

# MERSEYSIDE REFUGEE SUPPORT NETWORK

## ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS TO 31ST MARCH 2020

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Registered Charity No 1093033

**Merseyside Refugee  
Support Network**  
Registered Charity No 1093033



City of Sanctuary

**lasar**

Liverpool Asylum Seeker  
& Refugee Development  
Partnership

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## GOVERNANCE

The following have served the Network as Trustees during the year:

- Carmel Dersch (Independent)
- Harriet Gray (Independent/University of Liverpool/STAR)
- Lynn Learman (Independent) - *Treasurer*
- Jan Luff (Independent) - *Chair*
- Nick McLaughlin – South Liverpool CAB
- Ewan Roberts (Asylum Link Merseyside)
- Mohammed Taher (Independent/MerseyCare)

### THE TEAM - SESSIONAL & SUPPORT COLLEAGUES AND VOLUNTEERS:

- S. Roberts – MRSN Operations/Projects Manager
- M. McAdam – MRSN Senior Refugee Advocacy Officer/Project Coordinator
- A. Ahmed – MRSN Refugee Advocacy Officer
- C. Ashton – Sessional Project Officer
- G. Chahwanda – Student social worker
- K. Maloney – MNfC (Payroll/Project support), *to June 2019*
- M. Ralph – Project volunteer
- D. Mason – Project volunteer
- M. Edwards – Project volunteer

## MEMBERSHIP POLICY

The Network seeks to establish, through its Membership Policy, two principles. The first is that the Network has to remain firmly in the ownership of voluntary organisations. The second is that we have benefited enormously and intend to continue doing so from the involvement of public and private sector partners.

Membership of the Network represents your good will and intention to support the work of the charity and its members through the principles of partnership working and information sharing.

Full membership is open to any interested organisation or individual making an application to the Network and whose application is accepted.

Full members are able to vote at meetings and to nominate a person to stand for election as a Trustee.

## TRUSTEES' REPORT APRIL 2019/MARCH 2020

Each year, our annual report presents an important opportunity to reflect on the past (financial) year and as a means to assess how the charity has continued to work to meet its core charitable aims and objectives, as required by the Charity Commission. It was another very busy and challenging year, especially with the arrival of Covid 19 and the first lockdown, but we have continued our work and supported our clients throughout.

The overall aim of Merseyside Refugee Support Network (MRSN) includes the relief of refugees or asylum seekers in Merseyside and, as a Network, we also work to bring together local and regional organisations concerned with their welfare, to share information and good practice, discuss and address issues across the sector.

In meeting our aims, we provide a combination of networking and information sharing services, supported through the email newsgroup, directory of refugee and asylum support agencies and regular Network meetings.

Over the past 14 years, we have also offered "relief" through casework support with refugee clients moving-on from the asylum support system. The biggest need is met through our advocacy casework to help clients access and cope with the mainstream benefits and housing systems, as well as other integration matters such as accessing employment, education, language support and health services.

The shared asylum/refugee "sanctuary hub" here at St Anne's continues to enable MRSN to work in close partnership and provide reciprocal asylum and refugee client support and signposting in a very effective way between colleagues from Asylum Link Merseyside (ALM) and Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU). Our working partnership with Merseyside Network for Change (MNfC) sadly ended in summer 2019, when they decided to close, but we are grateful to the former trustees and staff for the important co-working over the years.

As ever, we continue to maintain and develop our close working relationships with Network Members to collectively help and support our vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeking clients.

We are delighted in this context to present our 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Report.

As per previous reports, the numbers of people fleeing war and persecution and seeking sanctuary across UK and Europe has not abated and our service is constantly trying to keep resources in place to help new refugees when they are granted leave to remain and in the years beyond to support their onward integration journey.

For those refugees and others with leave to remain coming through the asylum process in Merseyside, we continue to work closely with partners across the Network to meet their many and varied needs for moving on into mainstream society.

