



Welcome to the July edition of the WERS newsletter

Refugee Week



Refugee Week 2009: a great success!

A big thank-you to all the volunteers who participated in the awareness-raising activities during Refugee Week!

The two new locations for the stalls, Grainger Market and the new City Library, proved to be excellent venues and we all appreciated being under cover instead of being blown around Northumberland Street! Being inside made it much easier to talk at leisure with members of the public and answer their questions. Over the two days 2700 Mythbuster 6 and 2300 Refugee Week pens were given out by around 30 volunteers.

Newcastle University gave financial backing to Anna Guy, a postgraduate student, who created a beautiful art project over the two days. Attractive felt hearts with labels were pegged to a line. There was a fact about refugees and asylum seekers on one side of the label and members of the public were invited to write a message of support on the other side. The project proved to be very popular with everyone.

Anna is generously donating the work to WERS and we will be very proud to display it at the project.

We are all particularly grateful to Jayne Butler from the Comfrey Project who chaired the planning group and to Your Homes Newcastle Asylum Seeker Unit Grant Aid Budget, Newcastle Primary Care Trust Health Improvement Service and the North East Strategic Migration Partnership (NESMP) for their financial support. We hope to build on the success of this year's activities for an even bigger and better Refugee Week 2010!



The Grainger Market stall in full swing

WERS Hardship Fund

A few weeks ago WERS stopped taking new referrals for hardship support as the number of destitute clients receiving payments from the hardship fund had risen to 128. This means that the £10 cash payments together with the weekly purchase of food are costing WERS £1800 a week – a staggeringly large sum. We have cut down a little on the amount of tinned food we buy each week but are trying to maintain a good nutritional balance in the food parcels. Any donations of money or food would be very much welcomed at this difficult time.

**New team member for WERS:
a warm welcome to Nnenna!**



WERS is now very lucky to have two volunteer co-ordinators! Carol Willis has started to work part-time and has been joined by Nnenna George - Kalu.

Lindsay Cross

Recyke y'Bike

An update from Dorothy Craw

As some of you may already know Recyke y' Bike is a social enterprise and charity based in Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne. After last year's article in the WERS newsletter many of you kindly donated your unwanted bikes to us. Thank you very much. This has enabled us to continue the Community Bike Referral Scheme and supply roadworthy bikes to 17 asylum seekers from WERS, NERS, Common Ground and Save the Children (teenagers).

In order to ensure their safety when cycling on the roads we have made it a condition that they participate in our cycle training class before they go off on the bike. We also endeavour to supply them with locks, lights and helmets if these are available (donated).

Recyke y' Bike recycles and refurbishes unwanted bicycles to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill and promotes cycling as a safe and sustainable form of transport.

Through its work, Recyke y' Bike encourages more people to think about sustainable transport issues, to consider the difference cycling will make to their carbon emissions and to take up cycling as a daily activity.

20 bikes are always available for sale to the public on Saturday mornings, the money from which keeps the rent and mechanics paid.

We provide Bike Maintenance classes on the first Saturday of the month and Cycle Training on the last Saturday afternoon of the month.

There is an increasing demand for Referral bikes and sometimes we struggle to keep up, so if you still have one languishing in the shed please arrange to donate it to Recyke y'Bike. We have an arrangement with Community Furniture who will pick bikes up for us. Their number is 0191 265 6433.

For more information about Recyke y' Bike - www.recyke-y-bike.org

or phone 0191 265 4197.

We're open on Mon, Tues and Wed 10.00 – 4.00 for donations.



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Office & Clothing Store Opening times:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 9.30am – 1pm

Wednesday: 11am – 1pm