

Bristol Refugee Rights

Safety – Solidarity – Action for Change

Strategic Plan

2022-2027

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Bristol Refugee Rights: Strategic Plan 2022-2027 – on a page

Our 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.

Our Goals – 2022-27

Our Goals set out the sort of organisation we want to be and our framework for designing and delivering services:

Goal 1: Ensure services are impactful, accessible and designed to meet our participants' needs

- By 2027 we will offer a manageable range of welcoming, empowering and trauma informed services, which are: unique and transformative; help us achieve our vision and purpose; and deliver sustainable impact.

Goal 2: Empower and work in solidarity with people with Lived Experience

- By 2027 we will have representation by people with lived experience at all levels of the organisation; empowering services will be designed and delivered together with people with Lived Experience.

Goal 3: Be sustainable and invest in the wellbeing and resilience of our people and organisation

- By 2027 we will have invested in skills and wellbeing to ensure our people are resilient; we will have fit for purpose premises and sufficient funding to achieve our purpose.

Goal 4: Use partnerships to increase impact and resilience

- By 2027 we will be at the centre of a sustainable, impactful and resilient local refugee sector partnership (BRASP) working together to meet the needs of the local asylum seeker and migrant population.

Goal 5: Raise our profile to influence others

- By 2027 we will be recognised as a local sector leader; have worked with others to positively influence the asylum and immigration system and to create a more equitable system.

Our Vision:

Our aspiration for the future:

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.

Our Purpose:

Why we exist and what impact we want to have:

Safety – Solidarity – Action for Change:

- ② **More refugees, asylum seekers and people with insecure immigration status are able to positively build their lives in the UK;**
- ② We are an independent, accountable, purpose and value led, sustainable organisation;
- ② We promote equality, diversity and inclusion; we promote the rights and entitlements of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with insecure immigration status;
- ② We promote system change and the breaking down of societal barriers;
- ② We work in empowering ways and integrate lived experience throughout our organisation;
- ② We work in solidarity and partnership with others to combat poverty and destitution and to promote social and legal justice.

Values:

Our values shape what we do and how we do it:

Respect: We are committed to equality and treating everyone fairly.

Shared humanity: We are all human beings; we are all global citizens.

Integrity: We have strong moral principles and act in the interests of people we work with.

Collaboration: We build, support and encourage partnerships between individuals, teams and organisations.

Empowerment: We encourage people to be stronger, more confident and to claim their rights.

Innovation: We are adaptable, respond to the changing world around us and strive to be the best we can.

BRR is committed to tackling inequality and discrimination and to being anti-racist.

A Note on Language:

Participant: includes those who will “participate in” or receive services, including those who choose to be “members”, going forward, a special category of participant, which recognises a relationship which is more reciprocal than that of a service user.

Lived Experience: includes people with direct experience of forced migration, of being a refugee, asylum seeker or migrant with insecure immigration status; we also use the language of **Experts by Experience**.

Stakeholders: we use this to refer to all who work with us i.e. staff, volunteers, trustees, participants, members, partners.

About Bristol Refugee Rights (BRR):

Bristol Refugee Rights is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. BRR was formed in 2006 by asylum seekers, refugees and professionals with the aim of filling a gap in services, being a place of welcome and safety. Since 2006, BRR has developed into the largest local provider of services to asylum seekers and refugees in Bristol and continues to grow in size and capacity in response to need.

- ☐ *BRR is a place of solidarity and trust.*
- ☐ *Being lived experience led is fundamental; people with lived experience are encouraged and supported to participate, challenge and lead throughout the organisation.*
- ☐ *BRR services are holistic, complementary and integrated.*
- ☐ *BRR promotes wellbeing and trauma informed approaches.*

Many BRR services are unique in Bristol: an Advice Service for asylum seekers; an Early Years Project for pre-school children and their parents; an LGBTQ+ support group. BRR works in partnership: convening city-wide meetings, bringing organisations together and working strategically to meet the needs of members and tackle the causes of the problems they face. BRR is a founding partner in the Asylum Early Action Charter: an innovative approach to designing and delivering services to help people in the asylum system before they reach crisis.