On an annual basis MRSN is working with between 350-500 individual refugees and their families. Our advocacy, wellbeing and integration support casework is not limited in time or scope, and our work has been extended and enhanced through various grants which have spanned accounting years –John Moores Foundation; European Union ERASMUS + (x2); European Social Fund, The Hemby Trust and the Allan Lane Foundation.

We were also delighted to have contributed to the Liverpool CCG research evaluation of the Black and Minority Ethnic Community Outreach Service in conjunction with Faiths 4 Change and ALM.

We continue to work hard as an organisation and Network - to highlight the ongoing need to change hearts and minds and address media myth and hype, hence we have continued to work on updates to our Fact Not Fiction publication (now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year of circulation) thanks to contributory funds via Our Liverpool. This links well with our continued support with Liverpool City of Sanctuary and the Liverpool Schools of Sanctuary groups.

Throughout 2019/20, Merseyside Refugee Support Network has continued to offer a wide variety of support, networking and information sharing services for our refugee and asylum seeking clients, Diaspora communities and, the organisations who we work with to support them.

The work would not be possible without grants from our funders or the support from our sessional and support colleagues, volunteers, associates and student social workers who have supported our casework team in continuing to advocate for local refugees and asylum seekers.

Our advocacy and integration work is wholly led by client need. It is our 1-2-1 support that enables us to meet their needs through this empowering, resilience building and empathic model. We have continued to provide clients with customised integration support for employment, training, housing, welfare benefits and healthcare. By far the biggest element of our work is helping folk through move-on when they gain refugee status and advocating on their behalf when “the system” fails them and puts refugees at risk of homelessness or financial hardship.

Widening our reach and maintaining partnership arrangements is crucial in the support work we offer including our Refugee and Asylum Awareness Training; mutual work and support with local MPs; ongoing partnership working with colleagues in Liverpool City Council and in supporting the work on the Our Liverpool Refugee Strategy; Merseyside District DWP and across the key Network partners.

Our ongoing work on a transnational basis has been as rewarding as ever. Our Erasmus+ healthy eating and community cohesion/integration (“Healthnic”)

project was successfully concluded working with a combination of new and old EU partners – Healthnic Guide and Toolbox: <https://healthnic.eu/>

The project recently received EU recognition as an outstanding example of good practice for Erasmus+ Partnership Projects. Our newer Erasmus+ project “Learn Together - Create Opportunities” continues to progress despite the end of safe travel due to Covid 19 in March 2020.

In the lead up to local closures and into lockdown#1 (13/3/20-31/3/20), we compiled and circulated 17 e-news bulletins to over 350 Network members and partners across Merseyside. An indication of the combined efforts across our sector to ensure as much information on support and staying safe could be shared as widely as possible.

The trustees and partners meet quarterly to oversee the governance and administration of the Network and to discuss and respond to matters of urgent concern that are directly affecting refugees and asylum seekers, which are then shared and developed through the normal pre-Covid Network meetings.

All of our work fulfils our charitable objectives and once again we are so grateful to our grant funders who trust in our work, our experience and ethics.

The summary “Receipt and Payment” accounts have been externally/independently examined and are attached with this Annual Report.

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## RESERVES POLICY STATEMENT


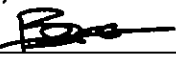




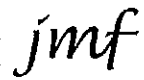
Reserves are unrestricted funds that are freely available to spend in relation to the charity's purposes. At MRSN there is only limited opportunity to build up reserves through donations, training events and other income received which is not restricted. For transparency, the source of the reserves is shown in the accounts.

The receipts and payment accounts which are prepared for the annual return to the Charity Commission show all income received and whether this is restricted per funder or unrestricted donations/income in each financial year. Unrestricted reserves may contribute to the future sustainability of the charity, but will not be built up to excessive levels. This will be reviewed and developed on an annual basis.







