



Coventry Migrant
Women's Houses

COVENTRY MIGRANT WOMEN'S HOUSES

ANNUAL REPORT 2018



Coventry Migrant Women's Houses
Charitable Incorporated Organisation – governed by Constitution
c/o Coventry Peace House, 311 Stoney Stanton Road, Coventry, CV6 5DS
02476 664 616 cmwhouses@gmail.com (Trustees) cmwh@yahoo.com (Residents)

Coventry Migrants Women's Houses
Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registration Number 1168441

Trustees Served During the Year:
Beth Ash
Christopher Gwyntopher
Carolyn Pickering
Sarah Taal

Annual Report for 2017-2018

Coventry Migrant Women's Houses (CMWH) was established as a partnership between Spare Room for Forced Migrants and local migrant support organisations in Coventry and the West Midlands, including Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, Coventry Night Shelter, Coventry Quakers and Baobab Women's Project, maintaining and improving the house and the quality of life of residents.

Our 4 bedroom property in North East Coventry is used to accommodate and support forced migrant women with no recourse to public funds. The property this year has had 10 residents, with stays ranging from 5 months to the full year.

Residents
countries of origin:
Albania, Pakistan,
Cameroon, Congo,
Guinea, Zimbabwe
and Nigeria.

The migrant women who have lived in the house have shown themselves to be resourceful and strong. They have built an excellent partnership working with the Coventry Refugee and Asylum Activism Project CARAG, doing many joint events and campaigns. The house has given women interested in social justice the opportunity to address and challenge some of the injustices that occur, and a chance to do that in a non-violent collective way. We have had regular lunches with the Coventry Quakers and often get support from quaker friends in the house and with residents.

Residents have been referred by local case-work agencies; and spaces are offered on a time limited basis.



Residents are expected to continue working with their existing advisors, this is complimented by facilitated group discussions around immigration law and practice, and one-to-one check-ins with Trustees.

Over the past year Trustees have focused on making the house more sustainable by having solar panels fitted. We have supported

the organic growth of the member led activities, as well as the bread and butter responsibilities of agreeing residents, moving people in, responding to emergencies and maintaining the property. Over the next year we hope to continue to empower residents to develop more networks across the region, and nationally to create further opportunities for residents to learn about the immigration system and take action on issues of importance to themselves.

Events & Groups Attended By Residents

Yarlswood Hunger Strike

On Wednesday the 7th of March CMWH residents alongside CARAG campaigned about women in detention who went on hunger strike. The event took place in Coventry city centre, where passers by were able to ask questions and engage in the campaign. The CMWH & CARAG activists had signs to help raise awareness. We stand in solidarity with all asylum seekers who are going through the hostile environment.

Lobby in Parliament

On the 8th of March CMWH & CARAG went to Westminster, for international women's day. The campaign was about Safety, Dignity and Liberty for refugee and migrant women.

Many organisation representatives were present and a few MP's were able to attend. We were impressed to see women fighting for their own rights supported by strong organisations such as Women for Refugee Women and Women Asylum Seekers Together (WAST Manchester). What amazed us most was the MP's delivering powerful speeches. They could see that they wanted to help women going through this hostile environment. They showed us we are not alone and all women count.

HC1 Workshop

The CMWH was asked by CARAG to deliver a workshop on HC1 forms and the reasons behind it, because some asylum seekers didn't know that they have the right to claim help with health costs through the NHS Low Income Scheme.

The workshop answered the following questions:

- Who is eligible?
- What is it for?
- What are the outcomes?

Anyone who does not have any income, or has an income of less than £16,000 / year can apply. All questions asked were answered at the

Meeting with MP Jim Cunningham

CMWH in partnership with CARAG invited the mp Jim Cunningham on the 0/4/18 to discuss about issues related to asylum seekers and refugees and how to stand against the hostile environment.

Jim Cunningham engage in a discussion with the two groups where he gave and answered any questions that were asked.



Migrants Organise Meeting

Migrants Organise is a platform that creates a movement that is powerful and strong for migrant and refugees to expose the reality of their situation to the public eye and politicians.

The aim of the meeting was to follow up on the previous meeting we had, whether we are ready to work with them to break the silence and challenge the hostile environment vocally.

We were invited to their strategy planning day which will take place in Manchester.

We said farewell to Sunny the Midlands Migrant Organiser.

The prop of the day was to have a broad conversation on how we work together in order to understand our need and how we can collaborate together to make change.

National Refugee Women's Conference

Women for Refugee Women and WAST Manchester co-hosted the National Refugee Women's Conference in Manchester, to build solidarity, energy and action.

