



## Welcome to the July edition of the WERS newsletter –

### Thank you!

Since the April edition of the newsletter, WERS has received over £7,000 in donations to the hardship fund – an excellent and encouraging response!

During the last financial year over £72,000 was given out from the fund so there remains an urgent need for donations if we are to continue supporting the many destitute clients who come to us for help.

### WERS AGM

**Thursday 9 October at 7.30pm**

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Westgate Baptist Church. We very much hope that our speaker this year will be Canon Nicholas Sagovsky who will talk about his work with the Independent Asylum Commission (IAC). The IAC has been conducting a nationwide review of the UK asylum system and has now produced three reports of conclusions and recommendations: Saving Sanctuary, Safe Return and, the most recent, Deserving Dignity. Canon Sagovsky is Canon Theologian at Westminster Abbey and an academic who has been passionately involved with the asylum process in the UK. From 1997 to 2002 he was William Leech Professorial Research Fellow in Applied Christian Theology, Newcastle University and from 2000-2002 he chaired the WERS Executive Committee. WERS will be delighted to welcome back such a distinguished speaker and good friend. It will be a fascinating evening and all are welcome to attend.

A buffet supper will be available from 7.30pm and the business meeting will begin at 8pm.

### Clothing Store

The Clothing Store remains busy and we are grateful for all the many donations that allow us to maintain the store at such a high standard. In addition to our usual needs, we are particularly short of new baby and younger men's clothing, bedding, towels and curtains. We regret that we are unable to accept bigger pieces of furniture or any sort of electrical items.

### An exceptional achievement!



WERS congratulates Evarist Mbakem on gaining his Doctorate in Political, Economic and Sustainable Development from Northumbria University. His thesis is entitled, 'Displacement, livelihoods and sustainable development: contrasting modes in the displacement of people of African descent in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo and Newcastle upon Tyne', a topic that draw on his direct experience. Evarist came to the UK in 2001 as an asylum seeker and settled in Newcastle upon Tyne. It has been a long, hard journey for Evarist and his family and we are thrilled to hear of his success.

### WERS signs up to FARESHARE

WERS has recently been delighted to sign up as a client of FARESHARE, a nationwide charity established to 'redistribute surplus food from the food industry to vulnerable people in the community.'

In doing so we are receiving a weekly delivery of food, free of charge, which goes a long way to making up the food parcels we give each week to destitute clients. Our weekly deliveries will usually comprise tins of soup, beans, spaghetti, packets of pasta, biscuits and chocolate, bottled water, bread and occasionally fresh fruit and vegetables.

These deliveries add greatly to the food we already purchase and the many donations of food and toiletries we regularly receive from WERS supporters, allowing us to provide a nutritionally varied food parcel with some treats included.



During Refugee Week, Your Homes Newcastle raised awareness of the plight of destitute asylum seekers by organising a collection of food and toiletries. YHN staff were asked to bring donations to collection points across the city. The food and toiletries were then delivered to WERS and the East Area Asylum Seeker Support Group for distribution to the many destitute clients supported by the two organisations. A similar collection was made by Newcastle Primary Care Trust and Newcastle City Council Education Welfare Department. WERS thanks all who contributed in this venture and hopes there will be a repeat performance next year!

As in previous years, the Refugee Week stall in Northumberland Street provided passers-by with free balloons, pens and the excellent Mythbuster leaflets produced by the North East Strategic Migration Partnership. The Mythbuster, now in its fifth edition, has proved a most useful awareness-raising tool. WERS team members distribute them at many venues when giving talks and presentations on asylum issues.

## Advice surgeries at WERS

WERS is now hosting a wide range of surgeries for asylum seekers and those granted leave to remain.

### Drop-in sessions

Monday 10.30am-12.30pm  
BME Welfare Rights

Monday 1pm – 3.30pm  
JET (Jobs, Education, Training)

Tuesday 9.30am-11am  
Victim Support

Thursday 9.30am-1pm  
Your Homes Newcastle Move on Team

Thursday 10am

Community Safety Unit, Northumbria Police

Friday 10am -12noon  
Newcastle City Council Education Welfare  
(Term time only, see poster at WERS for dates)

### By appointment

Monday 1pm –3pm  
North of England Refugee Service Move-on

### Office Details

**Tel:** 0191 273 7482

**Fax:** 0191 256 7862

**Email:** [wers@btinternet.com](mailto:wers@btinternet.com)

**Website:** [www.wers.org.uk](http://www.wers.org.uk)

**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