Who we work with:

In 2018, our Charitable Objects were broadened to enable us to work with migrants as well as asylum seekers and refugees. We purposely did not define “migrants”, recognising that any and all migrants have rights and entitlements which we may support them to secure and

providing us with the flexibility to change services in response to changes in law, capacity and need.

Why we do what we do:

Asylum seekers, refugees and increasingly other types of migrants face poor treatment in the UK and their rights and entitlements are increasingly difficult to secure. The hostile environment represents a package of measures designed to make life hard.

Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are assets to our country and deserve our welcome and solidarity.

Running the organisation:

- BRR has a Board of Trustees made up of a maximum of 12 elected Trustees; we aim to have 50% of the Trustees with lived experience of being a refugee or migrant.
- Trustees are elected from and by legal members – people who have completed a legal member form and paid an annual subscription.
- A participant (lived experience service user) consultation group are consulted each month on governance and operational issues.
- BRR has a comprehensive list of policies which are an active part of governance and running of the organisation.
- BRR is a Living Wage Employer.
- Bristol Refugee Rights is run by a Chief Executive Officer who is supported by a Strategic Management Team. A staff team of 27 (16.5 FTE) works with volunteers to deliver front line services.
- Policies are drafted in consultation with staff and where relevant, with participants and volunteers. Policies are reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees at least every 3 years.
- A Lived Experience Participation Strategy sets out how we meet our aim to be lived experience-led.

- Risks are managed through BRR's Risk Register which is regularly reviewed by Trustees.

Our charitable objects include:

- The provision of information, advice and support;
- Helping and protecting those with physical and mental health conditions;
- Public education about the issues facing our members;
- The provision of recreation or leisure activities;
- Education and training; and
- Promotion of human rights.

Based on a range of factors including need, availability of other services, our Vision, Purpose and Values, we currently prioritise the needs of those without immigration status, those with precarious immigration status and those who are destitute. Services are designed in line with our Objects and taking into consideration the original aim of the organisation to fill gaps where other services do not exist or are unable to meet the specific needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

The insights we used to inform this plan:

- ✓ We have listened to and learned from our stakeholders
- ✓ We have thought about the internal and external context and how these things are likely to change over the next 5 years
- ✓ We have thought about what will keep our organisation resilient and about the type of organisation we want to be

- ✓ We have used our learning from the past – about need, about ourselves, our impact
- ✓ We have thought about what we must continue to do and why
- ✓ We have thought about doing new or different things that would increase our impact

Context

The political environment is and is expected to continue to be increasingly hostile to people seeking asylum and to migrants generally. Brexit has created a new category of migrants who are highly vulnerable to the hostile environment. Climate change has the potential to create another new category of migrant and new migrant routes. The 2021 Nationality and Borders Bill aims to further restrict the rights of asylum seekers in the UK and to make people insecure and reliant on charity for longer periods.

COVID-19 has had a fundamental and long lasting impact on society, organisations, people and their wellbeing; the digital and financial divide has significantly increased. Black Lives Matter (BLM) has affected how the world sees people and operates and has led to an increased commitment across society to tackling inequality.

Despite recent international events which have led to an outpouring of support for refugees and migrants (Afghan crisis, channel deaths, BLM etc), considerable hostility is apparent from the media and general public. As a welcoming City of Sanctuary, increasingly recognised for its good practice by both voluntary and statutory organisations, Bristol's asylum and refugee population has significantly expanded and is likely to continue to do so.

Internally, we have observed people presenting with increasingly acute and complex needs. Participants present with a range of issues:

- Food and financial poverty and homelessness
- Poor physical and mental health
- Uncertainty

- Problems directly caused by the “hostile environment”
- Social Isolation and loneliness
- Education – particularly a lack of English

Our Goals – 2022-27: Our Five Goals set out the sort of organisation we want to be and our framework for designing and delivering services

Goal 1: Ensure services are impactful, accessible and designed to meet our participants’ needs

By 2027 we will offer a manageable range of welcoming, empowering and trauma informed services, which are: unique and transformative; help us achieve our vision and purpose; and deliver sustainable impact.

