



Connecting refugees with host communities

Signposting Befriendees to refugee and asylum seeker support organisations in London

London-wide asylum and refugee support and advice

British Red Cross Refugee Support Services

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee>

The Red Cross have destitution services, food banks, healthcare as well as caseworkers and family tracing services. Go online to find nearest local services.

Consonant

<https://consonant.org.uk>

Provides asylum support and legal advice; also helps people learn English, acquire the skills they need to find work and be able to participate fully in UK society. Runs IELTS preparation course.

Hackney Migrant Centre

<http://www.hackneymigrantcentre.org.uk/>

Free advice and casework for refugees, asylum seekers and recent migrants 10.30-4pm Wednesdays at St Mark's Church, St. Mark's Rise, E8 2LJ. Doors open at 8am, registration starts at 8.30 am every Wednesday and they can only see the first 20 people.

Immigration Law Practitioners Association

<http://www.ilpa.org.uk/>

Up to date information on immigration law. Good site for general briefing but do not advise on individual cases. Provide search engine for finding local immigration legal advisors.

Jesuit Refugee Services

<https://www.jrsuk.net/>

Day centre for vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers, support and advice, grants and crisis support for the newly destitute or detainees, activity groups, outings, peer support, detention visitors. For help at the day centre one must first book an appointment to register for services.

Micro Rainbow

<https://microrainbow.org>

An organisation for LGBTI asylum-seekers and refugees. It runs four safe houses in London providing temporary accommodation. The Moving On programme, for those recently granted refugee status, offers one to one support over six to twelve months, workshops on

CV writing and interview skills, facilitation of job opportunities. It also runs activities to reduce the extreme isolation faced by LGBTI refugees and foster social inclusion.

Migrant Help

<https://www.migranthelpuk.org/>

Providing support with asylum, human trafficking and slavery, and resettlement with interpreting and translating services. Their asylum helpline - 0808 8010 503 - is free, open 24/7/365 and accessible to all those accessing asylum support in the UK. Asylum seekers can contact them for guidance on the asylum process but also to report problems in maintenance of their housing (Migrant Help will liaise with accommodation provider), issues with asylum support payments or to request assistance if their health or well-being are at risk (from domestic violence, anti-social behaviour, threat of homelessness or destitution.)

Notre Dame

<https://www.notredamerc.org.uk/>

Based in Leicester Sq. Support for all asylum seekers and refugees especially French-speakers. Immigration and asylum advice: drop-in service Mon-Thurs 11am-4pm, telephone advice line Fridays only. Advice for benefits and social services. Mondays 1pm-4pm drop-in health clinic. Thursdays 1.30pm-3.30pm free massage sessions. Drop-in café incl warm midday meal twice weekly, plus two computers available. Free English classes (prior registration req) – English Entry, English Literacy, English for Jobs. Employment advice (Job Club) on Thursdays. Art Group Mondays 1.30pm-3.30pm; Sewing Group Mondays 1.30pm-3.30pm and theatre group Thursdays 1.30pm-3pm.

Say It Loud Club

<https://www.sayitloudclub.org>

Provides support, advocacy and community for LGBTQA+ refugees and asylum-seekers. Runs events, workshops and monthly socials (held in Kings Cross).

Refugee Action

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/our-services/>

Services: help on asylum process and how to access support; advice for those struggling with asylum process, poverty and homelessness; practical support on resettlement schemes. Based near Victoria.

Refugee Council

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/our-work/>

Free advice for refugees and asylum seekers. Based in Stratford.

The Refugee Council provides advice for new refugees, access to private housing, support into jobs, a bridge between refugees and healthcare professionals and the NHS to ensure proper access to health care, and support with homelessness applications.

Women for Refugee Women

<http://www.refugeewomen.co.uk/>

Advocacy and support for women who have faced injustice and seek asylum in the UK. Weekly Monday drop-in during term-time with fares paid and children welcome. Mums and children English class 11am-12.30pm, Beginner and intermediate class 12.30pm-2pm, lunch,

intermediate and advanced class 3pm-4.30pm. Based near Moorgate. Drama group, Refugee Women's Voice, hosted by Southbank Centre on Fridays; Rainbow Sisters, a supportive and confidential group open to all lesbian, bisexual, trans and non-binary people seeking asylum, meets on Mondays.

