



WELCOMING
REFUGEES,
HELPING
STRANGERS
BECOME
NEIGHBOURS

UPBEAT UPDATES

// 01 //

SUMMER 2018 //



WELCOME TO OUR BRAND NEW UPBEAT NEWSLETTER!

UPBEAT COMMUNITIES BEGAN WITH A VISION TO SEE DERBY BECOME A PLACE WHERE REFUGEES WERE WELCOMED AND REAL RELATIONSHIPS WOULD BE BUILT. It started thirteen years ago with our young family and a few friends from church simply offering a hand of welcome and friendship to refugees. Over the years that vision has become a reality through the love and commitment of many dedicated individuals. We have had the privilege of welcoming and building friendships with many people who have experienced great loss but show remarkable resilience and generosity.

Upbeat helped launch Refugee Week in Derby in 2005 and City of Sanctuary a few years later, celebrating the contribution of refugee communities through music festivals, cultural events and plenty of parties!

My personal journey now is to carry that same vision beyond Derby. I'll be doing that through Welcome Churches, a new charity which will inspire and train churches across the UK to welcome and support refugees. It's never easy to hand on something you started and love but it's made easier when you are handing on to an experienced leader like Andrew! My thanks to our founder member, Community Church Derby, the Upbeat team, trustees and our partners for your support over the years. You have made all the difference.



KARINA MARTIN
Founder & Former CEO



ANDREW JACKSON
Newly Appointed Chief Executive

TO STEP INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES IS NEVER AN EASY TASK, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT IS SOMEONE LIKE KARINA, WHO EMBODIES SUCH PASSION, ENERGY AND DRIVE.

Yet it is on the foundation that Karina has built, that I get to lead this amazing charity forward; full of vision, hope and opportunity. Whilst the situation faced by asylum seekers and refugees in the UK seems more and more challenging, particularly due to the current 'hostile environment', I am honoured to be part of an amazing team of staff and volunteers who are actually making a profound difference to the lives of many individuals, and to their local communities. Having worked with refugees for a number of years, I've had the privilege of meeting some of the most interesting and inspiring people I have ever come across, and I am truly grateful that I get to lead Upbeat Communities in welcoming those seeking sanctuary and helping strangers become neighbours.

LILY'S STORY



I WAS A
STRANGER &
THEY DIDN'T
KNOW ME BUT
THEY HELPED
ME ANYWAY

WE MET LILY* THROUGH OUR WELCOME BOXES PROJECT. THIS IS THE STORY OF HOW UPBEAT COMMUNITIES HAS TRANSFORMED HER LIFE.

I like the UK. It's so nice here, but I don't like the weather. It's so cold. I've met some beautiful people through Upbeat Communities. They really impacted my life. I was a stranger and they didn't know me but they helped me anyway. They took the extra time to listen to me, to engage with me in conversation and laugh with me.

This has given me great friendships that go beyond helping me with paperwork and problems. Whatever tomorrow brings, I'll be able to deal with the situation because I know I have people who support me. The UK has offered me a lot. I really enjoy it here. I love Derby because it's not too busy. It feels relaxed.

One of the projects I have been a part of is the creative sessions. We started off by making

bags and jewellery to sell in the community. I remember when I made my first necklace, I was so proud of myself. There is a sense of family in the group, people who are like me. We all come from different places, but we are all the same. We all bring something great to the group.

We had pop-up shops at different events and I really loved selling. I like people and I enjoyed talking to the customers. We sold lots of the items we made, which was very satisfying. I had never done that before and it was a nice experience. I felt like I was accomplishing something, and it gave me confidence to get some of my independence back.

I felt encouraged to look after myself because I could see I had value and I was useful.

*Want to help us serve more people like Lily through creative sessions and community-building activities? Find out more by heading to:
UPBEATCOMMUNITIES.ORG/DONATE*



IN THE LAST YEAR
WE'VE TAUGHT OVER 200
FREE ENGLISH CLASSES

RUN HUNDREDS OF TRAINING
EVENTS, DAYS OUT, BABY
SHOWERS & COMMUNITY
MEALS

SURVIVE AND THRIVE IS A PROJECT RUN JOINTLY BY THE BRITISH RED CROSS, THE MULTI-FAITH CENTRE AND UPBEAT COMMUNITIES.

