



How can we together foster welcome and inclusion in your place?

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A movement about welcome and belonging



Local people and community groups committed to creating a culture of welcome and safety for all, especially for people seeking sanctuary from violence and persecution.



City of Sanctuary UK



City of Sanctuary

an organisation, a network, and a movement

small
**refugee sector
charity**

12 part-time
staff across UK

network of
more than 120
grass-roots
refugee support
groups

movement
to create
welcome and
belonging for
people seeking
sanctuary

Why do we need talk about welcome?

- **Global:** 80 million forcibly displaced
- **Changing UK Asylum law:** *Nationality and Borders Bill*
- **Community:** Promoting cohesion & safety for all
- **Individual:** Supports new arrivals to integrate & foster new connections with settled community



The UK context

- Long historic tradition of welcoming people seeking safety
- People seeking sanctuary as % of population (UK 0.2%, Germany 1.2%, Lebanon 40%)
- Brexit
- New Immigration (asylum) legislation
- High press interest





Applying lessons from the Covid Pandemic and the Afghan Crisis

- Change can happen quickly
- Communities play a vital part in any crisis response
- Proximity matters
- In terms of LAs 'systems working' can deliver great results locally
- We are globally connected- No one is safe until we are all safe

What does a “welcoming” community look like?

- Is a ‘place’ for everyone.
- Ensures that local services and public spaces can be accessed and enjoyed by everyone
- Recognises that the UK is enriched by new arrivals.
- Does not tolerate hate crime, discrimination and harassment.
- Supports residents from all backgrounds to feel seen, supported, included and able to thrive.



How to make 'welcome' manifest: *Working with local Institutions and communities*

1. Working with key local institutions

- Schools, FE Colleges, Universities
- Health care providers
- Arts institutions
- Libraries
- Gardens
- Shops
- Places of worship
- Local Authorities

2. Facilitating contact and building relationships of solidarity





Local Authorities Network

- Launched in Dec 2020

Aims:

1. To support the development of a network of local authorities (cross-party) that are working towards a vision of welcome for all which is lead by LAs themselves.
2. To facilitate the sharing of innovative practices which promote the embedding of a culture and practice of welcome in Local Authorities.
3. To speak with one voice on national matters which affect local communities and LAs



Local Authorities Network

How does it work?

- LAs join the network as Awarded or Non-awarded [members](#)
- The network is led by a Steering Group of cllrs, officers, local groups and people with lived experience
- CoS staff support the network: TNMs, policy briefings, resources (incl. position statements, response to consultations, example strategies, motions etc.)
- Members work towards a Council of [Sanctuary Award Application](#)
- Learn, Embed, Share

What are the benefits of joining the Network?

- Help with the development of policies to support people with lived experience
- Help with responses to consultations (adapted to local context)
- Develop a 'Systems Approach'- inter-department multi-level, inter-council, multi-agency working
- Partnership working with national stakeholders
- Enhanced relationship with local community groups, VCSOs, and people with lived experience
- Learning opportunities for staff & cllrs about forced migration
- Opportunities to work with other LAs across the country and share good practice
- Steer the direction of the LAs network
- Stronger more inclusive communities
- Kind and humane practices/services which enable newcomers to thrive





Final thoughts

- Wherever we came from, we all deserve to feel safe in our homes and communities
- Welcome is for everyone, not just those who have fled war and persecution
- Engagement with and centring those with lived experience in this process to help identify what welcome/integration can really mean