Organisations that help with getting English qualifications, employment and training

Main Colleges providing ESOL classes:

City and Islington College

<https://www.candi.ac.uk>

Croydon College

<https://croydon.ac.uk>

The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London

<https://www.conel.ac.uk>

Centres in Tottenham and Enfield.

Kensington & Chelsea College

<https://www.kcc.ac.uk>

Centres in Chelsea and North Kensington.

New City College

<https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk>

Centres in Redbridge, Ilford, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Epping Forest.

South Thames College

<https://www.south-thames.ac.uk>

Campuses in Wandsworth and Tooting.

Waltham Forest College

<https://www.waltham.ac.uk>

West London College

<https://www.wlc.ac.uk>

Campuses in Ealing, Southall and Hammersmith.

Westminster Kingsway College

<https://www.westking.ac.uk>

Centres in King's Cross, Victoria, Regent's Park and Soho.

Other Organisations

Breaking Barriers

<http://breaking-barriers.co.uk/>

Supports refugees (with status) into employment. They provide advice and guidance on finding a job, and English language training, including business English, IELTS, English for Work and Customer Services English. They run workshops and work in partnership with businesses to develop recruitment routes for refugees.

Chatterbox

<https://www.chatterbox.io>

Started by an Afghan refugee dedicated to helping find work that makes use of refugee talents. They train and employ displaced people to teach their native languages online and in person - to university students, organisations and individuals - and pay them the Living Wage, providing meaningful employment and help with integration.

CIRCLE Project - Groundwork

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/projects/circle/>

Circle is a Community Integration project that offers a range of activities for people with refugee status or humanitarian protection in the UK. Sessions include ESOL and conversational English, expert employment advice (job search support, guidance writing CVs, interview practice, workshops on UK work ethics, with employment drop-ins for personal action plans in Hackney, Angel and Wembley, various days/times), social-cultural activities such as cooking, crafts, gardening and furniture upcycling. They are based in Hackney, Angel, Barnet and will soon be delivering activities in West London too.

ELATT

<http://elatt.org.uk>

Offers free training and skills, including English, ESOL, Maths and IT courses (free at Levels 1 and 2), with a focus on employment throughout the learning. ESOL in West London, Waltham Forest, Hackney and Tower Hamlets; IT at their Hackney address.

Hope for the Young

<https://hopefortheyoung.org.uk>

Offers help to young people up to the age of 25, removing obstacles to refugees' and asylum-seekers' education through mentoring and financial support.

Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants

<https://islingtoncentre.co.uk>

Offers 8 English language sessions a week, at two levels, with qualified teachers. The content of the classes is varied in order to meet clients' diverse needs, and includes: conversation-focussed classes, small group working, and 1:1 reading groups within a wider general English language curriculum. It also runs community English learning sessions, in partnership with Speak Street (see below) and arts organisations. The Centre also offers ICT classes, skills development programmes, social and recreational activities.

Project RISE

<http://www.renaisi.com/rise/>

A free service to help refugees find work, mentoring, free English, events, social opportunities, help with benefits and housing. Need to be unemployed with the right to work. Available in 10 East London boroughs – Barking and Dagenham, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest

Refugee Support Network

<https://www.refugeesupportnetwork.org/>

Helps 15-25 year-old asylum seekers and refugees get into and stay in education, providing mentoring, educational support, training and access to higher education.

RefuAid

<http://refuaid.org/about-us/>

Increases access to English language tuition, re-qualification and IELTS exams by sponsoring places at private language colleges for refugees and asylum seekers who wish to enter further education or British Universities. They also help with access grants, scholarships, student loans and interest-free finance for education and family reunification.

SPEAK STREET

<http://speak-street.com>

A pop-up language café offering free English classes, helping people improve their everyday language skills with native speakers. Sessions run term-time only; currently: Tues, 10.00am-12.00pm at the Islington Refugee and Migrant Centre; Wed, 1.30pm-3pm at Edith Neville Primary School, Camden (for Camden residents); Thurs, 9:30am-11:00am, Duke's Aldridge Academy, Tottenham; Fri, 1.30pm-2.45pm at Islington Central Library. (Priority to Islington residents). Sessions are frequently updated so contact Speak Street for the latest information.

