

Update from Horsforth Town of Sanctuary and Refugee Support Work

1st May 2024

Horsforth Town of Sanctuary (HToS)

- Laura Schubert started as the new Refugee Support Worker with Horsforth Chaplaincy Project for 15 hrs/week in March (funded by Leeds City Council).
- The HToS steering group, chaired by Rose McCarthy, meets monthly with representatives from the Horsforth community and men who are seeking asylum living at the local hotel.
- There have been awareness raising events in schools with experts by experience of seeking sanctuary, and in March we ran the Finding Your Voice course with 15 participants.
- The Sanctuary Socials at St Margaret's are held every second Friday of the month. They're enjoyed by men from the hotel and local residents – everyone is welcome from 7pm.
- One man came to volunteer at the Horsforth Community Café after connecting with Penny at one of the socials.
- 8 men from the hotel were delighted to join the Good Friday Walk of Witness.

Support to Mercure Parkway Hotel Residents

- There is a strong and active (and growing) group of volunteers running the Monday Conversation Group at the hotel.
- Since March 2024 about 100 new men have arrived at the hotel, and there are now 180 to 200 residents (previously it was 90 to 100 men) at one time.
- This has increased the demand for practical support such as providing clothing, SIM cards, phones, and bus tickets for English classes.
- The men who are seeking sanctuary and living at the hotel are as ever keen to connect, integrate, learn English, and get to know new people.

Links with and support from Horsforth Churches

- **Prayer** – We are thankful for people's prayers for our work and for these men. We hope they may know God's love and experience kindness and healing as they arrive in Leeds.
- **Donations** – We are continuing to collect men's clothes, shoes, backpacks, suitcases and mobile phones for men seeking sanctuary and new to Leeds.
- **Volunteers** – We always welcome new volunteers to join our team, either to help on Monday mornings at the hotel or with clothing or the Sanctuary Socials.
- **Welcome and connect** – We hope for the whole community to be transformed by welcoming and including people who are seeking sanctuary. Could you invite visitors from the hotel to events and services at your church? Our volunteers can help with transport.

Contact: Laura Schubert, email laura@horsforthchaplaincy.org or call/message 07384715444



Clothing Distribution at Holy Name Church Hall in Cookridge in April 2024 for over 80 men



Awareness raising of seeking sanctuary with 3 classes at Kirkstall St Stephen's School



Fathelrahman spoke about seeking sanctuary at the Stephen Lawrence event at Leeds Beckett University. The Good Friday Walk of Witness was enjoyed by 8 men from the hotel.

