

Dorset Welcome Fund
Impact report for Round 2 (grants made Oct 2022)

Summary of funded projects and impact on beneficiaries

Grant recipient	Project	Amount Awarded	Allocations	Number of beneficiaries	Number of volunteers involved	Outcomes
Dorset Reclaim	Grant to enable the charity to offer furniture and household items either free or at subsidised cost, to refugees in financial need and settling into a new home	£2200	£880 Dorset Council £1056 BCP Council £264 DCF Fundholder	21	9	21 refugees received essential furniture for their new homes in Dorset
Relate Dorset and South Wiltshire	Domestic Abuse Awareness Programme for refugees in the Dorset Council area	£4000	£4000 Dorset Council	14	0	14 refugees have increased awareness of their rights in the UK relating to relationships and domestic abuse
Samee	Ukrainian Entrepreneurs Business Start-up Service Plus - initially supporting 12 Ukrainian refugees to explore routes into self-employment	£4000	£4000 GCLS via DCF	12	3	7 Ukrainian refugees successfully employed or self-employed, 5 on a pathway to employment.
St Mary's Church, Ferndown	Social activities to enable Ukrainian refugees in the local area to meet one another and connect with the wider community in Ferndown	£600	£600 GCLS via DCF	35 (Ukrainian)	5	35 Ukrainian refugees feel a greater part of the community and able to access support from new friends both Ukrainian and British
TOTAL		£12,000		82 beneficiaries	17 volunteers	

Reports and case studies submitted by the groups

1) Dorset Reclaim

Funded activities

The grant funding allowed us to provide furniture and household items for the benefit of refugee households from Ukraine and some from Afghanistan. We were also able to provide delivery and installation as needed. The primary beneficiaries were households with children headed up by women originally from Ukraine, plus small number of adult households. Most were guided to us from the Council or from women within their communities who had heard about how we could help. Volunteers and staff working with us gained a greater insight in the circumstances of refugees and the difficulties faced through language and cultural differences, where even small issues can be confusing. This understanding will be very useful in the future and help strengthen what we can offer to the local community.

Impact

When we provided services to the families, we kept records from each about the difference it had made to their lives, what they may have received, where they heard about us as well as any personal comments they made. Without exception, the feedback was positive with lots of “thank you”s and positive comments.

Project Development

We will be continuing the provision of items on a small scale.

Case study

“T and her two young children had been in furnished lodgings and had been struggling in two small rooms. They had found a two bedroom property but it was not completely furnished and T was distressed about how she would cope, despite trying to be positive about the change. She was directed to Dorset Reclaim through other women in her community and we managed to provide bunk beds and bedding, table and chairs as well as kitchen crockery, glasses and other small items. The delivery team built the bunk beds at the new property and helped move other items for her. We received some lovely feedback from the family about how friendly and welcoming the people at the depot were, together with the guys that delivered the items. She felt that it had made a big difference to the quality of life for her and her children, but also made her feel very positive about her start in a new country when everything was so uncertain. She added that she would be recommending us to others so much as she felt so much better.”

2) Relate Dorset and South Wiltshire

Funded activities

The programme was also extended to 7 two hour modules due in order to fully cover all the material and allow for translation in the workshops. We had all the handouts translated and also got the use of a translated version of the Duluth Culture Wheel approved by the Duluth organisation in America. Following the delivery of the first programme to 6 male refugees, the Resettlement team then approached us to deliver the programme for the wives and other female refugees. They had heard the men speak positively about the course and approached the team about it. Due to childcare issues the women needed a more condensed version of the programme, with childcare and also in 2 different languages. So we rewrote the programme into a one day/8 hour course.

Impact

All post course evaluations were positive. Feedback from participants:

"I have learnt a lot about honesty and communication, that we are all equal and the need to work together in a relationship."

"I learned a lot about the law and without attending the course I could not have known what was right and wrong behaviour."

Feedback from the Resettlement team:

"While some families had reported watching some videos in the bridging hotels covering various topics about life in the UK, there did not seem to be anything very comprehensive on this topic. We are aware of the devastating impact Domestic Abuse can have within families and are grateful to RDSW for designing this course."

"Prior to the course, the women have since said, they had no idea that in the UK they are equal to men and have equal rights."

"It was a wonderful opportunity to bring the men together to discuss their own and our culture around this issue and to share ideas about how to support each other better."

"The reaction has been very favourable. The women in particular since attending the course have gained confidence to join further classes e.g. numeracy"

"Relate have gone over and beyond in putting this package together for no other reason but to help and educate our families. The programme was considerate and respected of cultural differences and the facilitators were able adapt and have extended conversations with participants and really pull apart each topic to ensure the material was being digested to its full potential"

Project Development

The programme took longer to develop than anticipated due to issues around translated resources and contacting international organisations for permission. Organising the courses was complex; finding a convenient time, date and location took time. However, the programme is now written in 2 different formats so we are able to deliver it as needed. We are looking to fund future delivery by selling the programme to other organisations in the country; we have identified that there is no other comparable programme.