We will know we achieved our Goal if:

- ✓ Our services are designed to accommodate the individual needs of participants who reflect the diversity of the asylum-seeking population of Bristol
- ✓ We have an access point which supports services which are unique, in depth, transformative and designed to meet need
- ✓ Each participant receives a service which is delivered in a trauma informed way
- ✓ At least 75% of the participants we support, report being empowered and having improved wellbeing
- ✓ There is a 50% increase in the number of participants receiving in depth / specialist services

What will help us achieve this:

- A service delivery model which delivers sustainable impact whilst achieving our vision and purpose
- Services and capacity being resilient to changing external factors
- Refining and formalising our approach to eligibility for services and membership of the organisation
- A tier/levels model for delivering different types of support which will ensure and enable access to specialist services whilst maintaining a social interaction offer

Goal 2: Empower and work in solidarity with people with Lived Experience

By 2027 we will have representation by people with lived experience at all levels of the organisation; empowering services will be designed and delivered together with people with Lived Experience.

We will know we achieved our Goal if:

- ✓ Our policies, staff, volunteers, and trustees proactively support the engagement and professional development of people with Lived Experience from diverse backgrounds as in Goal 1
- ✓ 40% of new staff and 25% of line managers have lived experience of being a refugee in the UK or of forced migration
- ✓ 50% of trustees and volunteers have lived experience of being a refugee in the UK or of forced migration
- ✓ An annual budget of 1% of turnover to support the professional development of people with lived experience through education and training
- ✓ An embedded model for participant engagement in the organisation ensures meaningful and representative engagement, voice and influence

What will help us achieve this:

- Services being designed and delivered together with people who are “Experts by Experience”.
- The types of services and the way they are delivered being welcoming, empowering, accessible, in solidarity and professional.
- Engagement of lived experience in all areas of our work, and representation at all levels of the organisation including leadership and governance.

- Systems for data gathering and analysis which enable us to understand who is using our services and address gaps and concerns

Goal 3: Be sustainable and invest in the wellbeing and resilience of our people and organisation

By 2027 we will have invested in skills and wellbeing to ensure our people are resilient; we will have fit for purpose premises and sufficient funding to achieve our purpose.

We will know we achieved our Goal if:

- ✓ Our funding strategy is robust and ethical, our premises are sound, accessible to and supportive of people of all abilities and needs; staff and volunteers can confidently and confidentially raise issues of concern, and issues are swiftly addressed
- ✓ 90% of staff and volunteers report good wellbeing, feeling valued and feeling that they have a valuable contribution to make
- ✓ An annual budget of 1% of turnover to support the professional development of people with lived experience through education and training
- ✓ Fundraising secures the annual budget set by Trustees, any additional income identified by Trustees as needed to meet the organisations vision, purpose and reserve level designated by trustees
- ✓ Staff, volunteers and members report premises are fit for purpose and support sustainable service delivery

What will help us achieve this:

- Our own premises or secure rented premises with sufficient space and facilities appropriate to people of all abilities
- Investment in professional development to ensure a range of experiences and knowledge (including lived experience) is at the forefront of leadership roles, decision making and delivery.

- A functioning membership model which enables engagement, participation, power and leadership for Experts by Experience
- A reporting system embodying transparency and accountability on EDI to our Trustees and participants

Goal 4: Use partnerships to increase impact and resilience

By 2027 we will be at the centre of a sustainable, impactful and resilient local refugee sector partnership (BRASP) working together to meet the needs of the local asylum seeker and migrant population.