TERN

<http://www.wearetern.org/>

The Entrepreneurial refugee network founded in 2016 to help refugees set up their own businesses. Helps with advice, mentoring, access to business networks and finance.

Organisations that help with housing and destitution services

London Housing Justice

<https://www.housingjustice.org.uk/london-hosting>

Tackles homelessness and destitution amongst migrants in London. Runs a hosting scheme in London and convenes the London Hosting Network, with NACCOM, Homeless Link, Praxis, Spare Room, Jesuit Refugee Service, London Catholic Worker, Refugees at Home and others

Refugees at Home

<https://www.refugeesathome.org/>

Connects those with a spare room in their home to asylum seekers and refugees in need of accommodation. This can provide a vital stop-gap when people receive refugee status and often become homeless in the process. Requires referral.

Also see organisations listed as London-wide support in first category

More general social activities, networking services and drop-in centres

London-wide:

Fences and Frontiers

<https://www.fencesandfrontiers.org>

Aims to make London a welcoming and inspiring place for refugees and asylum seekers to live. Organises museum trips for children from refugee backgrounds and their families every 6-8 weeks throughout the year; and in warmer months Saturday walks, alternating between urban and rural trails, with a maximum of 15 participants. Covers refugee walkers' travel costs.

Help Refugees

<https://helprefugees.org/>

A young grassroots collective responding to the refugee crisis responding where the need is greatest and supporting over 80 projects across the EU, the Middle East and the US-Mexico border. They mostly fundraise to support their humanitarian projects, including with Imad's Syrian Kitchen pop-ups (@imadssyriankitchen) and Choose Love online store.

<https://choose.love>.

Meetup.com

<https://www.meetup.com/>

Join a group, meet up with others with shared interests and passions. Learn new skills, train, collaborate, share ... Multiple meetups happening every night across London.

Migrants Organise

<https://www.migrantsorganise.org/>

Helps refugees and migrants speak out, connect and build common ground. Does a lot of advocacy work. Based close to Ladbroke Grove tube just under Westway. 2 Thorpe Close, W10 5XL. Its community programme – open to people from across London - includes free advice, English and wellbeing classes, leisure and social activities – sewing, football and theatre. Referrals accepted from people it feels it can help the most; for more info email francesca@migrantsorganise.org.

Ourmala

<https://www.ourmala.com>

Ourmala provides free yoga classes for refugees, asylum seekers and survivors of torture, trafficking and modern day slavery. Class details here:

<https://www.ourmala.com/wherewework/> On Mondays and Fridays with partner charity Happy Baby Community they run classes for mums and babies/children under 3, also offering welfare advice and support, childcare and hand massage. Once a month they also provide donated essentials (sanitary towels, nappies, clothes). Classes for all genders are held twice weekly (Soho and Euston). Referral required; refugees may self-refer. <https://www.ourmala.com/refer/>

PAN Intercultural Arts

<https://www.pan-arts.net/projects>

Pan Intercultural Arts is a dynamic London-based arts company using intercultural performance work to help facilitate self-expression and promote deeper understanding of our changing cultural identities. They work with women who have survived trafficking into the UK, victims of torture and trauma-affected young refugees and unaccompanied minor

asylum seekers. They have three Refugee Arts programmes – Amies for young women trafficked into the UK; Fortune for 17-23 year-olds who have recently arrived and Future for unaccompanied asylum seekers aged 14-18.

Timepeace App

<https://www.timepeaceapp.org/>

A skills swap mobile app, which connects refugees / asylum seekers and locals, to meet and share for free their skills, passions and interests. More than just an app - a movement that strives towards an integrated, diverse society.

Welcome Cinema

<http://welcomepresents.com/>

Monthly events held at Amnesty HQ to unite refugees, asylum and the general public through a shared love of film, food and friendship. Tickets for supper, film screening and Q&A are free for refugees and asylum seekers and approx. £20 for the public.

Welcome Cinema screens mainstream, culturally aware films followed by post screen discussions with topical special guest speakers.

Welcome Kitchen are a collective of friends and refugee chefs celebrating the cultures and cuisines of their homelands.

