



Annual Report

2018

(April 2017 – March 2018)

'A world where refugees and asylum seekers
are included, accepted and supported by
society'

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Reference and administrative details

Charity name	Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support
Registered Charity Number	1096874
OISC Number	N200100432
Office address	27b Tavistock Street Bedford, MK40 2RB

Staff

Brian Cunningham (Coordinator)
Heather Jones (Integration Officer)
Nadia Laribi (Syrian Resettlement Worker)
Jon Howden (Benefits Advisor and Finance Officer)
Rani Sheemar (Finance Manager)
Severine Ameur (Complex Caseworker)

Current Volunteers

Abeer Ahmed	Mahmoud El Sayed
Andrea Jones	Mona Sulieman
Anita Hanwell	Nabil Chabaan
Annie Doise	Nadia Gasmi
Babs Vine-Blakey	Nicola Harbour
Bekkie Hart	Nicola Lindsay
Ben Claxon	Pam Hider
Caroline Forni	Peter Jones
Catherine Veitch	Rainy Blair
Cathy Wood	Roshan Juma
David Thomas	Sabina Billing
Doreen Richardson	Sally Hilliard
Elizabeth Ridley	Shubham Kalyan
Gordon James	Sharif Durani
Helena Maddock	Sidney Miller
Irina Foster	Sue Horn
John Osman	Sumana Carlton-Smith
John Whittome	Roshan Juma
Krystal Heath	Rosie Newbigging
Michelle Thomas	

Trustees

Veta Hudson-Rae (Chair)	Victoria Hilliard (Vice Chair)
Morris Johns (Secretary)	Cathy Moorhouse
James Biggs	Sanja Radic
Janet Jamieson	David Dwyer

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

BRASS is a registered charity governed by a constitution that was adopted on 1st October 1999 and then revised on 18th September 2002 and 5th March 2003. BRASS is a non-political, voluntary organisation, established for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers in the County of Bedfordshire to assist in the relief of poverty, hardship or distress.

Organisational Structure

BRASS employs 2 full-time members of staff; a Project Co-ordinator overseeing day to day business and a Resettlement worker supporting Syrian Refugees who have been resettled in Bedford as part of the government's resettlement programme. We also employ a number of part time staff; an Integration Officer, a Benefits Advisor, a Complex Caseworker and a Finance Officer. Staff are supported by a team of dedicated volunteers, making our services excellent value for money. Services are delivered from a town centre, local government owned property and leased by BRASS. A board of skilled and experienced trustees drawn from the local community oversee and govern services.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

BRASS recognises that the recruitment and selection of new trustees can strongly influence our future effectiveness. The organisation aims to follow good practice in this field as well as the provisions of our constitution. All BRASS trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting or are co-opted. When looking to recruit new trustees, the committee will attempt to fill any gaps in skills, knowledge and experience of our current trustees and reflect the diversity of the communities in which we operate. We will use the most appropriate ways of recruiting new trustees, including local networks and advertising. We will prepare role descriptions for trustees, ensure that all potential trustees meet all eligibility criteria and ask all potential trustees about any possible conflicts of interest.

All trustees will be invited to complete a nomination/co-option form so that their nomination can be presented at the Annual General Meeting or the next Executive Committee. They will then be invited to meet with the chairperson to discuss their nomination and this discussion will be recorded on their nomination paper.

Induction and Training of New Trustees

On appointment, new trustees will be offered a tailored induction programme and ongoing support. The induction will include a welcome letter, signposting to the Charity commission website, in particular The Essential Trustee: What you need to know guidance, a copy of the BRASS constitution, a copy of the latest annual report and annual accounts and the policy schedule and access to all policies and procedures.

Relationships with other organisations

BRASS believes that by building capacity through partnership working, we can facilitate sustainability of service provision. The work of BRASS compliments other services through the co-ordinator's involvement with: The New Migration Partnership, Bedford Borough Diversity Network and the Social Inclusion, Community Cohesion and Culture Thematic Partnership – local multi-agency forums where issues are raised, information exchanged and partnership solutions explored. BRASS is a key participant in the organisation of the annual Bedford Refugee Week which holds events to raise awareness of the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers.

BRASS has strong working relationships with local organisations so that individuals can get support from the organisation best placed to provide it. Luton Law Centre has qualified solicitors and case workers who take referrals from BRASS and provide telephone support to BRASS advisors. There is cross referral of clients between BRASS and the Citizen's Advice Bureau. BRASS makes referrals to the local MP (previously Richard Fuller and currently Mohammad Yasin) who helps with representations to the Home Office for specific cases. Referrals are received from the Social Care Team, which is responsible for unaccompanied under 18 asylum seekers, for both advice at the drop-in and English tuition. CVS provides a regular supply of enthusiastic and committed volunteers and Bedford Borough Council supports BRASS and contributes to Refugee Week. Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity supports our tutoring project by carrying out the relevant DBS checks.

BRASS works in partnership with both local and national charities. Advice and support are provided by the Refugee Council, which is the largest refugee agency in the UK. BRASS has an arrangement with the Red Cross whereby they provide BRASS with vouchers which can be given to needy clients to spend on clothes at Red Cross shops and help with travel expenses to the nearest immigration solicitors in Luton.

Supporting the local voluntary sector and working towards some financial self-sustainability has become an important part of the organisational ethic. Through leasing the building at 27b Tavistock Street, BRASS is able to offer office and drop-in space to other local charities at a reasonable rate.

Risk management

We ensure that our health and safety policy, fire risk assessment and fire safety management plan are regularly reviewed and updated. The building and our services are appropriately insured to safeguard the organisation and volunteers with the tutoring project are subject to DBS checks in order to protect our clients. Our drop-in advice service is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commission (OISC) and we successfully passed an audit last year.

The organisation has been working towards having financial reserves of six months, a level which we have now achieved.

Chair's Report

This year was a very important year for BRASS. It was 20 years ago that a group of concerned people held a barbeque at St Luke's Moravian Church (now The Quarry Theatre), to discuss the plight of refugees and asylum seekers coming to Bedford. From that meeting BRASS was founded and in 1999 was granted charity status. I joined BRASS in June 2000 and have seen how BRASS has changed and expanded to meet the needs of the clients we serve.

This is my 4th annual report as Chair and I am grateful for all the help from trustees and staff. This year a new trustee has joined us, Janet Jamieson, who is responsible for the community allotment. The trustees, staff and volunteers have had to overcome a number of difficulties this year but as a team we have remained strong and worked together.

BRASS continues to support refugees and asylum seekers from Bedford and the surrounding areas, by providing financial, welfare and immigration advice and support. Severine, our immigration caseworker has also been able to offer some assistance to immigration detainees in Bedford Prison and in Yarl's Wood IRC. Severine has also set up and delivered courses on immigration and domestic violence which were open to staff, trustees and other community organisations.