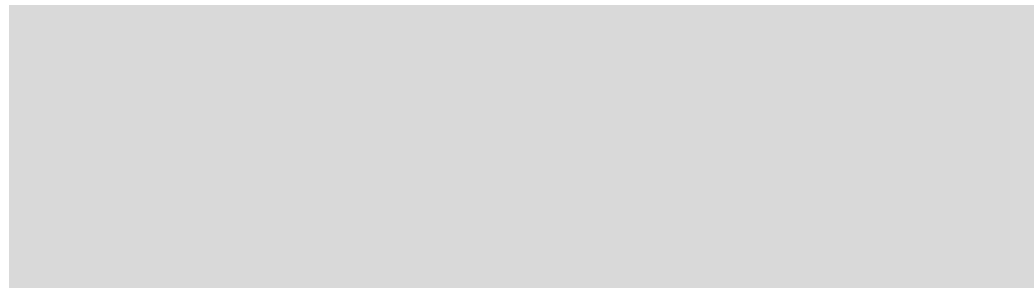
We will know we achieved our Goal if:

- ✓ We develop and sustain equitable partnerships with diverse refugee sector bodies including those led by equalities organisations
- ✓ Statutory and non-statutory partner agencies consider us a leading partner in Bristol Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership (BRASP), know and recognise us for good practice locally and nationally and see us as a credible and trusted authority
- ✓ 20% of funding results from partnerships which are impactful and enable us to achieve our vision and purpose
- ✓ Statutory and non-BRASP services understand the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants and take active steps to improve their service response

What will help us achieve this:

- Prioritising partnerships which lead to better, more effective and efficient services, formalised pathways, joined up and rounded approaches
- We take a lead role in BRASP working towards a common purpose and to meeting the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants
- Statutory and non-BRASP services are held to account
- BRR having a clear “Unique Selling Point” within BRASP and the city
- Prioritising equitable partnerships with organisations led by equalities groups

- Organisational structure and operational processes highly functioning and aligned with this strategy.
- Well-functioning, resilient Board, staff team and volunteers with necessary skills and capacity
- An appropriate induction and ongoing training programme for Board members, staff and volunteers which promotes a learning culture in relation to EDI and a system for reporting EDI concerns



Goal 5: Raise our profile to influence others

By 2027 we will be recognised as a local sector leader; have worked with others to positively influence the asylum and immigration system and to create a more equitable system.

We will know we achieved our Goal if:

- ✓ 25% increase in social media/website traffic from 2022 to 2027
- ✓ 25% of income generated through unrestricted individual/corporate giving
- ✓ Tangible change in policy / practice at a local level attributable to our advocacy and interventions
- ✓ Positive feedback from stakeholders and funders about our impact and expertise
- ✓ We take regular opportunities to raise the profile of EDI and anti-racism within our work, and to emphasise this in our dealings with our participants and external stakeholders

What will help us achieve this:

- Working with others to achieve system change
- Staff, volunteers and trustees being confident ambassadors for the organisation, for Bristol Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership (BRASP) and for our influencing priorities. Staff having time and space to progress influencing priorities

How we will measure success:

- ❓ *Our Vision, Purpose, Ways of Working, Values and Strategic Goals are used to plan services and monitor their impact.*
- ❓ *Participant consultation and feedback is key to measuring and monitoring impact of services.*

Our Goals set out the key things we want to achieve by 2027. An Action Plan (available on request) sets out in more detail the activities we will carry out to achieve our Goals and how we will measure our progress.

An Organisational Action Plan for achieving our Goals and Priorities is developed annually and used to inform team and individual staff member work plans and to monitor progress. The Board of Trustees receives reports every 6 months on progress and we publish an annual Impact Report. This Strategic Plan is reviewed and updated by the Board of Trustees annually.

Tools:

Measures of our progress in relation to this Strategic Plan include:

- An Organisational Success Indicators framework
- Information that must be reported to the Board of Trustees and the regularity of those reports e.g. Quarterly Management Accounts

- Representing the sector (BRASP) locally and sitting on city wide decision making meetings
- Communication and Digital strategies which clearly set out our priorities and approach
- Clear EDI Policy and Procedure and operational and governance structures which enable organisational focus on EDI and accountability

- Impact Monitoring (see page 10 below)
- Policies, procedures and risk assessments
- Human Resources policies, processes and reports
- Meeting minutes
- Specific strategies which flow from this document e.g. Communication Strategy

Ways of Working

Our Ways of Working are embedded across the whole organisation; they connect what we do and how we do things with the principles in our strapline of Safety – Solidarity – Action for Change.