Refugee and asylum seeking women and supporters came together to discuss:

- The campaign against detention: where now? Since 2014, the campaign against detaining asylum seeking women in the UK has been strong. *Asking how do you push to create genuine change?*
- Destitution: what can we do? More and more asylum seeking and refugee women are being left destitute due to the refusal of support. *We mapped out how we can move forwards and campaign on the issues.*
- Solidarity: how can we build a stronger network for refugee women? *Particularly, how to do some imaginative work around International Women's Day 2018 and take action to end destitution and detention*

NACCOM: overview of the 2017 annual conference

The meeting had workshops in place to carry out the agenda.

- Morning workshops focused on a range of topics, from supporting refugees after 'move on' and speaking up for change through to how and when to give immigration advice.
- Afternoon sessions looked at issues such as how to develop accommodation capacity, engage in creative communications and support service users with mental health needs.

Throughout the day it was also great to hear so many positive stories of the work that is going on across the country and the impact this support has made on a personal level.

The day ended with a focus on our plans for the year ahead and the reelection of three trustees. Thanks to all who contributed and volunteered to make the day run smoothly.

Case Studies

Nda- The story of my life

I came to UK 2007 I didn't claim asylum there and there, as I had a hope that we were going to win the elections for 2008 in my country.

Unfortunately the elections were rigged. Then I was scared to go back as I was fleeing violence, which was everywhere in the country and I was involved in these political activities.

Unfortunately, my asylum claim was refused, I think 7 times now, my daughter came to join me it even doubled my sufferings in this country. I was staying with a friend who she was using us, babysitting 24/7 taking the child to school everyday and the school was about 30mins away, so we used to walk every time, whether its raining or snowing, we had to go.

Thank you, this organisation, which came to our help, now we are happy people we have the roof over our head. C.M.W.H has helped lot of people who in the same situation like mine. Keep on the good work you are doing, without you I don't even know where we could be by now. We do appreciate your help thank you very much.

Mujinga

Was living in Asylum Support accommodation, when her case was refused.

They told her to leave the house and after that her friend as invited her to stay. She attended a Kushinga Garden Photo Exhibition networking event. She talked to Sarah, one of the CMWH trustees, she told her she didn't have a place to live in.

Sarah gave her a form and she filled it out, after a few weeks she heard back, met with the house residents, talked about her activities and plans. Then she was offered a place to live in CMWH

She is active within CMWH charity. As well as meeting to discuss everything inside the house weekly, she meets people in other charity houses and places.

Living with peoples is good, they are friendly, theres talking each other, sometimes they have a party at home and enjoy too.



SAIMA

I came to live at Coventry Migrant Women House in September 2018. On 4th November 2017 I attended National Migrant Women Conference which was co hosted by **Women for Refuge Women** and **WAST Manchester**. The slogan was Destitution, Detention and Solidarity. I attended it with the other residents.

The day was split in two halves. In the morning speakers from WAST and Women for Refuge Women delivered speeches. MP Kate Green also spoke in the favour of refugee women.

Speakers from WAST and Women for Refuge Women delivered speeches. Refuge and Assylum seeker women came from London, Coventry, Birmingham and other areas. In afternoon the participants attended different workshops. I enjoyed the workshop as it was informative. Women shared their experiences with the group.

The Conference was full of thrill as well. Different groups performed on stage. CMWH along with CARAG performed the poem " The Pain Of Wearing My Shoes". The poem addressed Detention, Destitution and Solidarity. I enjoyed the last session of the day which was comprised of dancing on the conference floor. The conference came to an end on a happy note of standing together in all odds.

Coventry Migrant Women's House Blog Space

About us

The Coventry Migrant Women House (CMWH) is a small project which started in 2015. Our aim is to support destitute forced migrant women who do not have any source of income with accommodation run cooperatively by residents and supporting positive social change.

What do we mean by cooperatively run: it means that we welcome new residents as family, we organise a monthly meeting to talk about our issues, meetings and campaigns that we need to attend. We familiarise them with other groups that work with asylum seekers in Coventry as well as Birmingham. We also direct them to useful places where they get some advice such as the Coventry Migrant and Refugee Centre, Coventry Law Centre, Baobab Project and Migrant Union.

What do we mean by supporting positive social change: we believe strongly that if we want to change the hostile environment in which we live, we have to join hand with other organisations that fight the same cause to be able to make a change for us but also for those who will come after us. That is why we attend conference such as the Right to Remain, Migrant Union, Carag, and many more to learn more about the asylum system and also to know our human rights.

CMWH....A PROJECT OF HOPE

Destitution is real and we are facing it with the weapon of love...giving hope to the hopeless, shelter to the homeless, and more.....

•The Question of Change

“I would like to see a United Kingdom where migrants are not seen as a social, economic or environmental threat, but as a beautiful addition to the building of a more integrated and stronger society, enriched from a variety of sources. Well, that is my side of things, I am sure that there are some changes that you would also like to see around you, in the UK. This can be social, political, or pertaining to the immigration system. Well, below are the changes that a few precious people we managed to get hold of would like to witness...”