Four years of funding have been provided by the Big Lottery: we are currently half way in. I really like the name of this project. Many asylum seekers and refugees are just about surviving. They have arrived in a foreign, alien country. Many have left relatives thousands of miles away on another continent. Perhaps they don't know anyone in the country when they arrive. Many have lost their role and status in society as well as their language.

Survive and Thrive gives people a reason to get up in the morning. It is a place to improve language skills and a place to find community. We provide English lessons, cultural awareness, employment training, meals together, trips and so much more.

When people arrive to English classes, they are warmly greeted, ushered in and offered a drink. After chatting to their friends from many different nations they come into the classroom. One of my favourite things about lessons is that if someone needs clarification there is usually someone who is able to explain in whatever language is needed.

As well as fuelling the body, eating together provides a relaxed atmosphere to get to know one another. Sporting and cultural trips enable people to escape from their immediate environment. Seeing people visibly relax when walking in the countryside is a testament to the restorative power of nature.

What do participants say? Here are a few phrases that I recall.

"That's the first time I've ever done that!"

"English people are so friendly!"

And finally, they often say,

"Thank you very much. Can I help with anything?"



WELL DONE TEAM UPBEAT!

We want to say congratulations to our incredible team of runners who took on the Derby 10K in April. Collectively, they raised over £1,800 for our work.

One of our Sudanese friends, who we've got to know through Survive and Thrive, finished the race in the top ten per cent! It was powerful to see one of the people we serve running alongside supporters, volunteers and friends of the charity.

If YOU have an idea for a fundraiser, get in touch with sam@upbeatcommunities.org. Together, we can fight isolation and help strangers become neighbours.

EVENTS

DERBY'S BIGGEST EVER REFUGEE WEEK

JUNE 2018

In June 2018, Refugee Week reached an important milestone: twenty years of celebrating the contributions, creativity and resilience of refugees.

We helped to organise the Derby celebrations, which included a Q&A with the celebrated author Gulwali Passarlay, a film screening at QUAD and a community meal for over 150 people!

Thank you to everyone who helped make the week such a success!

WELCOME BANQUET

5 OCTOBER 2018

Raising essential funds to welcome refugees. This year's banquet will feature gourmet Indian food, a charity auction, luxury ice cream, a photo booth and a performance from TV comedian & magician John Archer!

Tickets now on sale at WELCOMEBANQUET2018.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK



WHAT'S ON?

MONDAYS

Free English Classes for Refugees & Asylum Seekers
BEGINNER: 10.00am-11.30am

WEDNESDAYS

Free English Classes for Refugees & Asylum Seekers
BEGINNER: 10.00am-11.30am
ENTRY LEVEL: 11.30am-1.00pm

Red Cross Drop-in, Casework and Advice 12.00pm-2.00pm

TUESDAYS

Free English Classes for Refugees & Asylum Seekers
INTERMEDIATE: 10.00am-11.30am
Lunch 12.00pm-1.00pm
Social Activities 1.00pm-3.00pm

Open Word English Class Using The Bible
1.00pm-3.00pm

FRIDAYS

Free English Classes for Refugees & Asylum Seekers
ENTRY 2/3: 10am-11.30am
Creative Session 11.30am-2.00pm

All events take place at:

Overdale House, 96 Whitaker Road, Derby, DE23 6AP

THURSDAYS

NEW! Women's Coffee Morning
10:30am-12pm

HELP STRANGERS BECOME NEIGHBOURS BY DONATING TODAY

All of the work you've read about in this newsletter is only possible through financial support.

REMEMBER:

YOUR DONATION + UPBEAT COMMUNITIES = LIVES OF REFUGEES TRANSFORMED!

Upbeat Communities is reliant on generous donations from people like you to support our work in transforming the lives of refugees. If you're not already doing so, please consider supporting us with a regular monthly donation.

£5 / helps us make one Welcome Box visit to befriend a newly arrived asylum seeking family

£10 / contributes to the costs of teaching English to refugees to help integration

£50 / lets us run a creative session for refugees and asylum seekers to express themselves

£100 / allows us to run social activities to prevent isolation

£500 / provides set-up costs for a new house to provide accommodation for refugees

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*To find out more head to:
UPBEATCOMMUNITIES.ORG/DONATE*