Case Study

One of the women who attended the female session with her 3 children was very shy and reticent to join in with the group initially. We later learnt that she had witnessed her father being killed in Afghanistan which naturally had traumatized her. After the first hour she began to reply to questions in the group about types of abuse and became interested when we were informing the group about the rights of women in the UK. Also, when we dispelled the idea that if Social Services becomes involved with a family for any reason it does not automatically mean that the children will be taken into care. This lady has gone on to join the English language course and other courses such as mathematics and the women's group organised by the Resettlement team. All the women attending the course appeared to gain knowledge on matters relating to them living in the UK.

3) Samee

Funded activities

Our Ukrainian Entrepreneurs Business Start-up Service Plus project has delivered a total output of 144 hours of tailored self-employment support to the personal needs of 12 refugees from Ukraine. All 12 project participants had been resettled into the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area and referred by Job Centre Plus. Each of the 12 participants received 12 hours of support over a 12-month project lifecycle period. Some received all 12 hours of advice and guidance in quick succession over a period of 3 months, whilst others spread out the support they requested much like a mobile phone minutes tariff. All 12 participants were from various regions of war torn Ukraine, and all of them were unemployed and claiming unemployment benefits when recruited to the project.

Impact

All 12 participants reported raised aspirations, particularly in their self-esteem and career aspirations. 7 of the 12 participants have moved into positive income generating outcomes, and needing to rely less on benefits; 5 have successfully launched self-employed ventures and 2 are sustainably employed in traditional job roles of retail at Lidl in both cases. The remaining 5 have moved closer to the UK employment market with tailored self-employment skills being newly developed.

The wider community has benefitted from increased local economic prosperity with 7 new jobs being created with the potential for new vacancies being created by the 5 new business owners. The project has also encouraged and given all 12 participants increased confidence and understanding of the cultural values of living and working in the UK. This should result in greater community harmony as Ukrainian refugees start to integrate with the local community in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Our project leader said he had never advised such a positive and hard working cohort on a project before. He also mentioned how each participant spoke good English language despite only recently coming to the UK, but discovered that the majority of Ukrainian people learn English at school as it is the International Business Language of Commerce.

Project development

The SAMEE charity survives on a project-by-project basis. Unfortunately, unless there is the opportunity to apply for continuation funding, then this specific project for the Ukrainian refugees is going to have been a one-off service. Please contact us if the opportunity to apply for further funding becomes available because the project has been a huge success, and we are confident that we will be able to replicate the project for other refugee groups.



Case study

“Samee has been supporting me since April 2023 when my family came to UK from my home country [Ukraine]. I wanted to start a wellness business in Bournemouth selling items from Ukraine but I had no idea where to begin. The SAMEE charity was quick to respond and with the help from Steve Harrison (Business Coach) who was very respectful, I had good support and relevant information to write a business plan and now 5 months later my business has launched and I can officially say I am a business owner in the UK. Steve has always just been a phone call or email away; He has given me confidence in business ideas as well as pointed me in the right direction. I still have contact with Steve regularly and he helps me to create 'lists' to keep me on track!”



4) St Mary's Church, Ferndown

Funded activities

We host a monthly support meeting to which we invite Ukrainian guests and their hosts. As time as gone on, it is now just Ukrainian families who come. Some of the hosts now help us behind the scenes. Each meeting is 90 minutes over lunchtime on a Saturday morning. We provide simple food (e.g. Pizza, Chilli, Jacket Potato, yoghurts, fruit) and drink (tea, coffee, juice). There is a craft activity for the children. The guests now know each other and are now supporting each other (e.g. help moving, finding furniture). We have been expecting the meetings to fizzle out but our last meeting (29-Oct) was over 35 people and 3 new families found us.

Impact

The grant has helped the refugees become part of our local community. Many going to church felt they wanted to do "something" but didn't know what. The group helps them to feel part of the solution. As well as rooms, heating and lighting the church has at times donated money and other gifts. Almost everyone who comes says directly to use how much they appreciate coming and using the building. They appreciate each other culturally, but also that we host the group. Last month an older lady came up to us to say thank you and that she loved us (!) which was very encouraging. The meetings help to build confidence and community. Whilst we cannot take full responsibility, 8 of our Ukrainian guests now have jobs – most are low paid but they are happy to be in work - and others say they feel better prepared for work. Most are low paid but they are happy. A number have moved out of their host families and are managing to rent.

Project development

We have had 2 other grants but this was the first one and enabled us to establish the group with some financial security for the first 12 months.

We have money for our last meeting this year (2-Dec-23). Next year, we are not sure yet what we are doing. After the October meeting with a big turnout and 3 new families, we feel that we should carry on but we don't have any funding yet. We are planning to look into grants available and make applications.

Case study

Iryna is a single mum with 2 children. Her host family were 2 good friends from church. She has now moved out and rents in Ferndown. She works in the kitchen at a care home in Ferndown. Her ex-host family have their house on the market and plan to move away to be closer to family. We have grown close to Iryna and her children and can give her support when needed. Recently, she had 2 tickets for AFC Bmth and wanted to take her son, so we help with car lifts. She has invited us for meals with her and she has been to our home for meals. She asks us questions on a range of topics and we help as best we can. Her care home recently was throwing away some nice glasses, so she offered them to our church and we accepted. A lady in the beacon cafe offered Iryna an old Xbox for her son and he loves it. Iryna is part of our local community and knows many people.