The women's group and English tuition continues to grow with the guidance of Heather and a band of committed volunteers.

We were able to increase Rani's hours this year to ensure that financial records are kept up to date for our funders and in line with The Charity Commission requirements.

The Syrian Protection Scheme continues to grow from strength to strength under the leadership of Nadia with Ken Scott from Bedford Borough Council. There are now 9 families living in Bedford who have needed a significant amount of help and support to settle in.

Jon, our welfare officer, has increased his hours as his workload has expanded. Congratulations to Jon on passing his OISC level 1 exam this year, he is now working towards level 2.

Our allotment project had a very successful year under Janet's leadership, encouragement and hard work. Several families were involved in planting and harvesting vegetables and some vegetables were available for clients in the drop in. The women's group met for a picnic on the allotment this year, which was very successful and well attended.

As usual, a big thank you to Karen, our fundraiser, who continues to find the funding needed to continue the work of BRASS.

Brian, our operations manager, continues to oversee the work of BRASS and networks with other agencies and local groups and he continues to work with students and graduate volunteers from Bedfordshire University School of Law in

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support

Luton at the Refugee Legal Aid Project to support refugees with their applications to allow close family members to join them in the UK. Brian also continues to work with Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire Universities and we provide placements for their social work students.

As usual Refugee Week was a great success, thanks to all involved.

During the summer there was our annual trip to Hunstanton beach and despite rather damp weather, was much enjoyed by everyone who went. This year we also held a trip for the women's group to Irchester Country Park later in August.

Our Christmas party was also well attended and was also enjoyed by everyone who attended. We were able to provide presents to all children, which had been donated by Bedford Boys School and many other local supporters.

Now that we have six members of staff, covering seven posts all with different work patterns; it was decided to hold staff meetings. These started at the end of 2017 and have proved to be beneficial and effective.

A big thank you to all our funders, especially the Harpur Trust and other Bedford charities, who have supported us over the years.

And finally, a big thank you for attending this AGM today.

Coordinator's report

It has been another amazing year at BRASS, we keep growing and breaking new records. Our busiest ever AGM last year, our busiest ever Christmas party, with over 100 presents given out thanks to the wonderful number of donations to our gender-neutral toys appeal. We recently had a record month in the number of case matters we dealt with in May in our drop in advice session. We have now supported 9 Syrian families on that project which is now half way through its five years. We have provided placements to more than 10 Social work students. We provide English, Maths and Life in the UK classes.



Most recently, Refugee week had 14 events this year with over a 1,000 people attending an event, more about that later under Community Cohesion.

I must thank all our volunteers and 6 members of staff - we have come along way since it was just me part time 10 years ago - and our Trustees. And a special thank you to Karen our fundraiser because as we grow, more funds must be raised and this is during a time when local government has had to pull back its funding of the voluntary sector, meaning charitable trusts are being asked for more both locally and nationally. Funders have also told us that due to an increase in public sympathy in recent years, (thank goodness, remember the time when the Sun said we should machine gun their boats?!) it is more difficult to fundraise, but we do, and as Karen says, we make a good team!

Service Updates

Drop-in Report

We are pleased to say that we have now increased OISC accreditation to OISC Level 3, and we are very fortunate to have a qualified OISC L3 adviser already on our drop-in staff. Another one of our drop-in staff has passed OISC L1 and is studying for L2. Our biggest area of growth has been benefits advice, and we have also begun provide outreach immigration advice services to Bedford Prison and Yarl's Wood IRC. In total we addressed over 1,400 client matters at drop-in, an increase on last year's record high. We are pleased to have qualified immigration and welfare benefits advisers to assist our clients with these matters.

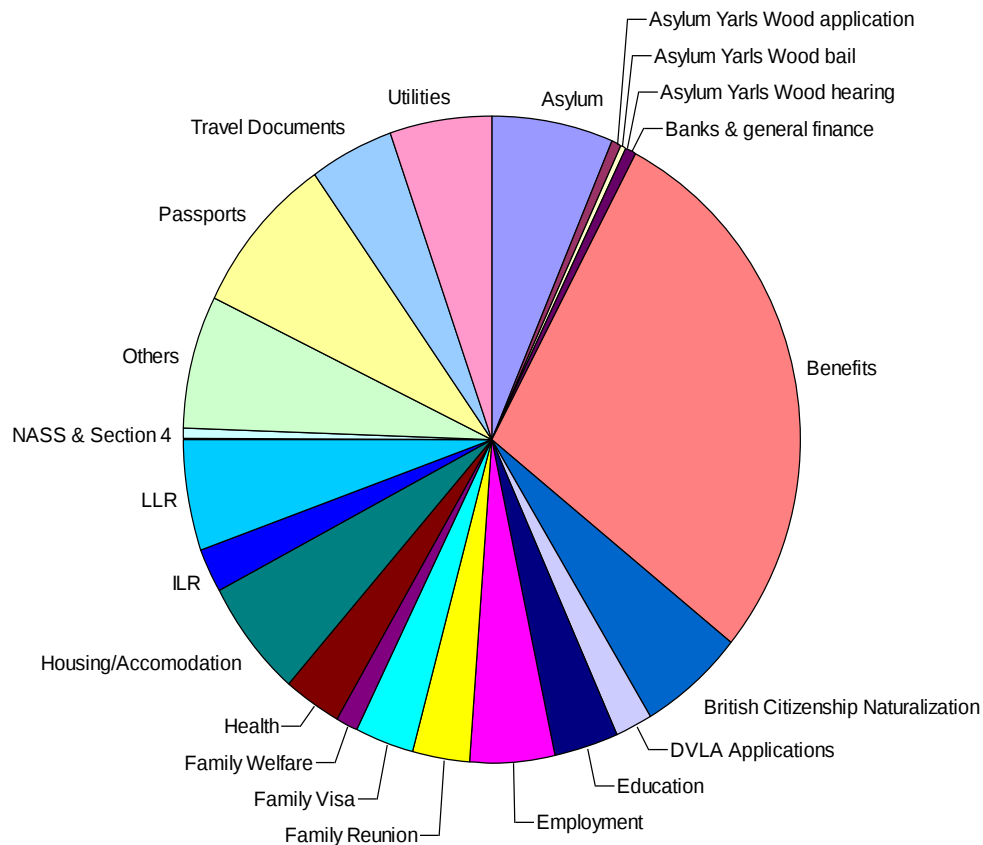
We have continued to increase our benefits and housing advice service to our clients. We had a total of 400 benefits-related enquiries and 82 housing-related enquiries. We currently have two benefits systems in place in Bedford, with single adults and families with fewer than three children claiming Universal Credit, whilst families with three or more children remain on the previous system of Jobseekers Allowance, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit. The expansion of online administration, particularly for Universal Credit and Local Authority benefits is particularly challenging for clients whose first language is not English, or who are not accustomed to using online services.