We use an **EARLY ACTION** approach to working with asylum seekers, refugees and migrants; we focus on preventing and de-escalating crises through the provision of good quality, early advice, support and information using methods which build resilience, support networks and well-being; as an organisation we provide stability and strive for sustainability.

We **EMPOWER** asylum seekers, refugees and migrants by giving them information and confidence to access their rights and entitlements and to build their lives; asylum seekers, refugees and migrants have opportunities to develop and share their talents; we provide support for them to learn and develop personal and professional transferable skills through a range of opportunities both within and outside of the organisation.

We use **ADVOCACY** to challenge injustice for individuals, and for all asylum seekers, refugees and migrants; members will receive high quality and timely advice aimed at achieving their rights and entitlements and a fair outcome; we lead and support campaigns for better treatment and for a fairer society; we never accept the status quo.

Partnerships

BRR works in partnership to learn from others, provide the best service to our participants and because it will make us more sustainable. To the partnerships we are part of, we bring: knowledge, experience and expertise; an ability and aspiration to make the partnership a success; organisational infrastructure; and our unique services and approach to being lived experience led.

We prioritise partnerships which are:

- **Impactful** – they help us achieve our Strategic Plan, are within our charitable objects and are beneficial to our participants; they help us be better at what we do or our services to reach more people in need.
- **Able to generate income, preferably unrestricted** – unrestricted income provides us with flexibility and security; we want to enter into partnerships which will help us reduce costs, give us greater access to funding and improve our fundraising capacity.
- **Strategic** – strategic relationships and partnerships have the potential to be more impactful; we may advocate with greater authority when connected with groups of or larger organisations.

Current partnerships:

- **Bristol Refugee and Asylum Seeker Partnership (BRASP)** – a partnership of 16 local refugee/asylum seeker organisations which aims to work together as an effective, unified and sustainable sector.
- **Explore, Adapt Renew** – We are a founding member of the Asylum Early Action partnership led by Refugee Action and in late 2021 secured a further 3 years of funding to develop Early Action focused services.
- **Bristol Impact Fund 2** – we are the lead partner in a partnership of 5 organisations providing “drop-in services” in Bristol, funded for 4 years from October 2021.
- **Bristol Law Centre** – we are funded by Tudor Trust to develop our partnership in a way which improves access to immigration advice.

- We collaborate informally / without specific funding with organisations across the VCSE and statutory sectors.



Monitoring Impact and Quality Assurance

Bristol Refugee Rights uses a Theory of Change (available on our website/can be requested) and comprehensive Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework to monitor our impact and for quality assurance purposes. These documents are reviewed at least annually to ensure that they are kept up to date and in line with current service delivery activities.

Our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework sets out detailed information about our outputs and methods used to monitor and evaluate our services. It also sets out how we will monitor progress specifically in relation to equalities objectives set annually by the Board of Trustees.

We regularly gather feedback from stakeholders through questionnaires, surveys, at events, focus groups, Participant Consultation Group meetings, volunteer meetings, and regular strategy planning.

We regularly produce case studies as a way of demonstrating our impact on individuals.

Bristol Refugee Rights is also monitored through our compliance with:

- Bristol City Council's Baseline Standards for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations aimed at ensuring organisations are well managed and provide good quality services.
- Our Early Years Project Voluntary Registration with Ofsted.
- Our Advice Service Level 3 OISC accreditation. We are also working towards obtaining an Advice Quality Standard Quality Mark.
- Our registration with the Fundraising Regulator.

