work again and started to earn his own livelihood.

"I came to BRR when my case was refused. Since I joined my life has got better; I understand my options. Although I am an educated person ... I did not understand my rights at all in this country. I was so happy to find something to be able to help others, be busy, and use my skills. If I had known about this support earlier, I think my life would have been absolutely different. Thank you BRR."

4 Asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol have improved wellbeing



Therapeutic massages
for members weekly by volunteers

Weekly yoga classes
in partnership with Yoga Roots

What difference does Member Volunteering make?

- 44% made new friends
- 43% improved confidence
- 39% learnt new skills
- 35% were able to keep busy
- 33% improved their English
- 15% said it had helped them to get a job

Mukhtar's story

BRR's Young People's Immigration Project (YPIP) met Mukhtar when he was 17. He had recently arrived in the UK. He felt very alone separated from all of his family. Unfortunately the Local Authority did not believe he was under 18. They denied him access to the care and support he was entitled to, including a social worker and safe place to live.

Mukhtar's YPIP Caseworker supported him to find a solicitor. With the help of an interpreter he was able to communicate what he needed. BRR helped him understand the complex legal system and the process for claiming asylum. They helped him challenge his age assessment and won!

Mukhtar's YPIP Caseworker arranged a mentor who helped him get to know the city. His Caseworker supports him to attend the YPIP Wellbeing Group where he learns different tools and skills to manage his emotions.

Mukhtar did not know if any of his family were still alive. His YPIP Caseworker linked him up with Red Cross' family tracing service. They helped him search for his lost family and amazingly, Mukhtar was reunited with his two brothers. They are all now living in Bristol and see each other regularly. BRR's YPIP Caseworker said:

"It has been fantastic to see the transformation in Mukhtar. Initially he was very anxious and depressed. Now that Mukhtar is supported and feels safe in Bristol he often greets me with a beaming smile on his regular visits to the Welcome Centre."

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



95 cooked meals*
served each week



15 people*
had their hair cut each week



18 food bags*
given out each week,
including:



26 people*
used the free shop each week



3.9 tonnes of food
received from Fareshare,
with estimated retail
value of £6236, saving
1.5 tonnes of CO₂



400 bus tickets
distributed to access appointments
and report at Patchway police
station – a result of a partnership
with City of Sanctuary and First Bus

Regular drop in sessions provided by:



*Figures given are averages

Partner feedback

'Especially since the cuts in Legal Aid and also the diminishing number of immigration lawyers, the BRR advisory teams are a unique source of expert, reliable and sensitive support.' **Bristol Signing Support**

'BRR is a lifeline for asylum seekers in Bristol... They deliver a very professional service, and are great partners to work with. There is no other organisation able to fill the gap.' **Borderlands**

'No other local organisation has the same level of experience in providing wrap around practical and emotional support together with an expertise in asylum issues. The services at BRR are extremely well managed and all the systems have been designed with very rigorous regular service reviews.'

Anne James, Bristol City Council

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



Advice

450 individual members
assisted through individual appointments

1339 individual
appointments carried out

90% of people who used
Advice felt supported

92% of people assisted
better understand the asylum process

49% of people received
referrals to other services

30% needed help with a legal
matter relating to their
immigration status

18% needed help with
health services

33% needed advice about
housing, finance, or to
prevent or end destitution

'There is no other group doing what BRR do in the South West. They plug the lacuna. Their services are absolutely vital and specialist.' Deighton Pierce Glynn

BRR gained
OISC level 3
accreditation in Asylum



Public speaking

8 members

trained in public speaking

Over 1,000 people

heard a BRR member speak
about their experiences of
claiming asylum in the UK

9 members spoke at

14 public events

Human rights were promoted
and members spoke to media for
campaigning and fundraising purposes

New 2 year project started working
with young people subject to
immigration control. The project works
with young people with insecure
immigration status to access good
quality legal support in a way they
can understand. We work closely
with Refugee Council Children's
Panel Advisor.

A look into the future

In 2018/19, we reviewed our vision and mission statement.
Our new vision and aims for 2019–22 better represent the context
we are working in and what we are currently trying to achieve.

Our New Vision

A society where refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are welcomed,
feel safe, live free of poverty and are able to positively build their lives.
A society where everyone's rights and entitlements are respected.

We've adopted 3 new Aims and Ways of Working to help us achieve our Vision



Early Action

We work in partnership with
others to combat poverty and
destitution and to promote
social and legal justice; our
focus is on preventing and
de-escalating crises



Empower

We empower people;
promote inclusion and
equality of opportunity
through the breaking
down of societal
barriers

