

Refugees The next step

Canon Ed Saville
The Next Step?

Places of Sanctuary



There are now 40 'Cities of Sanctuary' in the UK. Places which offers a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary in the UK. Building a network of boroughs, towns and cities throughout the country which are proud to be places of safety for people seeking sanctuary and helping them integrate into their local communities.



The movement should be broad based in all parts of the society and places such as schools, universities, health and maternity services, theatres and arts centres, churches and other faith centres, sports, communities, businesses and homes can all become 'places of sanctuary'. A key element of these 'streams of sanctuary' relationships is awareness raising, telling the true stories of refugees to those who never hear them.

At this time, should we not be thinking of stimulating this move in Lancashire? I know that Lancaster is starting, but what about your town, your borough, your city? Building a network of places committed to this would start to address the bias in the usual reporting of migrants.

If we can demonstrate that people are willing to help; to house; to integrate refugees into their communities the politicians would have to take notice.

How does it work?

The City of Sanctuary website <https://cityofsanctuary.org/> guides you through the process and gives you the opportunity to become part of a generous, movement aimed at relieving the suffering of some of the most damaged people.

Why not start the process today and do keep in touch via this blog if you start to set one up – it would be good to hear from you.

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Refugees - where now?

So there we are then, it's now alright. It has been decided that we accept 4,000 a year for the next 5 years. Now that will make a HUGE difference to the numbers trying to leave a war torn area. Still I suppose we should be grateful for small mercies and say - 'nice start - now let's do it properly'.

I have been asked what people can do NOW. The honest answer is - if you are not in an area where Refugees are already being housed - not a lot, physically. But there are other options

The charities working with the refugees are always seeking support so below is a list.

Refugee Charities

To make donations there are many national and some local charities involved.

Refugee Action <http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/>

Refugee Council: A donation of £100 could pay for the education and travel for two children for a week <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

UNICEF The UN's children's charity is providing life-saving supplies such as clean water, medicine and psychological support. It says a donation of £9 could provide an emergency water kit for a family. <http://www.unicef.org.uk/>

Migrant Offshore Aid Station: The charity which runs independent rescue boats to rescue migrants at risk of drowning <http://www.moas.eu/>

Médecins Sans Frontières: The humanitarian agency has three rescue ships in the Mediterranean, <http://www.msf.org.uk/>

Save the Children: It says a donation of £50 could buy two hygiene kits including soap, towels and toothbrushes <https://secure.savethechildren.org.uk/donate/>

British Red Cross: A donation of £30 could buy 28 mats to help Syria refugees cope with the cold. <http://www.redcross.org.uk/syriacrisis/>

Islamic Relief: Three families could be fed for a month on a donation of £210, the charity says. <http://www.islamic-relief.org.uk/current-appeals/syria-appeal/>

The crowdfunding website **Just Giving** has a list of specific appeals for migrants in Calais. It includes one of students trying to raise £750 to buy mobile phones, footballs, camping equipment, dictionaries, storage boxes, sanitary items and waterproof clothing.

The **UNHCR** is running camps, providing shelter and aid to refugees in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, as well as helping refugees across Europe.

British Red Cross are running a drop in at St. Cuthbert's Fulwood if you want the donation to be local

In addition there are a number of other local initiatives – usually revolving around Calais.

Lancaster Supports Refugees <https://www.facebook.com/LancasterRefugeeSolidarity>

Helping Hands for Calais

Refugees <https://www.facebook.com/helpinghandsforcalaisrefugees?fref=ts>

Blackpool Fylde Preston Supporting Calais

Refugees <https://www.facebook.com/groups/supportingrefugees/>

Calais Action – Blackpool Preston Fylde <https://www.facebook.com/events/1489962354656532/>

Pendle2Calais <https://m.facebook.com/pages/Pendle2calais/673011176167701>

Parts of Lancashire has suffered from a lack of safe drinking water and will be in receipt of compensation from United Utilities - one suggestion is that the compensation could be passed on to a suitable charity to help the plight of those who have no homes, with or without water.

The response we offer should hold to our Christian values; seeking to be generous with the love we give in the way the God was generous with his love for us in the life of his Son, Jesus Christ.