North London:

Akwaaba

<https://akwaaba.org.uk>

A social drop-in session for migrants from 2pm-6pm every Sunday at Princess May School, Barrett's Grove, Hackney, N16 8AJ. The sessions offer a free cooked meal and social and welcoming space incl English conversation and literacy classes, storytelling, arts and music, wellbeing, computers and wi-fi. Travel expenses are not available.

Barnet Refugee Service

<http://www.b-r-s.org.uk/>

An integrated model of support to improve mental health, community cohesion and life chances of vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees. Advice, support, ESOL, help with Citizenship Test, Syrian group, men's group, women's group, emotional support, gardening, youth activities, homework club, training & workshops, emergency food, visiting solicitors. BRS is an accredited centre for Trinity College ESOL and offers classes for refugees to learn English over a certain number of weeks and then sit for the college exam.

NWR Synagogue

<https://www.alyth.org.uk/>

Alyth Gardens, off Finchley Rd, London NW11 7EL. Last Sunday of every month 2-4pm
Nearest tube: Golders Green (Northern line) Advice for anyone who has recently received leave to remain in the UK. Hot food. £5.00 travel per adult will be provided. English conversation. Help with children's schoolwork. Children welcome.

Paiwand

<http://paiwand.com/how-we-help/>

Based in Harrow, set up by Afghan refugees in 2002, Paiwand offers support and solidarity to all refugees in London esp young – Saturday schools, mentoring, youth groups and trips, supported accommodation, info and advice, emotional wellbeing, preparing for employment, parenting and ESOL.

Sufra

<https://www.sufra-nwlondon.org.uk>

A community hub, Food Bank and Community Kitchen based in Brent with many additional projects including a Refugee Support Programme – drop-in on Mondays, 11am-2pm - food academy (cooking course and professional catering skills), welfare advice service, volunteer opportunities, vocational training for asylum seekers and refugees in Brent area. The kitchen is open Fridays 6.30pm-8.30pm and serves vegetarian meals to all who turn up, no need to book.

Xenia

<https://xenia.org.uk/>

Runs Saturday workshops that brings migrant, refugee, asylum-seeking, refugee and British women together to socialise and practise their English through fun, interactive workshops. Make friends and children-welcome. Women-only in Hackney.

Young Roots

<http://youngroots.org.uk/london/>

Works with young refugees and asylum seekers through fun and educational activities, trips and 1:1 casework. Offers peer-led language learning. For 18-25-year-olds in Brent and Croydon.

East London:

Refugee & migrant forum of East London (Newham, Barking and Dagenham)

<http://www.ramfel.org.uk>

Legal advice, casework support, destitution support and crisis intervention for vulnerable migrants, by appointment – requested online. For those without internet access, there is a drop-in on Thursdays, 10am-1pm, run on first come first served basis, at 326 High Rd, Ilford IG1 1QP.

Praxis Community Projects

<http://www.praxis.org.uk/>

Based in Pott Street, London E2 0EF, its core purpose is to support migrants and refugees in crisis or at risk, helping them through immigration advice, housing and peer support groups. Classes and activities – for women, young people, migrant men - change frequently; contact directly for further information. On Thursday mornings, from 9am, they run a drop-in advice session for Tower Hamlet residents and the homeless; only the first 8 to 10 people can be seen. Phone advice on immigration issues is available on Wednesdays, 2pm-4pm.

The Welcome Project

<http://www.healthylivingprojects.org.uk/projects/welcome-project-page.html>

2-6 St Mary's Rd, Ilford, IG1 1QX. Tel: 020 8514 3283. Tuesdays–Fridays: 9am-3pm. A day centre for the street homeless, including refugees, living in Redbridge. Accommodation advice; bathroom/showers, benefit advice; clothing; free food; housing advice, laundry. Nurse-led clinic. ESOL classes. And it has an allotment.

West London:

West London Synagogue Drop In

<http://www.wls.org.uk/event/wls-drop-in-centre/>

33 Seymour Place, London W1H 5AU. Third Sunday of every month 2.30pm – 4.30pm
Family drop-in for destitute asylum seekers (children and parents only). Hot food, clothing, food vouchers and travel expenses. People must present their Home Office letter of first refusal, and identification documents for themselves and their children.

West London Welcome

<https://westlondonwelcome.com/>

Free drop in centre for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with refugee kitchen, social activities, English classes open every Thursday, 9.30am-4pm (during term-time). Near Hammersmith.

