



## HAY, BRECON & TALGARTH SANCTUARY FOR REFUGEES

### GROUP MEETING

Wednesday 12th October 2016 18:30. Gwernyfed Rugby club in Talgarth.

1. **Minutes Approved** with correction of Marilyn for Margaret, listening skills deferred at suggestion of Maggie. Report Approved.

Activities since last meeting:

- Stall at Promfest run by Penny - over £70 raised and lots of leaflets given out. Additional generous donations including one from Susi who gave and was paid for a talk about her family experiences of being refugees during WW2.
- Lobbying - letters sent to Chris Davies by various members and from the group about the need to raise refugee issues in Parliament especially the plight of the Calais children. Draft Template available from me or our website; Refugee Welcome summit attended by Steve on our behalf; Refugee Welcome march in London and Swansea.
- Respite day in Christ College - please see write up [here](#).
- English teaching group coordinated by Janet delivered sessions to Syrian families in Ystradgynlais and also signed up families with library and helped with some household needs. Help from Arabic speakers in Swansea- particularly Samir.

### Matters arising

- Football boots needed by UID. Will have an ongoing need as the people change. Have written to Christ College, Talgarth FC and Hay FC. Gwernyfed HS have put out an appeal. ACTION Neil to do poster to go to sports halls, schools etc. Can share this on Facebook and ask all supporters to share. Steve will ask Birmingham City who have been generous to him in past.
- Reverse advent calendar. ACTION Promote idea via Facebook, twitter etc. Goods could be delivered in the early New Year. (Basically - Start the Reverse Advent Calendar when you start your regular Advent Calendar. Grab a basket or box, and every day leading up to Christmas, add something useful to the box (tinned food, cleaning stuff, toys, whatever you think would be welcome). Then, in run up to Christmas, donate the entire basket and contents to HBTSR. We will deliver to families for the New Year.

- Refugees Welcome - Steve reported on his attendance at the summit meeting in Birmingham which he found inspiring, thought-provoking and useful for building relationships. He had described our model of respite days which we have found mutually beneficial both for recipients and local people to change views. Jo reported on her experience of a conference call with this group- She has put the information on our website [here](#). Do consider taking action
- No info from Anna May about whether addition monies are needed. She is working with the children on getting their asylum claims processed. May need French speakers to help with bi-lingual information sheets ACTION Lynne to chase and see if there is still a need for French language help. Group agreed £250 could be given if needed.
- MIDAS minibus licence training. Group agreed to fund training for up to three additional people [? Wayne, Gez, Sue and Neil]. PAVO may be able to offer discounted rates.
- The young runner Mo that we had helped to get running kit ran in the Cardiff Half Marathon. He is joining an athletics club and is reported to be much happier than for some time. Agreed we would be happy to offer similar help to other athletes.

## 2. Youth /Schools

Agreed - We would offer a talk to Gwernyfed by Sue about the Bronllys day as pupils who had been invited and seemed keen to be involved didn't come. However several others did but the sixth form may need some inspiration and encouragement. Cradoc School would like a refugee to speak if possible. ACTION Ailsa will ask Samer or the speakers' team and see if other schools want this

3. Lobbying - plight of unaccompanied children in Calais - Virginia and Ailsa reported upon the letters from Chris Davies that they had in response to their letters. ACTION to post on the website the email sent on behalf of the group and its response.
4. Stalls - 10th December Hay fair trade winter fair - Sean agrees to coordinate this. Offers of help please to [seanonwye@gmail.com](mailto:seanonwye@gmail.com)
5. Publicity, Twitter, Facebook, Website - Recent mention in B&R led to a new supporter coming to Bronllys and our meeting. 306 supporters on mailing list, 261 twitter and 258 on Facebook. Website remains well maintained but we still don't seem able to get a Facebook feed on website. Still trying!
6. Respite days
  - Bronllys (October 9<sup>th</sup>) - great success with many donations, support and a core of young people involved in the activities and kitchen. The organisers were congratulated upon hosting such a successful day without even a sink or any kitchen units. Neil has prepared a helpful thank you poster to go to schools and churches and library to thank people for their support. Action Lynne to ask Choir leader if she

would like to write to B&R highlighting the day and her response to it. Write up will be on website by early next week.