• Right to Remain AGM

“The conference was firstly to help the organisation to get more funding, secondly to share information about new projects and finally to think how to tackle problems that asylum seekers and refugees are facing...”

• Quaker work at CMWH

“Quaker is a well known religious group that help refugees and asylum seekers. They work with various organisations to tackle destitution. Group work on Wednesday 2nd of August at CMWH. The purpose of the job was to take out the hedge and tidy up the garage. The amazing job was done by seven people from Quakers. The residents from the house offered a lunch meal...”



<https://cmwhblog.wordpress.com>

Accounts

	April 2017 to March 2018	April 2016 to March 2017
INCOME		
Council Tax Refund	305	0
Donations	335	250
Grant Funding	16100	5350
Hope Destitution Fund	260	960
Spare Room Survival Fund	0	934
TOTAL INCOME	17000	7494
EXPENDITURE		
Community Lunches	165	0
Council Tax	768	1368
Destitution Payments	3840	1217
Events, Conferences etc.	159	109
Garden	76	0
Household	167	108
Insurance	1348	408
Internet	291	94
Maintenance	702	744
Meetings	0	19
Naccomm Network Membership	30	0
Office	35	0
Spare Room Destitution Fund	Within destitution payments	957
Gas and Electric	1792	1163
Volunteer Expenses	171	93
Hope Destitution Payments	Within destitution payments	960
Sessional Worker Costs	105	0
Solar Panels	6500	0
Resident Support	38	48
Trustee Expenses	133	0

Balance Adjustment	0	32
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	16320	7320
OVERALL TOTAL	680	174
BALANCE BOUGHT FORWARD	134452	134278
BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD	135132	134452
RESTRICTED FUNDS (PROPERTY VALUE)	130000	130000
FUNDS AVAILABLE	5132	4452

Statement of Financial Account

Balance Sheet			
		As of March 2018	As of 31 March 2017
ASSETS			
Cash at bank		5090	4720
Cash in hand		44	332
Property		130000	130,000
LIABILITIES			
Year End Debtors		0	600
EQUITY		135133	134,452

Notes to the accounts:

Hope Destitution Fund and Spare Room Survival Fund both give allowances to destitute individuals; where possible we refer residents to such sources of income. If they are not eligible for either of these we give residents £15 per week for essential expenditure.

We have been granted a 50% reduction on council tax on the basis of the property's use. This was backdated and accounts for the council tax refund and the reduced expenditure.

In this financial year we received a grant to install solar panels, this accounts for the higher income and expenditure than in previous years.

Grant funding was received with thanks from Allen Lane Foundation, Cole Trust, Hilden Trust, and Quaker Housing Trust. Donations were received with thanks from Coventry Quaker Meeting among others.

The Balance Carried Forward includes the value of our property which is not available for project or running costs; the Funds Available shows the money the charity has available to spend.

Accounting Policies and Notes to the Account

- CMWH seeks to hold reserves to cover the ordinary running of its activities for a period of time within which the charity could reasonably expect to acquire further funds.
- Trustees are sought from existing supporters or through relevant local networks; they are elected according to our governing document, they express an intent to stand at an AGM and each Trustee will need to be elected by the members present.
- CMWH was established in 2014 and therefore the comparison period in the accounts for November 2015 to March 2016 is not a full 12 months. This means that the two financial years shown in the Cash Flow do not consist of entirely comparable amounts. The Balance Sheet has been treated as the first year trading and therefore there is no comparison available.
- To the best of our knowledge and intention these accounts were prepared in full accordance with SORP, with FRS 102 and with applicable charity law.
- CMWH is currently a going concern, and there is no concerns that the charity will not be able to continue it's work into the foreseeable future. This is based on the information contained in these accounts and conversations with potential future funding bodies.
- Coventry Migrant Women's Houses (CMWH) is Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with a Constitution and exists as a public benefit entity.
- These accounts have been prepared on a cash basis, with expenditure reported by nature of expenditure as CMWH remains below the audit threshold.
- There have been no changes to the accounting policies in the period.
- CMWH recognises donated goods and services as income using a reasonable valuation based on recent or comparable value. During the accounting period the charity was gifted a property with the condition that it be used as accommodation for destitute forced migrants; this has been accounted for using the 2015 sale price of the property.
- CMWH would also like to note the work of general volunteers as a positive contribution to the charity during the accounting period.
- No Trustee has been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with the charity or a related entity.
- There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period that require disclosure.
- We are thankful to our independent examiner for providing this service free of charge.
- No ex-gratia payments were made during the period
- 'Cash at Bank' refers to the money available in the organisations current account, while 'Cash in Hand' refers to the Petty Cash balance held.
- All amounts in these accounts are in £ Sterling



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