South London:

The Bike Project

<https://thebikeproject.co.uk>

A community of refugees and bike mechanics based in South and East London its mission is to get refugees cycling. It fixes up bikes and donates them as well as teaching refugees to cycle safely in London. Cycling proficiency courses for refugee women in Wapping and Croydon.

Citizens of the World Choir

<http://www.citizensoftheworldchoir.org>

A choir for refugees, asylum-seekers, migrants and the wider London community. It advocates for refugee and human rights while creating powerful musical arrangements. Although based in Greenwich, members can come from across the city.

Croydon Refugee Day Centre

<https://croydonrefugeedaycentre.co.uk/>

West Croydon Baptist Church, (corner of St James and Whitehorse Road), Croydon CR0 2JH. Drop in Tuesdays from 10am to 1pm. A safe social space with tea, coffee and cake. A hot midday meal. A small weekly food parcel of non-perishable goods. Toiletries and household items. Clothing. A help desk and signposting service. Access to term-time English classes on Wednesdays 10am-1pm. A play area for pre-school children.

Greenwich Migrant Hub

<https://www.lrmn.org.uk/migranthub>

It works with advice agencies to offer free advice and information and provide ongoing practical and social support to vulnerable migrants in Greenwich and neighbouring boroughs. The Hub is open every Tuesday 10.30am-2.30pm at the Woolwich Common Community Centre, Leslie Smith Square, Woolwich, London SE18 4DW. Registration opens at 8.30am and people are seen on a first come, first served basis. The session gets very busy: they advise arriving early as they cannot always see everyone who comes for advice.

Lewisham Refugee & Migrant Network

<http://lrnmn.org.uk/>

1st floor Parker House, 144 Evelyn Street, Deptford SE8 5DD. 020 8694 0323. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. Immigration advice, health access, employment and skills support; Women Together project for women survivors of gender-based violence. Therapeutic gardening sessions for all genders in their office garden on Wednesdays, 1.30pm-3pm. Free English classes at different levels are held (term time only) at Clyde Early Childhood Centre, Alverton Street, London SE8 5NH on Mondays, 1pm – 2.30pm, Tuesdays, 10am -12pm, Thursdays, 1pm-3pm. Free Literacy Classes on Thursdays from 12pm -1pm. Housing and Welfare drop-in, Tuesdays 10am-12pm; arrive early as they can only see the first eight people.

South London Refugee Association

<https://www.slr-a.org.uk/>

SLRA, The Woodlawns Centre, 16 Leigham Court Road, London SW16 2PJ. Women's social group, youth casework, family support, ESOL, ICT, education, training and employment support, outing and activities. 2 weekly drop-in advice sessions: Mondays, 10am-1pm, St. Mary and St John Church, Balham High Rd., London SW12 9BS (term time only); Thursdays, 10am-1pm, at the Woodlawns Centre (term time only). Also at the Centre, men's social group, Thursdays, 6.30pm-8.30pm.

Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers

<http://www.sdcas.org.uk/>

Provide a wide range of free support services to asylum seekers and refugees in Southwark. They have 3 drop-in day centres in Southwark offering free English classes, gardening, lunch, crèche, storytelling, advice. Tuesdays 12.30pm-5.30pm Copleston Centre, Copleston Road, SE15 4AN; Wednesdays, 11.00am-2.45pm Peckham Park Road Baptist Church, 121 Peckham Park Road, SE15 6SX; Thursdays, 1pm-5pm, St Mary Newington, Kennington Park Rd, SE11 4JH.

Streatham drop-In Service For Refugees and Asylum Seekers

<http://streathamdropin.org.uk/>

Thursdays and Fridays, Drop-In Services, 9.30 am-2pm. Advice, information and signposting, English language classes, creche and play facilities, health and wellbeing support & Women's wellbeing activities.

Saturdays Homework and Families Learning Project (by application only, please contact them to express an interest in joining).

2 Mitcham Lane, SW16 6N. (Next door to English Martyrs Church)

Young Roots

<http://youngroots.org.uk/london/>

For young refugees and asylum seekers through fun and educational activities, trips and 1:1 casework. Offers peer-led language learning. For 18-25-year olds in Brent and Croydon.