- Landmark Trust (October 29<sup>th</sup>) - Details still being confirmed but will likely be two minibuses coming to Llwyn Celyn Llanthony Valley and up to 10 supporters helping with welcome and support will be appreciated to offer support.
- Caerphilly Castle via Lumen Prize (November 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>). Cardiff and Newport will visit on 24<sup>th</sup> and Swansea on 27<sup>th</sup>. Again we would welcome supporters coming to Caerphilly on one or both days. Will need to let me know so I can get passes.
- Pre-Christmas Event (December 11<sup>th</sup>) - have reserved coach in case Ystrad or Llanfihangel or Hay might host a pre-Christmas event. ACTION - await decisions.
- Cradoc 29<sup>th</sup> January, Beth the acting Head Teacher told us the exciting ideas they had for pottery, woodwork, singing, music, a walk up the Crug, football and possibly rugby. ACTION Try to find a refugee speaker to enthuse the children who will enthuse the parents. Help offered in planning from Sue and Ailsa.
- Ystradgynlais - Maggie explained her reservations about hosting a day in Ystradgynlais at present. She feared that a large number of people coming might jeopardize the successful integration of the current families. Agreed to consider this next year. However there will be a Christmas party for local children that will involve the Syrian families.
- Llangorse in April for consideration
- Llanfihangel Nant Bran possibly Feb/March- no details yet
- Trefecca - no details
- The Pales (a Quaker house near Penybont, Llandrindod Wells) could be a venue for a weekend in June/July. Jeff and Jan will work on details. Possibly could involve the community cafe in Llandrindod Wells
- Craig y NOS bulb planting on weekend of 22/23<sup>rd</sup> October anyone keen to help with this? Could see if any people seeking refuge might like to come.
- The Powys Football development officer has offered the possibility of free tickets and transport to watch Hereford play in New Year. We think this will be very popular.

#### 7. Hardship fund details

- Running kit and fees £100. Confirmed we would look favourably at supporting other similar requests.
- Agreed expenditure - request submitted by Maria for bus fares for a lady who needs to go to college and cannot walk there.

#### 8. Finance and expenditure

- £345 spent on coach and about £70 on minibus
- Several donations amounting to £170 this month
- Agreed to give £100 to Rachel to support her attending a project to help mothers and babies in Greece via [Nurture Project International](#)
- Agreed donation to Unity in Diversity for general running costs £250

## 9. Fundraising

- Brecon Volunteer bureau fundraising with us at the MUSE 4th February pm. Fran has sent further details of her plans for the evening and Steve will liaise with her. Save the date!
- Winterfair 10th December in Hay - Sean will liaise
- Hay winter festival- things are in hand and there may be tickets for events if desired by people seeking refuge.
- Thai Restaurant in Brecon has asked if we would like to be their charity for the opening evening on 19th October. We would! David Meredith to be thanked to arranging this.
- Ideas of other events –
  - i. Possible concert with Jo Gooch on December 10
  - ii. Possible fundraising evening Rachel and Virginia

## 10. Goods

- Virginia coordinator of supermarket donations report- two loads of perishable goods from Aldi since last meeting but nil else from Morrisons at present.
- Store users group report - We have distributed goods to UID x2 (thanks Trevor and Virginia) and to Red Cross since last meeting. Continue to receive regular donations of goods from St Marys and Lib Dems and Library.

11. Ystradgynlais - A group coordinated by Janet and Maggie has delivered about 5 conversation classes at request of Mr Inkson. The formal teaching has now started. Last week PAVO held a local meeting and was rather critical of our group being involved with English teaching which was saddening. In response we submitted a report of our observations and suggestions of how we feel things could be done better in Newtown. Report available to see on request. Our group will continue to invite the Ystradgynlais families to join with us when we can and the individuals who have been involved are encouraged by us to continue to befriend the families. If the homework sessions are wanted by the families then group members may be prepared to travel in support.

## 12. Groups

- Artists - Antonia has suggested diary project and will discuss this further next year.
- Homes - Rachel had sent details of a project about Homes- this may be more suitable for Swansea
- English teaching - as above
- Therapy - listening skills session to be delivered at another meeting.
- Writers' group - Sian and Mark are setting up a group to support some Refugee writers.

13. Charitable status – progressing

## 14. Meetings attended

- Booklet launch in Cardiff - booklet about refugees stories to be donated to Ystradgynlais library

15. Any Other business

- Mike and Sean spoke with a Researcher from Glasgow University about refugees and solidarity in a time of austerity.
- We responded to a request for information about employment support.
- Sanctuary in Parliament on 29th November and in Senedd on 7th December
- Please see the City of Sanctuary newsletter [here](#)

16. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 16th November