



# OUR NEWSLETTER IS BACK!!

**Welcome to End of Year Newsletter!**

**It has been a while since our last newsletter, so we appreciate your patience.**

**A massive thank you to all our volunteers!**



We continue to be so grateful to all of our volunteers for offering their time to support Harbour's work. We currently have more than 90 volunteers helping in a variety of ways, including teaching English, Maths, and IT classes, running our café, responding to queries in the Advice Room, and acting as Appropriate Adults in age assessments.

In October, we had our most recent Volunteer Get-Together, and it was a great opportunity for volunteers to meet each other and offer ideas to enhance their experiences going forward. The key takeaways were to:

- (Re)introduce a quarterly newsletter to keep everyone informed of what is going on at Harbour
- Create a widespread volunteer WhatsApp group where frequent updates can be sent out
- Continue to have at least two Volunteer Get-Togethers each year

As we move into 2025, we look forward to your continued support!

## Our Visitors



We now have more people registered with Harbour (1,610) than ever before! This demonstrates that the need for our work remains, and we must continue to respond to the changing needs our Visitors have. The past 12 months have seen the demographic of our people changing, most notably the fact that we now have more people with Refugee Status than those with an outstanding asylum claim.

The Harbour continues to run several activities to benefit the physical and mental wellbeing of our Visitors. This includes 2 football training sessions,

weekly Women's and Youth Groups, a LGBTQ+ Group, English classes, a café, and barber shop!

We are always open to new ideas and different activities, so if you are interested in helping with any of the activities, or leading a new one, please do get in touch!

## Staff & Trustee Changes



There has been significant team changes at Harbour in 2024. We welcomed Rebecca Chick in January as our new Young Visitor Engagement Lead, and Mohamed Yahya joined in July as an Advisor, and both have been amazing additions to the team.

Claire Garrett and Mindy Sandhu are both retiring at the end of 2024. They have been hugely valuable members of the Harbour family for many years, and we will all be sad to see them go. We thank them for everything they have done for Harbour.

With Claire's announcement to leave Harbour, Tom Bain was selected to be her successor at CEO. They have been working as Joint CEOs since April to ensure a smooth transition, and Tom will continue as sole CEO in 2025.

There has also been change within The Board of Trustees, as David Rowlands decided to step down as Chair. In July 2024, Emma Graham was approved by all Trustees to be his successor. We are very happy to report that David will continue as Vice Chair.

## Looking ahead to 2025...



2025 will be a big year for Harbour. It will be our 25th anniversary year, and we want to celebrate all of the work that we have done to support the asylum seeking and refugee community in Swindon. The work will continue, however, and there are some key focus areas as we move into 2025:

**Steps2Work** - As we now have more people with the Right to Work than without, the demand for the Steps2Work programme has increased. We want to explore possible areas of development for the programme. If anyone would like to learn more about it, please do get in touch with our Steps2Work Coordinator, Stella Mortazavi.

**Lived Experience Panel** - We are proud to announce the creation of our first Lived Experience Panel. The panel is made up of a diverse mix of Visitors, who will be sharing their experiences of engaging with Harbour's services, and offering feedback for how we can continue to improve. The panel have undertaken training to prepare them to hold open and honest conversations, and we are looking forward to receiving their meaningful contributions going forward.

**Continue to build relationships** - We want to continue building mutually beneficial relationships with other Asylum and Refugee charities across the South West and beyond. In addition, we want to collaborate with other organisations who have more expertise in specific areas such as homelessness and mental health.

**Collective Voice of the Refugee Sector** - The Refugee Sector is made up of incredible organisations, but it is often fragmented in its approach when it comes to advocacy. We want to use our knowledge and our connections to speak in a collective voice to better represent the people we support.

If you would like to stay up to date on everything that is happening at Harbour, please follow us on social media:



## Can I Donate Monthly?

If you would like to offer additional support, you can donate to us monthly. To set up a regular monthly donation, click the link below.

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# THE HARBOUR PROJECT



**The Harbour Project for Swindon Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

Broadgreen Community Centre, Swindon  
United Kingdom

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