We have successfully supported clients who have medical conditions claim disability benefits, in spite a national decline in the rate of positive decisions on such claims. We have been working closely with Bedford Council and the local Jobcentre to enable us to achieve quick resolutions to delays in benefit payments and decisions on benefit claims. We also work with local housing providers to support clients at risk of homelessness. We have assisted asylum seekers in applying for Asylum Support funding, and have liaised with Migrant Help to ensure applications are processed as swiftly as possible.

We have provided educational advice to clients who are seeking to further their education and training, and have liaised with Bedford College and national educational institutions to assist clients in applying for places on courses. We have also supported clients with job applications and have made referrals to employment agencies for temporary employment. We supported clients with over 100 education and employment enquiries during 2017-18.

We are grateful to our University of Bedfordshire social work students and our volunteers, who continue to provide a valuable contribution to our busy drop-in service.

Drop-in enquiries 2017-2018



The Vulnerable Syrian Persons Relocation Scheme (VSPRS)

Two and a half years into this programme, BRASS is now providing support services to 9 Syrian families. We would like to share with you their progress under this scheme since the last AGM.

The delivery of the scheme has been made more efficient in the following ways:

- increased engagement between the families and other BRASS staff, such as our Benefits Advisor and Complex Caseworker
- ongoing intensive support from our Syrian Resettlement Support Worker

Progress in the Syrian refugee families' integration into UK society has included the following:

- A mother obtained her driving license, after 2 years of residence in the UK.
- A father has been working for over 6 months as a cook in an Arabic restaurant in Bedford.

- A talented 15-year-old boy was awarded 'Top 10' in every term during the last academic year and is now in his 2nd year of piano study.
- An outstanding 16 year old girl has picked up the English language in less than a year and serves as a translator for her parents.
- Another family received a morale-enhancing visit from relatives who are refugees in Germany.
- Most children have progressed in English language and are helping their parents to study the language at home.
- Some members of the Syrian refugee community collaborated with Mrs Josepa Munoz of the Higgins Museum during Refugee Week.

BRASS is supported by other agencies in supporting these families. We are supported actively by the Clinical Commissioning Group with registering families with the GP. We are continually supported by Mr Ken Irwin, Refugees Resettlement Officer at the Bedford Borough Council. We are supported by the Bedford Borough Council Early Help professional, Mr Ben Scott, whose actions contribute to enhance the quality of life of the families.

In a major step forward in addressing hereto unresolved issues of our clients' mental health, we have arranged to meet with staff from the Wellbeing Centre to create a plan.

We are expecting a 10th family in September 2018.

Community Cohesion

Throughout the year we deliver talks to community groups, spreading the word on not only what BRASS does and encouraging referrals, but also telling people about our clients, why they come here and how the asylum process works. We did talks to several groups this year including: other charities, universities, churches and a school. Over 100 people responded that they had learned a lot about the plight of refugees from the talks. I am grateful to Heather Jones and Nadia Laribi who also gave talks this year.

Refugee week was again a great success this year we had a record 14 events! Each year we seem to break some new record. I have been told we do far more than any other town our size. I do think that is a reflection on Bedford as a town. BRASS must not take all the credit for this I would like to thank the Place Theatre, the Higgins Bedford, Bedford Central Library, Putnoe Library, ACCM, the Quarry Theatre and the Pavilion Bedford Park for hosting events. I would also particularly like to thank Gulwali Passarlay for coming to talk about his journey as a 12 year old boy, from Afghanistan to the UK.



Another record was broken at football tournament where 13 teams, including 4 refugee teams played and congratulations to the BPHA team who won and thanks to the Mayor for presenting prizes. And thanks to Bedford Borough

Council for printing the many flyers and most importantly the many Myth Busting leaflets which were distributed during the week.

Integration Services

Requests for help to learn English remains high, but fortunately we also continue to have a number of people offering to help, without them we would not be able to support the number that we do. Students range from people who have been in the UK for a number of years, but still struggle to understand and express themselves in English properly, to young people who have only recently arrived in the UK and who have little or no English at all. Some of these have had little education in their own country. All the students are very keen to learn and grateful for our help. We are gradually introducing small classes to increase the number of people we can help. Numbers for the year were over 30 students regularly attending classes.

Numbers of women attending our women's group have fluctuated during the year with a small core of regular attendees and three established volunteers. A trip to Irchester Country Park and a picnic at the allotment were extremely popular and we plan to hold similar trips again.

The coach trip last August to Hunstanton was again very popular, with the spaces filled very quickly. Despite the weather being rather dull and damp everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day out.

Allotment

The aim of the Brass allotment has been to provide a safe, healing, social, therapeutic place to grow things, and spend time with other people, through nature. April 2017 to April 2018 was particularly productive and rewarding.

In early Spring 2017, we built a shelter, a further shed, and continued to develop the 'Insect Hotel'. We received lots of donations including forks, spades, gloves and little watering cans. Throughout the year, individual clients came to work one-to-one with me, families came, and on a couple of occasions, as many as 18 people visited and worked together as group. In mid-summer, 41 members from the BRASS Women's Group came for a picnic, which was one of the highlights of the year



We grew potatoes, onions, runner beans, French beans, kallettes, salad leaves, beetroots, tomatoes, spinach, chard, apples, strawberries and rhubarb. There were also some very interesting shaped squashes, and one large pumpkin. In addition, we were donated sweetcorn plants, blackcurrant and raspberry bushes, and leeks. In the herb garden, sage, thyme, oregano, parsley, chives, lavender,

feverfew and rosemary bushes, flourished. As usual, the comfrey flowers, marigolds, and sunflowers attracted lots of birds, insects and different types of bees

The allotment continued to be a wonderful tranquil place for clients to come together, relax, have fun, and enjoy the great outdoors!

BRASS 20 years history

David Tatem, then the Minister at St Luke's United Reformed and Moravian Church in Bedford, called together some like-minded people in early 1998. There had been an influx of refugees at this time and he saw the need and brought people and resources together to help and this group grew into BRASS.

David Tatem was the mainspring of everything and was entirely responsible for persuading the elders of St Luke's Moravian Church to charge no rent for use of the Church premises and nothing for extensive use of the telephones. Remarkably, this lasted for more than a year until we started to attract some grants of our own. Another body who gave valuable help in the early days was the Bedford Quaker Meeting, who did marvellous social work, usually at the Meeting House in Lansdowne Road. In summer good use was made of the attractive garden and children were made especially welcome.

There were three more key figures. At BRASS we knew very little about the work we would be doing with refugees. Solicitors had the knowledge but not much time or patience. Ellen Carpenter was the head of the refugee section of Social Services and Giulia was the Secretary of Patrick Hall, MP for Bedford. They were unbelievably supportive and usually very patient with our frequent requests for guidance. Bryden Keenan was a great help in running our drop-in advice sessions for many years.