Support Us

We rely on our supporters and donors to transform the lives of our members. You can support us in a variety of ways:

- Make a donation online
- Sign up to our free quarterly e-newsletter (via <https://app.etapestry.com/onlineforms/BristolRefugeeRights/eNewsletter.html>)
- Give a regular monthly donation by Direct Debit
- Make a restricted donation to support specific work
- Leave a gift in your will
- Fundraise for us
- Follow us on social media (Twitter / FB/ Insta / LinkedIn)
- Businesses can support us through donations and volunteering

To donate or find out more about ways to support us, please visit: <https://www.bristolrefugeerights.org/support-us/donation/>

Appendices:

- ❓ **Appendix A:** Factors critical to success
- ❓ **Appendix B:** Operational Plan



Appendix A: Factors critical to success

- ❑ *Organisational Annual Action Plan for achieving our Goals and Success Indicators.*
- ❑ *Practicalities such as having access to resources, technology, premises etc.*
- ❑ *The people who work with us – directly (staff, volunteers, trustees) and indirectly (statutory partners, voluntary sector partners).*
- ❑ *Funding.*

The availability of these things is factored into our budgeting and risk management and kept under regular review by the Strategic Management Team and Board of Trustees.

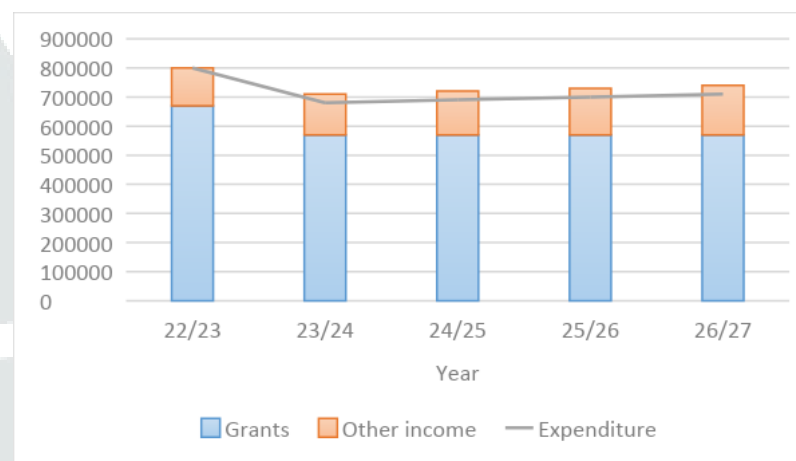


Funding and outline budget:

Our 3 year Income Generation Strategy (available on request) sets out how we plan to raise sufficient funds to ensure that the organisation and its activities are sustainable and that we can continue to work towards our vision and purpose.

Our current income spectrum includes: grants, individual giving, crowdfunding, major donors and partnerships, and we are working on developing trading and legacies as part of our income spectrum. Our budget has grown significantly in 2022/23 due to BRR employing new posts on behalf of the BRASP partnership (including short term development capacity). We are expecting our income in 2023/24 to reduce in line with anticipated reduced expenditure around BRASP. We are confident of being able to raise the level of funding needed and to continue to be able to build a strategic reserve to secure our long term premises goal.

Outline budget:



Appendix B: Outline of current services and how we promote our services

Current services and opening hours:

- Helpline Call/ Text/ WhatsApp: 07526 352353.
- Opening times are limited and may vary (up to date information is available on our website)

Advice and Information Session

- Wednesdays 10.00-12.00 at The Wellspring Settlement Main Hall, 43 Ducie Road, Bristol, BS5 0AX
- Help with asylum accommodation, asylum support or asylum claim · Healthcare access · Form-filling and Signposting. No appointment needed. We will see people in order they arrive and you may be asked to come back for a longer appointment on another day.

Social Space

- Thursdays 10.00-13.00 at The Wellspring Settlement Main Hall, 43 Ducie Road, Bristol, BS5 0AX
- Tea, coffee and snacks · Games · An opportunity to meet new people and make friends. No appointment needed

We also offer

- English classes, Early Years crèche, family support, Pride Without Borders group (LGBTQ+), Young People's Immigration Project, Project CLEAR (Complex Needs Casework), Hardship/Destitution support.

How we promote our services:

Our services are promoted via our website and social media. We work with other organisations in BRASP to promote our services via a joint leaflet translated into commonly used languages. This leaflet is used by all organisations to promote services to service users/potential services users. The leaflet (and where appropriate more detailed information about our services) is shared with statutory agencies and other organisations locally. Statutory services promote our offer to new service users arriving in the city. We use WhatsApp groups to share information about services with existing service users.