



**Welcome to the July edition of the WERS newsletter!**

### **WEST END REFUGEE SERVICE GETS THREE YEARS OF SUPPORT FROM GREGGS TRUST**



WERS has been awarded a further grant from Greggs Trust which will provide funding for the part-time clothing store manager, a post which Greggs Trust has funded since 2000.

Mark Wilson, manager of Greggs Trust, said: "WERS is an impressive project, and the clothing store is an integral part of the charity's work. It provides for the immediate needs of people who arrive in the UK with few possessions, and the project is also working to encourage integration within the community. The Trust is very pleased to continue supporting the West End Refugee Service."

Everyone at WERS is delighted about the latest award and is very grateful to Greggs Trust for their continuing support of the clothing store which provides a wide variety of items for numerous clients and their families.

WERS would very much like to elicit support from local businesses for the clothing store and the food parcels and has started to explore this new area. We would particularly welcome donations of food, toiletries, T shirts, underwear and socks.

If anyone has a business contact or can offer any help with this venture, WERS would be pleased to hear from them.

There is always a demand for stock for the clothing store and our particular needs at the moment are for babies', children's and younger men's clothes, along with bedding and towels.

### **WERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Everyone is warmly invited to the Annual General Meeting on **Thursday 27 September at 6pm**. It will be held at WERS' usual venue, Westgate Baptist Church, Westgate Road, and we are most grateful to the church for letting us use their premises. A light buffet will be available after the meeting and we all look forward to catching up with friends, colleagues and supporters.

Our guest speaker will be Dr Kim Seaton, a Research Associate in the Institute for Policy and Practice at Newcastle University. The presentation, entitled 'Immigration Policy and the Asylum System in Europe' will focus on the dual issues of immigration and asylum in Europe with reference to three case study countries – the UK, Germany and Sweden. It will consider some of the key policy developments in the last 10-20 years, given the intention to move towards a Common Asylum Policy in 2010. Kim is a human geographer and has a particular interest in the functionality and 'morality' of the asylum system as it currently stands. This will be a most interesting talk and give us an insight into asylum systems in other European countries.

### **DESTITUTION: THE SCANDAL CONTINUES**

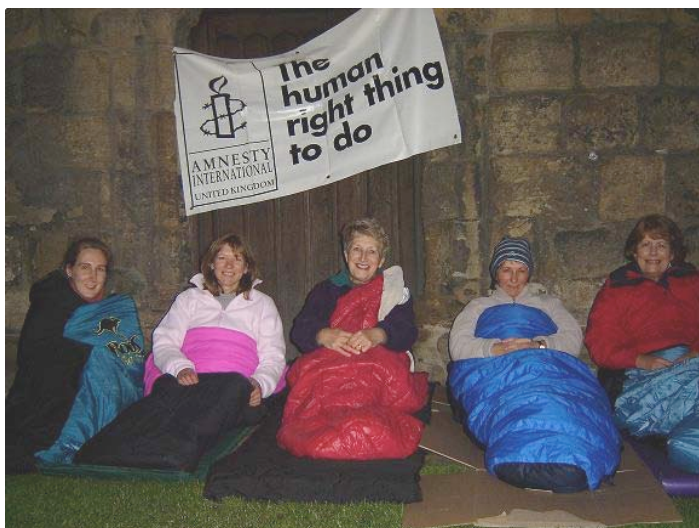
During the last few weeks the number of destitute clients being supported by WERS has risen by 10% to 105. Each week, WERS is receiving 2 or 3 new referrals for support. Each client is given a £10 weekly cash payment and a food parcel worth just over £6. Our weekly bill is therefore £1680 – a considerable sum.

WERS is looking to increase the number of monthly standing orders to help sustain this level of outgoings from the Hardship Fund. Forms can be downloaded from our website: [www.wers.org.uk](http://www.wers.org.uk) or can be obtained from our office.

# Sponsored Sleepout

Many events have been organised across the country to raise awareness of the destitution situation through the 'Still Human Still Here' Campaign.

On 29 June, Hexham Amnesty Group drew attention to the plight of destitute asylum seekers with a sponsored sleepout outside Hexham Abbey in aid of WERS.



Alison Page one of the event organisers who took part said:

'It was an experience I won't forget and made me realise how awful it must be for the destitute.'

Alison was also interviewed on Radio Newcastle and the event was mentioned in the local press. Sponsorship money is coming in to WERS as I write this newsletter and WERS is most grateful to the Hexham Amnesty Group, both for supporting the hardship fund and particularly for raising awareness of the situation.



Pupils at Corbridge Middle School knitted this wonderful blanket to be given to a refugee family. Here Ali from WERS presents the blanket to a delighted Dad and his daughter, who is determined to have it for her bed!

## WERS COUNSELLING SERVICE

### Church Urban Fund

WERS has been awarded £5,000 a year for 2 years by Church Urban Fund for the Counselling Service which is also supported by Your Homes Newcastle Grant Aid Budget. Last year 26 clients benefitted from counselling sessions and WERS thanks both funders for their support.

**Lindsay Cross**

#### Office Details

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**West End Refugee Service  
St Philip's Vicarage  
St Philip's Close  
Arthur's Hill  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE4 5JE**

#### Office & Clothing Store Opening times:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 9.30am – 1pm  
Wednesday: 11am – 1pm