At first the greatest need then appeared to be with Croatians, actually Serbs born in Croatia but persecuted by ethnic Croatians. There appeared to be a number of Kosovans but it was only a year or two later that it became obvious that by far the largest group of refugees in Bedford would be Afghans. Indeed Bedford had the largest group of Afghan refugees in the country outside London. In addition, the Afghans were divided between Dari speakers and Pashto speakers which are hardly intelligible to each other. More recently we have clients from; Zimbabwe, Congo, Sudan, Iran, Iraq and Eritrea.

BRASS is now an established charity dealing with needs of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the Bedford area. BRASS has six paid members of staff to carry out the increasing work of the organisation. We deal with approximately 1500 issues a year from a growing client base of over 3000 people. We have an excellent team of volunteers, over 40 of whom act as tutors providing tuition in English and Maths as well as classes for the 'Life in the UK' test.

We are now into our third year supporting Syrian families resettled in Bedford as part of Syrian Resettlement Programme. We now support ten families.

The regular Women's Group meetings are well attended and the BRASS allotment provide opportunities for clients to meet and maybe develop some new skills. We have well attended Christmas parties and hold numerous events for Refugee Week.

None of this would be possible without the help and support of our funders, the BRASS workers and volunteers and, of course, David Tatem.

Objectives and Activities

Vision

A world where refugees and asylum seekers are included, accepted and supported by society.

Mission Statement

BRASS is an established charity working to empower, inform and support refugees and asylum seekers and to protect rights with an aim to develop independence and involvement in UK society.

Strategic Objectives 2014-2017

- 1) Sustainable development of BRASS as an organisation to serve the interests and needs of refugees and asylum seekers and their families.
- 2) To enhance the ability of refugees and asylum seekers to understand and navigate UK procedures, processes and systems.
- 3) Increasing independence, integration and confidence through learning and social activities.
- 4) Encourage participation of refugees and asylum seekers in the development and management of BRASS.
- 5) To build partnerships with other agencies, to cross refer clients, share information and campaign on behalf of the wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers locally and nationally.

Services

BRASS owns the lease for 27b Tavistock Street and rooms are available for other local charities to rent.

BRASS offers two drop-in advice sessions staffed by volunteers - on Tuesdays 10am-2pm and Wednesdays 10am-2pm. These are accredited by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to give immigration advice. Through funding by the BIG lottery, BRASS employs a specialist benefits advisor and a complex case worker for immigration matters. She has also begun

providing immigration advice to asylum seekers in Yarl's Wood IRC and Bedford prison. We also support the Refugee Legal Assistance project run by the University of Bedford on its Luton Campus on Tuesday evenings during term time, which specialises in refugee family reunions. The project has now supported 50 families.

Our tutoring programme matches volunteer tutors with refugees and asylum seekers who want to learn or improve their English language skills. This service is offered in the community and at the BRASS offices. Our education services have now expanded and we now provide small group tuition in numeracy and preparing for the Life in the UK test.

The BRASS women's group meets fortnightly, providing activities and peer support to refugee women. Our allotment has continued to develop due to the commitment of volunteers and clients. The popularity of our summer outing has continued to grow; our summer trip to the seaside was oversubscribed, so another successful trip went to Wickstead Park in October half term.

BRASS plays a leading role in Refugee Week each year, organising a variety of events to promote refugee issues.

Public Benefit

BRASS provides a range of services to support refugees and asylum seekers in the Bedford community and further afield. Free immigration advice is in short supply in this area and without the service provided by BRASS through drop-in advice sessions, many refugees and asylum seekers would be left to tackle the often complex immigration system alone. Advice is also provided on a range of resettlement issues including employment, housing, education and benefits. This advice enables our clients to better integrate into society and to learn to manage their own affairs independently. Our Women's Group is another initiative to support integration and also to improve the self-confidence and language skills of the women who attend. For those who want to improve their English, BRASS's tutoring project matches volunteer tutors with clients. This relationship can often provide improved self-confidence and support with other aspects of integration. We now also run classes for those wishing to improve their numeracy and those preparing for the Life in the UK test. The BRASS allotment is now quite well established, providing a sense of community to clients, as well as providing asylum seekers (who are not allowed to work) activities to fill their time as well as fresh produce to take home.

BRASS is working to inform and educate the public on issues around immigration and asylum. Asylum seekers are a much stigmatised group and through our work with Refugee Week and our coordinator giving talks to groups in the Bedford area, we are encouraging the public to look differently at refugees and asylum seekers and to see the positive contribution they make to our society.

Achievements and Performance

Progress towards Strategic Objectives 2014-2017

Sustainable development of BRASS as an organisation to serve the interests and needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

BRASS's drop-in advice sessions, our core service, is as busy as ever and our complex caseworker funded by the Big Lottery Fund enables us to support clients with more complicated immigration cases. We also continue to provide specialist benefits advice. Our English Language project is providing tuition to 33 clients due to the commitment of 21 volunteers. We also offer classes in numeracy and preparing for the Life in the UK test. The Women's Group meets on a fortnightly basis, with members enjoying a varied programme of talks and activities.

The BRASS allotment is being developed by a committed group of volunteers and clients. They grow a great variety of vegetables which are given to our clients. Our social activities continue to be popular and the summer trips are always fully booked.

To enhance the ability of refugees and asylum seekers to understand UK procedures, processes and systems.

The UK immigration system can be confusing even for those of us who deal with it on a regular basis, so navigating it can be near impossible for those who are new to the country and may have limited English. Through our OISC registered drop-in immigration advice sessions, BRASS helps refugees and asylum seekers to deal with these complex systems. Advice is also provided around other non-immigration issues such as housing, employment and finance to aid integration. We are able to provide specialist advice through our complex immigration caseworker and benefits advisor. Our increasingly popular English Language Tuition also gives refugees and asylum seekers the skills to better navigate British systems and our new classes in numeracy and preparing for the Life in the UK test also aid integration. BRASS has computers available to clients which can be used for CVs, job searches and benefit applications.

Increasing independence and confidence through learning and social activities.

The BRASS women's group has continued to grow during the last year with a regular group meeting monthly. Members have also got involved with other BRASS activities. Our social activities provide an opportunity to meet other refugees and our outings to the seaside and Wickstead Park continue to be over subscribed. Our English language tuition project provides one-to-one tuition to those who wish to improve their English and we also provide classes in numeracy and preparing for the Life in the UK test. It is hoped that this will enable them to become more independent and better able to integrate into society. Our allotment provides a place for our clients to relax, meet new people and grow their own food.

To raise awareness in wider society of issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers.

BRASS is always heavily involved with activities in Bedford celebrating Refugee Week and this year's was the biggest and most successful yet. This year, 500 myth-busting leaflets were given out to members of the public at an information stand outside Bedford library and the events held at the library, the Place Theatre and the football fun day were better attended than ever, being held in a public park. BRASS's coordinator gave a number of talks to local groups and the feedback forms completed at the end of these talks indicate that perceptions of refugees and asylum seekers have been changed by what they have heard.