# ACCOUNTS SUMMARY REPORT APRIL 2019/MARCH 2020

## HSBC Account Summary

MERSEYSIDE REFUGEE SUPPORT NETWORK Receipts and Payments Accounts 2019-20 Year ending 31st March 2020		HSBC ACCOUNT		<b>Merseyside Refugee Support Network</b> Registered Charity No 1093033		
#	Project	Income/Funder/Donor	£ B/F	£ Income	£ Exp	£ Balance
	<b>Unrestricted Funds/Donations</b>					
1	General Funds /Client Support	MISC	6,834.47	7,206.17	6,766.92	7,273.72
		Sub Total:	6,834.47	7,206.17	6,766.92	7,273.72
	<b>Restricted Funds/Grants</b>					
6	JOHN MOORES FOUNDATION	JMF	7,856.00	4,500.00	9,956.00	2,400.00
7	HEMBY TRUST	HEMBY	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00
8	NEW ERASMUS - CREATE OPPORTUNITIES	ERASMUS + (Bialystok)	-603.25	11,164.11	4,278.21	6,282.65
9	TRANSFER CoS RESIDUAL GRANT	CoS Central	0.00	125.59	0.00	125.59
10	NEW ESF 19/20	ESF/WEA	0.00	4,937.50	3,533.96	1,403.54
11	TRANSFER L'POOL WELCOMES RESIDUAL FUND	MRSN	0.00	549.19	0.00	549.19
12	ALLEN LANE FOUNDATION	ALLEN LANE	0.00	6,500.00	688.50	5,811.50
13	Erasmus HEALTHNIC	ERASMUS + (Syros)	3,648.13	7,980.87	11,629.00	0.00
		Sub Total:	10,900.88	37,257.26	31,585.67	16,572.47
	<b>Balances Per Bank Statement: To 31.3.20</b>		£ 17,735.35	44,463.43	38,352.59	23,846.19
<div>  <b>THE ALLEN LANE FOUNDATION</b> </div> <p>I have examined these accounts and they are consistent with the books and records kept by Merseyside Refugee Support Network</p> <p>Mr B. Gray</p> <p>Signed: </p> <p>Date: 22/01/2021</p> <div>  <b>City of Sanctuary</b> </div> <div>  <b>European Union</b> European Social Fund </div> <div>  <b>Erasmus+</b> </div> <div>  <b>HEMBY CHARITABLE TRUST</b> Working with the people of Merseyside </div> <div>  <b>jmf</b> </div>						

# Unity Bank Account Summary (inc. account closure)

MERSEYSIDE REFUGEE SUPPORT NETWORK Receipts and Payments Accounts 2019-20 Year ending 31st March 2020			UNITY ACCOUNT		Merseyside Refugee Support Network Registered Charly No 1093033	
#	Project	Income/Funder/Donor	£ B/F	£ Income	£ Exp	£ Balance
	<b>Unrestricted Funds/Donations</b>					
1	General Funds / Volunteer & Client Support	MISC	2,211.98	18.00	2,229.98	0.00
		<i>Sub Total:</i>	<i>2,211.98</i>	<i>18.00</i>	<i>2,229.98</i>	<i>0.00</i>
	<b>Restricted Funds/Grants</b>					
x	ESF paid to account instead of HSBC account	ESF see HSBC reconciliation	0.00	4,937.50	4,937.50	0.00
9	City of Sanctuary Grant (The Guardian)	CoS Central	125.59	0.00	125.59	0.00
11	#Liverpool Welcomes - FUND ADMINISTRATION	MISC	549.19	0.00	549.19	0.00
13	Erasmus HEALTHNIC	ERASMUS + (Syros)	53.89	0.00	53.89	0.00
		<i>Sub Total:</i>	<i>728.67</i>	<i>4,937.50</i>	<i>5,666.17</i>	<i>0.00</i>
<b>Balances Per Bank Statement: To 31.3.20</b>			<b>£ 2,940.65</b>	<b>4,955.50</b>	<b>7,896.15</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<p>I have examined these accounts and they are consistent with the books and records kept by Merseyside Refugee Support Network</p> <p>Mr B. Gray</p> <p>Signed: </p> <p>Date: 22/01/2021</p>						
			 City of Sanctuary			
			 <b>European Union</b> European Social Fund		 <b>Erasmus+</b>	

These accounts have been approved by the MRSN Board of Trustees on:

23 January 2021

