

Moravian Women's Association
Home and Overseas Paper - May 2017
The Harbour Project for Refugees
“ - lets help refugees thrive not just survive!”

In 2016, the MWA decided to give £1,500 to a refugee project. It has taken a little time, but our Swindon Circle provided details of “The Harbour Project”, which is a registered charity, and the Executive Committee has decided to donate the money to them.

The Harbour Project

Harbour is based in Swindon, and aids refugees and asylum seekers across Swindon. Harbour gives them friendship, advice, and hope. Their “visitors” are some of the most marginalised and misunderstood in the community.

Who runs Harbour?

There is a small team of paid staff, and volunteers. Many of the volunteers are former asylum seekers, or have lived abroad. They know how important a friendly face is in a place far from home.

Who uses Harbour?

Over 500 hundred people from more than 50 countries come to Harbour each year.

What does Harbour offer to visitors?

- A drop in centre with free telephone, internet and refreshments
- Help settling in, registering with a GP and schools, and getting around Swindon, also second hand clothing and household goods
- Friendly and informal English classes
- Help building a CV, and assistance with job applications
- Volunteering opportunities
- Recreation activities
- Cookery and art classes
- Family activities during school holidays

Harbour does not offer immigration advice, but will refer visitors to the Citizens Advice Bureau for specialist help.

Harbour say

“Let's help refugees thrive not just survive!”

“We truly are a “Harbour” - a place where people from all walks of life, from all over the world, can meet, make friends, get support and advice.”

“There are no such things as strangers, only friends we have not yet met.”

Visitors say

Mohamed

“When I came here I was without family and friends; homesick. I will never forget you all my life, because nobody can forget his father and mother and you are like my parents.”

Aeoub

“At first I was confused because I was not sure how to speak to people, to make friends or how to go to places. The English and computer classes were very important. They helped me to know how to speak to people and to mix with others, so I became happier.”

Sagar

“Harbour Project is the place where I have got help, advice & love. I will never forget the loving moments I spent in Harbour. Thank you so much.”

Information about The Harbour Project can be found at www.harbourproject.org.uk. The information in this paper has come from their website.

Here is a short extract from a statement about refugees from the worldwide Moravian Unity Synod held in Montego Bay in 2016:

“We bear in our collective memory that our forefathers and –mothers were welcomed as refugees in Herrnhut – this is paramount to our church. This history challenges us to take a stand and to support refugees wherever we have the chance to do so. “

Naomi Hancock