Encourage participation of refugees and asylum seekers in the development and management of BRASS.

BRASS continually encourages clients and former clients to become involved in BRASS, whether through attending groups and activities, becoming a volunteer or joining the committee. A former client is now on our committee and some of our volunteers have previously used our services. We have also provided social work placements to a number of students, some of whom are from a refugee background.

To build partnerships with other agencies, to cross refer clients, share information and campaign on behalf of the wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers locally and nationally.

BRASS works with other agencies in a variety of ways. Our office space and Drop-in space are available for other local charities to rent. BRASS works with many local charities and networks. Our coordinator is involved with The New Migration Partnership, Bedford Borough Diversity Network and the Social Inclusion, Community Cohesion and Culture Thematic Partnership – local multi-agency forums where issues are raised, information exchanged and partnership solutions explored. BRASS is a key participant in the organisation of the annual Bedford Refugee Week which holds events to raise awareness of the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers.

BRASS has the objective of building capacity through partnerships, working to help sustain service provision. BRASS seeks to complement other services through involvement with local multi-agency forums such as The New Migration Partnership, Bedford Borough Diversity Network, Bedford Advice Forum, where issues are raised, information exchanged and partnership solutions explored. BRASS is a key participant in the organisation of the annual Bedford Refugee Week which holds events to raise awareness of the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers.

Referrals are received from Children's Services which is responsible for unaccompanied Asylum seekers under the age of 18. The Community Voluntary Service (CVS) provides a regular supply of enthusiastic and committed volunteers and the Charity continues to receive invaluable support from the Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity who support our tutoring project by carrying out the relevant DBS checks.

BRASS has been very involved with Refugee Week in Bedford for many years and this year it was better than ever, with more events and more people attending. The aim of Refugee Week is to raise awareness of the issues faced by refugees and asylum seekers and the positive contributions they make to British society. Our coordinator has been giving talks to various groups in the Bedford area to change perceptions of these issues and has been gathering feedback forms from those who attend to demonstrate changing attitudes.

Fundraising activities

We would like to thank the following organisations from whom we have received grants over the past year:

Bedford Borough Council
Harpur Trust
The Big Lottery Fund
The 29th of May Charitable Trust
The Beds and Luton Community Foundation
Wixamtree Trust
Allen Lane Foundation
Beatrice Laing Trust

We are also grateful for the financial contributions and responses to the shoebox appeal from St Peter De Morton Church, King Arms Project, St Marks Church, St Peters Church, Bedford High School and Etonbury Academy.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our fundraiser Karen Mayoh for her continued hard work and support.

Internal and external factors contributing to performance

As with other small charities, BRASS is affected by external factors, particularly in terms of the economy and legal changes affecting asylum seekers and refugees. The economic situation nationally continues to affect fundraising, however BRASS is fortunate to have secured a 5 year grant from the Big Lottery Fund which provides a significant level of security to the charity. BRASS also continues to seek and secure other grants which allow us to maintain and expand our services. BRASS continues to be affected by changes made to the OISC which has made it more difficult for volunteers to qualify as level 1 immigration advisors. Although volunteers are always supervised by a registered advisor, it is important that we are able to ensure that a good number of volunteers are always registered to maintain this cover. In addition, it is important for BRASS that we are able to provide volunteers with training and progression in return for their commitment. BRASS is also affected by media coverage of refugees and asylum seekers. This can result in increased interest in helping our clients, but it can also have a negative impact when prejudice against refugees and asylum seekers increases.

Internally, BRASS now has a group of committed trustees with skills and experience that can help with the development of the organisation. We have now recruited a treasurer which was a gap in the committee. The Big Lottery Fund grant provides longer term stability for our staff and the ability to expand the

number of staff we employ and therefore the capacity to expand our services. Our success in fundraising also presents some challenges as many trusts will only fund an organisation for a limited time, which means we have to be increasingly proactive in seeking funders. We are fortunate to have a good number of committed volunteers, enabling us to provide reliable and high-quality services beyond our drop-in advice service.

Future Plans and the challenges ahead

We have now completed year 2 of our 5 year grant from the Big Lottery Fund, so we will have a regular income for the next 3 years to support all or some of the salaries of our coordinator, benefits adviser, integration officer and complex caseworker. This allows us to increase the capacity of our drop-in advice sessions and continue to expand our social activities.

Following some significant growth within the charity, we are now working to consolidate this progress and ensure that we are providing quality reliable services and that we have good governance to maintain stability. There are bound to be other challenges ahead, but we are confident that BRASS is well placed to face them.

Getting involved with BRASS

Volunteers are always needed for our drop-in, women's group, English tutoring and the allotment.

Friends of BRASS provide support to the organisation through fundraising and donations of food for our emergency food cupboard. BRASS is always in need of more people to help in this way.

If you are interested in using the drop-in space or are interested in becoming involved with BRASS as a volunteer or a friend, please contact Co-ordinator Brian Cunningham on 01234 211381 or brian@brass27b.org . For further information on any of our work, please check our website www.brassbedford.org.uk .

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as

BRASS

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

Martin Foster & Co Limited
AIMS Accountants for Business
Unit 5 Shannon Court
High Street
Sandy
Bedfordshire SG19 1AG

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Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Trustees' Report

Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees

James Biggs
Veta Hudson-Rae, Chair
Rani Sheemar, Treasurer (resigned 30 September 2017)
Cathy Moorhouse, Treasurer
Victoria Hillard, Vice Chair
Mags Brady
Sarah Hardy, Secretary (resigned 31 May 2017)
David Dwyer (appointed 31 May 2017)
Sanja Radic
Janet Jamieson (appointed 30 September 2017)
Morris Johns

Principal Office

27B Tavistock Street
Bedford
Bedfordshire
MK40 2RB

Charity Registration Number ***1096874***

Independent Examiner

Martin Foster & Co Limited
AIMS Accountants for Business
Unit 5 Shannon Court
High Street
Sandy
Bedfordshire
SG19 1AG

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Trustees' Report

The trustees present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

A world where refugees and asylum seekers are included, accepted and supported by society.

The charity is an established non-political, voluntary organisation working to empower, inform and support refugees and asylum seekers and their families, protect their rights and enable them to develop their independence and involvement in UK society. Specifically the charity was established for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers in the County of Bedfordshire to assist in the relief of poverty, hardship or distress. Services are delivered from a local government owned property in Bedford town centre which is leased by BRASS.

Objectives, strategies and activities

BRASS seeks to support the local voluntary sector and work towards financial self-sustainability. It leases its offices in Bedford town centre but is able to sub-let office and drop-in space to other local charities at affordable rates.