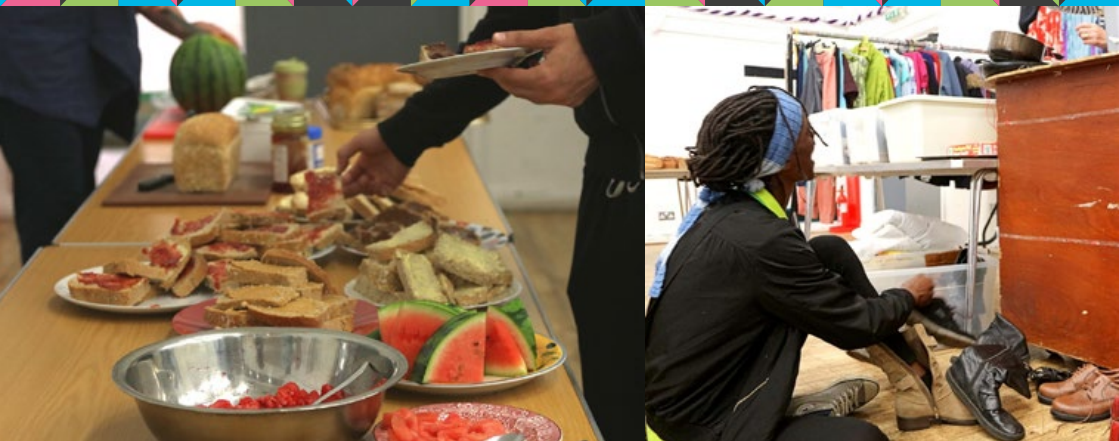


Advocacy

We challenge individual
and systemic injustices;
we aim to ensure the rights
and entitlements of asylum
seekers, refugees and
migrants are respected

We've also adopted 6 new Strategic Priorities for 2019–2022:

- 1 Participation:** Everyone will have the opportunity to take part.
- 2 Quality:** A hub of high quality and specialised services.
- 3 Partnership:** We will work together to achieve the best outcomes.
- 4 Inclusion:** Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants will have improved opportunities in their communities and society.
- 5 Voice:** Asylum seekers, refugees and migrant voices will be heard.
- 6 Rights and entitlements:** Services will be provided to those who need support.



Support us

As a charity we rely 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

£5

pays the volunteer expenses of an interpreter to support members to access BRR services

£20

enables an LGBT+ member to attend a Pride Without Borders meeting and get vital and unique support

£75

funds an advice appointment for an asylum seeker at which they can gain a better understanding about the asylum process

“They have been so helpful to me and the staff here are so welcoming and friendly. Great place to be.”

Contact us

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

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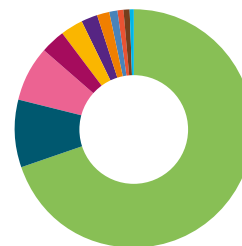
Sign up to BRR's Supporter's Newsletter via our website.

Financial Review

BRR's total income in 2018/19 was £575,250 (an increase of £86,838 compared to the previous year). This includes restricted funding raised with the purpose of using it in 2019/20. BRR's total expenditure in 2018/19 was £490,286 (an increase of £76,356 compared to the previous year).

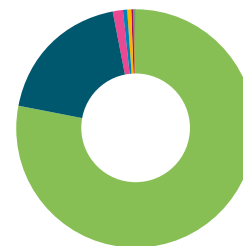
Most of our funding came from trusts, foundations, and Bristol City Council, while close to one fifth of income came from individual donations, subscriptions and gift aid.

Expenditure



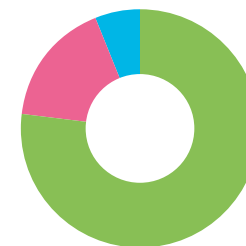
Staff costs (including training and recruitment) **£342,994**
 Premises costs **£44,763**
 Overheads **£37,094**
 Computer and internet expenses **£15,838**
 Interpreting **£15,249**
 Fundraising **£10,462**
 Evaluation **£7,667**
 Food and drink **£6,207**
 Training **£3,638**
 Hardship payments **£3,607**
 Governance **£2,767**

Income



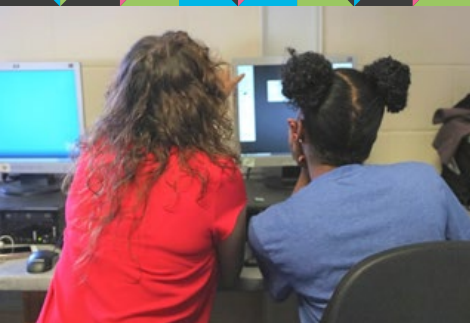
Grants **£449,394**
 Subscriptions and donations **£109,780**
 Charitable activities **£7,861**
 Gift Aid **£3,528**
 Rental Income **£2,767**
 Bank Interest **£1,064**
 Membership fees **£450**
 Hardship fund donations **£406**

For every £1 donated



Delivering services **77p**
 Support costs **17p**
 Fundraising **6p**

Further detail on 2018/19 finances can be found in our Annual Accounts 2018/19, which are submitted to the Charity Commission and are freely available on our website.



Thank You

Thank You to all the dedicated volunteers, to the generous donors and many more people who made the delivery of a wide range of services possible over the year!

In particular we would like to extend thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund and Henry Smith Charity who funded key services for many years. Those grants ended in March 2019.

Over the year, BRR employed 26 staff [with a maximum of 21 at any one time] and 146 volunteers [61 member volunteers and 85 non-member volunteers]. Thank you to you all!

Our Funders



A B Charitable Trust



The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust



Thank you to all the donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Partner Organisations

Thank you to all the organisations in Bristol and other parts of England, who have worked with us over the year to deliver quality services.

Photography by **Andy Morgan** and **Bnar Sardar**.

Cover illustration by **Karrie Fransman** first published by 'Draw The Line' 2017.