



Rhif Elusen / Charity no. 1174459

### **Aberaid Annual Report 2018**

**Saturday 10 November 2018**

Aberaid have had an incredibly busy and rewarding year in 2017-18 since our first AGM in October 2017. We have successfully put together an application to become a Community Sponsor for the Home office, and were approved in January this year after nearly a year of application and discussions with the Local Authority, Citizens UK and the Home Office.

Our first Sponsorship family arrived safely with us from Jordan in April this year following a long period of frustrating delays in obtaining approval and then waiting for the family to arrive. We were delighted to welcome a family of 5, two adults and three children to our lovely town. We then spent an intensive 5 month period of working with them on a daily basis to help them to resettle into Aberystwyth, from registering them with the GP and English classes, to taking their children to school, to visiting them at home and sourcing items they needed, to troubleshooting a variety of problems and issues that arose over that period.

We worked very hard to do whatever we could to help the family to integrate, resettle and become happily established here. Our team of 7 Trustees and 2 Support Volunteers worked tirelessly, and often had to respond to emergency situations and work unsociable hours at short notice. We were continually challenged and responded professionally and sympathetically at every turn. I would like to pay tribute to the whole Aberaid team, and I include within that the wider team of support volunteers who worked tirelessly with us, from lunch club workers to English language supporters and especially including Yasameen, who deserves special mention and who has been an incredible source of support and help to us in interpreting and befriending the family, and indeed all the families. We each spent a huge amount of time and energy with the family and it was a rewarding and amazing experience in which I think we all learned a huge amount and we must give credit to ourselves and each other for the amount of work we have all done on a voluntary basis with only the wellbeing of others as our guide and inspiration.

As you will all know by now, our family unfortunately struggled to adapt to life in Aberystwyth for a variety of reasons, and disclosed to us a month or so after arriving that they had distant relatives in another town in England. They made an informed decision to relocate there, with our full support and guidance, and finally moved in early September. We felt a mixture of emotions and had a difficult time in adjusting to this, but ultimately we all want what is best for our family and accept their decision and their reasons for moving.

This left us in a period of reflection, over which this autumn we have been considering our next steps and we decided that we would like to reapply for another refugee family and to continue renting the

flat that we had held for the first family, so as to avoid the lengthy and problematic issue of funding alternative affordable accommodation in the centre of town.

We are now about to hold our pre-approval interview with the Home office later this week, and expect to be approved and to have our second family arrive within the next few months!

In total, Aberaid Trustees and support volunteers have attended about 100 meetings over the last year, including:

- 14 monthly Trustee meetings
- 16 weekly meetings of the support volunteers
- Meeting various officials and others who support the Refugees – Home Office, Red Cross, Local Authority, Citizens UK
- 4 Local Authority Multi-Agency Task force meetings
- Meetings to support the volunteers
- Citizens UK and other training courses and Prize ceremony

In addition there were:

- almost daily meetings with our family who arrived on the 19th April and left on 4th September and we have continued to run the weekly Monday Lunch club meetings to support all the Syrian refugee community and collaborate with both Aber food surplus and the Red Cross, which we will continue to do well into 2019 and beyond.

**A huge thank you to everyone, members, supporters and volunteers, trustees, interpreters, members of the local Syrian community, all of whom have been of enormous help and without whom we couldn't have done this amazing amount of work. Thank you, Diolch yn Fawr and Shukran to all.**

**Lindsey Gaunt, Chair, Aberaid**

#### **Treasurer's report 31 August 2017 – 10 November 2018**

##### **Expenditure**

Admin and expenses	£1,614.49
Arabic language and culture classes	£180.00
The flat, rent, deposit, council tax etc	£4,873.54
Journey from Bristol	£548.65
Furniture and other equipment	£950.25
For the family	£1,903.31
Translation	£1,837.33
Support for other refugees	£1,188.15
Library books	£200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£13,295.72</b>

##### **Income**

donations before 30.8.2017	£19,524.51
Income 31.8.2017 - 10.11.2018	£6,858.15
total	£26,382.66
<b>Balance on 10.11.2018</b>	<b>£13,086.94</b>

**Michael Freeman, Treasurer, Aberaid**