We continue to run our successful drop-in-advice sessions 2 times a week. We have dealt with over 1,300 client matters this year. We also offer appointments with our Benefits Adviser and our Immigration Adviser.

We continue to run our 1 : 1 English tutoring and befriending programme with 30 tutors currently seeing students. We have also small classes for English, Maths and The Life in the UK Test. Our social activities this year include our fortnightly women's group, two coach trips and our Christmas party. BRASS' allotment is now up and running with both refugees and volunteers attending.

Our Co-ordinator is the chair of the Bedford Refugee Week steering group and we have with our steering group partners had a very busy and successful week with 12 events attended by over 900 people.

Public benefit

BRASS is focused on working in partnership with other organisations to share knowledge and skills, prevent duplication, maximise effectiveness, cut costs and share facilities.

On behalf of the Trustees of BRASS I can confirm that in carrying out our financial review we have considered and complied with our duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Trustees' Report

Achievements and performance

During the last financial year BRASS has supported over 400 clients. We seek to support our client group's changing needs; the changes to the Benefits system and ever increasing complexity of immigration applications has increased the number of clients seeking support. BRASS now receives funding from the Big Lottery Fund and will provide specialist advice through a Complex Caseworker for immigration matters and a Benefits Advisor. We will be able to provide additional social activities through our Integration Officer who will also be part funded by the Big Lottery Fund.

BRASS has expanded our core activity this year which is our drop-in advice service, by employing a complex caseworker. We continue to provide specialist benefits advice. Our English Language project is providing tuition to 33 clients due to the commitment of 29 volunteers. This year, we have begun offering classes in numeracy and preparing for the Life in the UK test. The Women's Group meets on a monthly basis, with members enjoying a varied programme of talks and activities.

Financial review

Total Incoming resources during the financial year were £158,235, a 23% increase on the previous year. This has been used to provide funding to cover all our existing posts which are all filled and other direct costs and overheads.

Costs increased this year by 4% to £115,788, mainly due to inflation.

Policy on reserves

BRASS held cash at bank of £90,084 at 31 March 2018. Of these funds £50,945 is for restricted purposes, the remaining £39,139 is for unrestricted purposes. The Trustee Board have established a policy whereby it aims to maintain sufficient unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets and not required to meet future budgeted expenditure, being the "free reserves", to be sufficient to support the future growth of the charity and provide sufficient reserves for dealing with possible contingencies such as short-term cessation of project activity or redundancy.

Principal funding sources

BRASS is fortunate to have received funding from a number of sources this year.

The Big Lottery Fund continues to fund our Co-ordinator, along with other posts and other running costs for five years.

The Harpur Trust continues its support by helping to fund our Finance Officer salary costs and volunteer costs. Bedford Borough Council provided continued funding support towards staff costs, and BRASS has been able to utilise funding from the Government Transition Fund to support the introduction of the Universal Credit Scheme. Money has been used to fund a part-time Benefits adviser.

We thank Wixamtree Trust for their continued ongoing support for funding. Also we would like to thank Garfield Weston and A B Charitable Trust for providing unrestricted funding.

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Trustees' Report

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

BRASS is a registered charity governed by a constitution that was adopted on 1st October 1999 and then revised on 18th September 2002 and 5th March 2003. BRASS is a non-political, voluntary organisation, established for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers in the County of Bedfordshire to assist in the relief of poverty, hardship or distress.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

BRASS recognises that the recruitment and selection of new trustees can strongly influence our future effectiveness. The organisation aims to follow good practice in this field as well as the provisions of our constitution. All BRASS trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting or are co-opted. When looking to recruit new trustees, the committee will attempt to fill any gaps in skills, knowledge and experience of our current trustees and reflect the diversity of the communities in which we operate. We will use the most appropriate ways of recruiting new trustees, including local networks and advertising. We will prepare role descriptions for trustees, ensure that all potential trustees meet all eligibility criteria and ask all potential trustees about any possible conflicts of interest.

All trustees will be invited to complete a nomination/co-option form so that their nomination can be presented at the Annual General Meeting or the next Executive Committee. They will then be invited to meet with the chairperson to discuss their nomination and this discussion will be recorded on their nomination paper.

Induction and training of trustees

On appointment, new trustees will be offered a tailored induction programme and ongoing support. The induction will include a welcome letter, signposting to the Charity commission website, in particular The Essential Trustee: What you need to know guidance, a copy of the BRASS constitution, a copy of the latest annual report and annual accounts and the policy schedule and access to all policies and procedures.

Organisational structure

BRASS employs a Project co-ordinator to oversee day to day business and to provide specialist advice, and full-time Syrian Family Support Officer and part-time Benefits Adviser, Integration Officer, Immigration adviser, Finance Manager and Finance Officer. Most of the charity's work is undertaken by a team of dedicated volunteers.

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Trustees' Report

Relationships with related parties

Other organisations

BRASS has the objective of building capacity through partnerships, working to help sustain service provision. BRASS seeks to compliment other services through involvement with local multi-agency forums such as The New Migration Partnership, Bedford Borough Diversity Network, Bedford Advice Forum, where issues are raised, information exchanged and partnership solutions explored. BRASS is a key participant in the organisation of the annual Bedford Refugee Week which holds events to raise awareness of the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers.

BRASS continues to have strong working relationships with local organisations providing advice so that individuals can get support from the organisations best placed to offer it. Luton Law Centre has qualified solicitors and case workers who take referrals from BRASS and provide telephone support to BRASS advisors. BRASS also works with the University of Bedfordshire Law department to assist refugees with family reunification applications. BRASS works with the Citizens Advice Bureau to cross refer clients and makes referrals to the local MP who, in specific cases, helps with representations to the Home Office.

Referrals are received from Children's Services which is responsible for unaccompanied Asylum seekers under the age of 18. The Community Voluntary Service (CVS) provides a regular supply of enthusiastic and committed volunteers and the Charity continues to receive invaluable support from the Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity who support our tutoring project by carrying out the relevant DBS checks.

BRASS works in partnership with both local and national charities. Advice and support are provided by the Refugee Council, which is the largest refugee agency in the UK, and Migrant Help. The Red Cross provide BRASS with vouchers which can be given to clients to spend on clothes at Red Cross Shops and help with travel expenses to the nearest immigration solicitors in Luton.

Major risks and management of those risks

General

Our Facilities Officer ensures that our health and safety policy, fire risk assessment and fire safety management plan are regularly reviewed and updated. The building and our services are appropriately insured to safeguard the organisation and volunteers with the tutoring project are subject to DBS checks in order to protect our clients. Our drop-in advice service is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commission (OISC).

Financial instruments

Objectives and policies

The charity's activities expose it to a number of financial risks including credit risk, cash flow risk and liquidity risk. The use of financial derivatives is governed by the charity's policies approved by the

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Trustees' Report

board of trustees, which provide written principles on the use of financial derivatives to manage these risks. The charity does not use derivative financial instruments for speculative purposes.

Cash flow risk

The charity's activities expose it primarily to the financial risks of changes in foreign currency exchange rates and interest rates. The charity uses foreign exchange forward contracts and interest rate swap contracts to hedge these exposures.

Interest bearing assets and liabilities are held at fixed rate to ensure certainty of cash flows.

Credit risk

The charity's principal financial assets are bank balances and cash, trade and other receivables, and investments.

The charity's credit risk is primarily attributable to its trade receivables. The amounts presented in the balance sheet are net of allowances for doubtful receivables. An allowance for impairment is made where there is an identified loss event which, based on previous experience, is evidence of a reduction in the recoverability of the cash flows.

The credit risk on liquid funds and derivative financial instruments is limited because the counterparties are banks with high credit-ratings assigned by international credit-rating agencies. The charity has no significant concentration of credit risk, with exposure spread over a large number of counterparties and customers.

Liquidity risk

In order to maintain liquidity to ensure that sufficient funds are available for ongoing operations and future developments, the charity uses a mixture of long-term and short-term debt finance.

Further details regarding liquidity risk can be found in the Statement of accounting policies in the financial statements.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 28 August 2018 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Veta Hudson-Rae
Trustee

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations, and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 28 August 2018 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Veta Hudson-Rae
Trustee

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2018 which are set out on pages 9 to 24.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees of Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

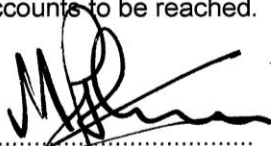
I report in respect of my examination of the Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



.....
Martin Foster, ACA
AIMS Accountants for Business
ICAEW

Unit 5 Shannon Court
High Street
Sandy
Bedfordshire
SG19 1AG

Date: 18 August 2018

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies		37,832	120,031	157,863
Investment income	3	45	-	45
Other income		327	-	327
Total income		38,204	120,031	158,235
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		(3,719)	(2,548)	(6,267)
Charitable activities		(776)	(88,374)	(89,150)
Other expenditure	7	(10,377)	(9,994)	(20,371)
Total expenditure		(14,872)	(100,916)	(115,788)
Net movement in funds		23,332	19,115	42,447
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		10,281	109,519	119,800
Total funds carried forward	16	33,613	128,634	162,247
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2017 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies		20,237	108,318	128,555
Investment income	3	39	-	39
Other income		366	-	366
Total income		20,642	108,318	128,960
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		-	(6,130)	(6,130)
Charitable activities		-	(87,378)	(87,378)
Other expenditure	7	(21,178)	3,460	(17,718)
Total expenditure		(21,178)	(90,048)	(111,226)
Net movement in funds		(536)	18,270	17,734
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		14,657	87,410	102,067
Total funds carried forward	16	14,121	105,680	119,801

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The funds breakdown for 2017 is shown in note 16.

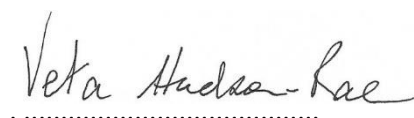
Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

**(Registration number: 1096874)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2018**

	Note	2018 £	2017 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	712	1,717
Current assets			
Debtors	14	96,834	56,236
Cash at bank and in hand		90,084	87,818
		<u>186,918</u>	<u>144,054</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	15	<u>(25,383)</u>	<u>(25,970)</u>
Net current assets		<u>161,535</u>	<u>118,084</u>
Net assets		<u><u>162,247</u></u>	<u><u>119,801</u></u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted funds		128,634	105,680
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>33,613</u>	<u>14,121</u>
Total funds	16	<u><u>162,247</u></u>	<u><u>119,801</u></u>

The financial statements on pages 9 to 24 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 28 August 2018 and signed on their behalf by:



.....
Veta Hudson-Rae
Trustee

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

1 Accounting policies

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Basis of preparation

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Exemption from preparing a cash flow statement

The charity opted to early adopt Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016 and have therefore not included a cash flow statement in these financial statements.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Income and endowments

Voluntary income including donations, gifts, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Donations and legacies

Donations and legacies are recognised on a receivable basis when receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.

Grants receivable

Grants are recognised when the charity has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

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Gifts in kind

Gifts in kind are recognised in different ways dependent on how they are used by the charity:

- (i) Those donated for resale produce income when they are sold. They are valued at the amount actually realised.
- (ii) Those donated for onward transmission to beneficiaries are included in the Statement of Financial Activities as incoming resources and resources expended when they are distributed. They are valued at the amount the charity would have had to pay to acquire them.
- (iii) Those donated for use by the charity itself are included when receivable. They are valued at the amount the charity would have had to pay to acquire them.

Gift aid

Incoming resources from tax reclaims are included in the Statement of Financial Activities at the same time as the gift to which they relate.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Raising funds

These are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, the management of investments and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees's meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

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256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £100.00 or more are initially recorded at cost.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Computer equipment	33% straight line
Office equipment	25% straight line

Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Trade creditors

are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Borrowings

Interest-bearing borrowings are initially recorded at fair value, net of transaction costs. Interest-bearing borrowings are subsequently carried at amortised cost, with the difference between the proceeds, net of transaction costs, and the amount due on redemption being recognised as a charge to the Statement of Financial Activities over the period of the relevant borrowing.

Interest expense is recognised on the basis of the effective interest method and is included in interest payable and similar charges.

Borrowings are classified as current liabilities unless the charity has an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting date.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees's discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside for specific purposes at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Financial instruments

Classification

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the charity after deducting all of its liabilities.

Recognition and measurement

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), except for those financial assets classified as at fair value through profit or loss, which are initially measured at fair value (which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are only offset in the statement of financial position when, and only when there exists a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and the charity intends either to settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Financial assets are derecognised when and only when a) the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are settled, b) the charity transfers to another party substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of the financial asset, or c) the charity, despite having retained some, but not all, significant risks and rewards of ownership, has transferred control of the asset to another party.

Financial liabilities are derecognised only when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Debt instruments

Debt instruments which meet the following conditions are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method:

- (a) The contractual return to the holder is (i) a fixed amount; (ii) a positive fixed rate or a positive variable rate; or (iii) a combination of a positive or a negative fixed rate and a positive variable rate.
- (b) The contract may provide for repayments of the principal or the return to the holder (but not both) to be linked to a single relevant observable index of general price inflation of the currency in which the debt instrument is denominated, provided such links are not leveraged.
- (c) The contract may provide for a determinable variation of the return to the holder during the life of the instrument, provided that (i) the new rate satisfies condition (a) and the variation is not contingent on future events other than (1) a change of a contractual variable rate; (2) to protect the holder against credit deterioration of the issuer; (3) changes in levies applied by a central bank or arising from changes in relevant taxation or law; or (ii) the new rate is a market rate of interest and satisfies condition (a).
- (d) There is no contractual provision that could, by its terms, result in the holder losing the principal amount or any interest attributable to the current period or prior periods.
- (e) Contractual provisions that permit the issuer to prepay a debt instrument or permit the holder to put it back to the issuer before maturity are not contingent on future events, other than to protect the holder against the credit deterioration of the issuer or a change in control of the issuer, or to protect the holder or issuer against changes in levies applied by a central bank or arising from changes in relevant taxation or law.
- (f) Contractual provisions may permit the extension of the term of the debt instrument, provided that the return to the holder and any other contractual provisions applicable during the extended term satisfy the conditions of paragraphs (a) to (c).

Debt instruments that are classified as payable or receivable within one year on initial recognition and which meet the above conditions are measured at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received, net of impairment.

With the exception of some hedging instruments, other debt instruments not meeting these conditions are measured at fair value through profit or loss.

Commitments to make and receive loans which meet the conditions mentioned above are measured at cost (which may be nil) less impairment.

Investments

Investments in non-convertible preference shares and non-puttable ordinary or preference shares (where shares are publicly traded or their fair value is reliably measurable) are measured at fair value through profit or loss. Where fair value cannot be measured reliably, investments are measured at cost less impairment.

Investments in subsidiaries and associates are measured at cost less impairment. For investments in subsidiaries acquired for consideration including the issue of shares qualifying for merger relief, cost is measured by reference to the nominal value of the shares issued plus fair value of other consideration. Any premium is ignored.

Derivative financial instruments

The charity uses derivative financial instruments to reduce exposure to foreign exchange risk and interest rate movements. The charity does not hold or issue derivative financial instruments for speculative purposes.

Derivatives are initially recognised at fair value at the date a derivative contract is entered into and are subsequently remeasured to their fair value at each reporting date. The resulting gain or loss is recognised in statement of financial activities immediately unless the derivative is designated and effective as a hedging instrument, in which event the timing of the recognition in statement of financial activities depends on the nature of the hedge relationship.

Fair value measurement

The best evidence of fair value is a quoted price for an identical asset in an active market. When quoted prices are unavailable, the price of a recent transaction for an identical asset provides evidence of fair value as long as there has not been a significant change in economic circumstances or a significant lapse of time since the transaction took place. If the market is not active and recent transactions of an identical asset on their own are not a good estimate of fair value, the fair value is estimated by using a valuation technique.

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total 2018	Total 2017
	Designated £	General £	£	£	£
Donations and legacies;					
Donations from companies, trusts and similar proceeds	-	-	336	336	42,094
Donations from individuals	-	7,032	-	7,032	10,850
Grants, including capital grants;					
Grants from other charities	2,800	22,000	109,895	134,695	75,611
Donations from community groups	-	-	9,800	9,800	-
Gifts in kind	-	6,000	-	6,000	5,000
Other income from donations and legacies	-	-	-	-	(5,000)
	<u>2,800</u>	<u>35,032</u>	<u>120,031</u>	<u>157,863</u>	<u>128,555</u>

3 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds	Total 2018	Total 2017
	General £	£	£
Other investment income	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>39</u>

4 Other income

	Unrestricted funds	Total 2018	Total 2017
	General £	£	£
Rental income	<u>325</u>	<u>325</u>	<u>366</u>

Bedfordshire Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Group

known as BRASS

5 Expenditure on raising funds

a) Costs of generating donations and legacies

	Note	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Other direct costs of generating voluntary income		<u>3,719</u>	<u>2,548</u>	<u>6,267</u>	<u>6,130</u>
				Direct costs £	Total 2018 £
Costs of generating donations and legacies				<u>6,267</u>	<u>6,267</u>

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Note	Unrestricted funds Designated £	General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Staff costs		1,680	(1,803)	87,333	87,210	84,819
Governance costs		<u>-</u>	<u>899</u>	<u>1,041</u>	<u>1,940</u>	<u>2,559</u>
		<u>1,680</u>	<u>(904)</u>	<u>88,374</u>	<u>89,150</u>	<u>87,378</u>

7 Other expenditure

	Designated £	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Other resources expended	183	10,194	9,994	20,371	17,718
	<u>183</u>	<u>10,194</u>	<u>9,994</u>	<u>20,371</u>	<u>17,718</u>

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8 Analysis of governance and support costs

Governance costs

	Unrestricted funds			
	General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Independent examiner fees				
Other fees paid to examiners	599	36	635	600
Depreciation, amortisation and other similar costs	-	1,005	1,005	1,659
Other governance costs	300	-	300	300
	<u>899</u>	<u>1,041</u>	<u>1,940</u>	<u>2,559</u>

9 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming resources for the year include:

	2018 £	2017 £
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>1,005</u>	<u>1,659</u>

10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2018 £	2017 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	84,753	80,821
Social security costs	-	(3,000)
Pension costs	2,260	1,679
Other staff costs	197	5,319
	<u>87,210</u>	<u>84,819</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year

11 Independent examiner's remuneration

	2018 £	2017 £
Other fees to examiners		
Examination-related assurance services	<u>635</u>	<u>600</u>

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12 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Other tangible fixed asset £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2017	7,882	1,976	9,858
At 31 March 2018	7,882	1,976	9,858
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2017	6,197	1,944	8,141
Charge for the year	973	32	1,005
At 31 March 2018	7,170	1,976	9,146
Net book value			
At 31 March 2018	712	-	712
At 31 March 2017	1,685	32	1,717

14 Debtors

	2018 £	2017 £
Accrued income	96,834	56,236

15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2018 £	2017 £
Trade creditors	30	30
Other creditors	-	(1)
Accruals	25,353	25,941
	25,383	25,970

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16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2017 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2018 £
Unrestricted funds				
General	(9,611)	(35,404)	13,009	(32,006)
Designated	(670)	(2,800)	1,863	(1,607)
Total unrestricted funds	(10,281)	(38,204)	14,872	(33,613)
Restricted funds	(109,519)	(120,031)	100,916	(128,634)
Total funds	(119,800)	(158,235)	115,788	(162,247)
	Balance at 1 April 2016 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2017 £
Unrestricted funds				
General	(14,657)	(19,242)	21,178	(12,721)
Other	-	(1,400)	-	(1,400)
Total unrestricted funds	(14,657)	(20,642)	21,178	(14,121)
Restricted funds	(87,410)	(108,318)	90,048	(105,680)
Total funds	(102,067)	(128,960)	111,226	(119,801)

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	(1,005)	1,717	712
Current assets	186,118	800	186,918
Current liabilities	(25,383)	-	(25,383)
Total net assets	159,730	2,517	162,247

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18 Analysis of net funds

	At 1 April 2017 £	Cash flow £	At 31 March 2018 £
Cash at bank and in hand	87,818	2,266	90,084
Net debt	<u>87,818</u>	<u>2,266</u>	<u>90,084</u>