

THE HARBOUR PROJECT

Annual Report

April 2022 – March 2023

The Harbour Project for Swindon Refugees and
Asylum Seekers Registered Charity (1171368)



FROM THE CHAIRMAN

2022/23 was a year of significant milestones and achievements for the Harbour Project, most important in this has been our unwavering ability to support refugees and those claiming asylum in Swindon. It has been, and continues to be, an especially challenging time for the Refugee sector in the context of a hostile environment, Nationality and Borders Act and Illegal Migration Bill, war in Ukraine and a growing backlog of asylum claims, leading to the opening of a third hotel in the town.

Reflecting upon our breadth of activities and the positive impact of our work upon our Visitors, we took the opportunity to update our Charitable Objects with the inclusion of reference to our efforts to support people into employment as well as our advice work.

During the year financial support from two of our largest funders was due to come to an end, which could have represented a significant hole in our finances. We have been successful with both National Community Lottery Fund and Swindon Borough Council in securing continuation funding which helps assure our future as well offering leverage in other fundraising efforts.

Amid the challenges of responding to higher demand and more complex cases, we also completed a much needed and very overdue move to new premises. St Luke's Hall, our home for the last two decades, was becoming increasingly unviable. Closure of an NHS Covid Test facility at Broadgreen Community Centre presented the opportunity to occupy a larger footprint, with space more flexibly adaptable to a range of different activities.

The move took 6 months of planning, delivery and completion with The Harbour working hand-in-hand with South Swindon Parish Council, our new landlords. We re-opened our services in January 2023 in our new premises and it is fair to say that the move has had a palpable and positive impact upon our team, volunteers and, most importantly, our Visitors.

We could not achieve everything that we have in the last year without the support of our funders, patrons, civic leaders in Swindon and Wiltshire, the generosity and open-heartedness of individuals, organisations and local businesses and of course our team and everyone within the Harbour-family. I formally record our thanks to everyone who helped us in supporting people most marginalised in society. This year we have also taken a more active role with the media, seeking to redress public misconceptions around asylum and giving voice to the experiences of our Visitors.

In conclusion, despite the many challenges and unpredictable nature of the work that we do, The Harbour Project remains committed to its mission of helping asylum seekers and refugees to rebuild their lives with the best possible chance of a fair hearing, a fair outcome from their asylum claim, and a fair future in the UK.

David Rowlands, Chair of Trustees

SOME HEADLINE FACTS

Over the course of the year 1,403 asylum seekers and refugees were reached by our services, including 783 who contacted us for the first time. They were from 68 different countries. This represents a 35% increase in demand from the previous year. 175 people from the Ukraine accessed our services.

In addition to Ukraine, the main countries of origin for new arrivals were Iran, Eritrea, Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan. Across all of Visitors, main countries of origin are Iran (16%), Iraq (14%), Eritrea (12%), Sudan (10%), Afghanistan (7%), Albania and Syria (both 4%), Ethiopia (3%), Pakistan, Kuwait and Nigeria (all 2%).

There were 165 grants of Leave to Remain (or other form of protection), 29% more than in 2021/22.

Overall, there were 19,179 individual onsite attendances, 2 x more than in 21/22. Within this, there were 5,937 advice sessions, 4,316 to asylum seekers and 1,621 to refugees. There were also 8510 class attendances across a range of topics from English, to maths and computer skills.

Supporting our staff team of 11, volunteers gave 10,621 hours of their time (18% more than the previous year, signaling a return to face-to-face volunteering post-Covid). This included 523 hours of translation provided by Visitor-Volunteers.

This report records the objects, activities and achievements of The Harbour Project from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. It has been compiled with due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance.

The Harbour Project is committed to openness and transparency. Further information is available at Broadgreen Community Centre, Salisbury Street, Swindon, SN1 2AN. www.harbourproject.org.uk. info@harbourproject.org.uk. 01793 611682.



OBJECTIVES & PRIORITIES

The Harbour Project is a registered charity (with CIO status) based in Swindon provisioning advice, support, practical help and friendship to asylum seekers and refugees in the town. Our mission is to be a family for every individual who seeks asylum or is granted refugee status in Swindon and to help them to rebuild their lives.

We hope that our Visitors have the best possible chance of a fair hearing, fair outcome from their asylum claim, and a fair future in the UK.

This year we updated our Charitable Objects to better reflect our day to day work and our unique local offer to our Visitors. We have incorporated our Steps2Work activities as well as recognition of the importance of our Advice work.

From May 2022, our Charitable Objects are now:

- To provide relief to Asylum Seekers and Refugees and their dependents who are in conditions of hardship and distress;
- To preserve and protect the physical and mental health of Asylum Seekers and Refugees;
- To provide facilities for Asylum Seekers and Refugees for education, recreation and other leisure time occupations with the object of improving their conditions of life and assisting their inclusion into the wider community;
- To support the needs of asylum seekers and refugees with appropriate information, advice and guidance.





Our strategic priorities for 2022–2023 were:

- Continue to meet the ongoing and changing needs of Visitors. Keeping our Visitors safe through proactive safeguarding policies and practices is embedded in everything that we do.
- Focus on the mental well-being of Visitors and ensure appropriate resources and partnerships are put in place. We do so much more than merely responding to basic and immediate human needs.
- Extend (through resource, structure and relationships) our programme to support Visitors in building employability skills, seeking and securing suitable employment, and training and volunteering opportunities.
- Diversify and build our funding base to ensure our ongoing stability and success well into the future.
- Ensure that our structure, staffing and operational processes remain fit for purpose. As the organisation grows and responds to greater complexity of support needs, we have to create ways of being more efficient, scalable and replicable in our processes. Our accreditation to OISC LI (asylum and protection) is a critical component of this.
- Continue to attract, retain and value volunteers, ensuring that the experience that they have with us is fulfilling and makes best use of their skills and experience.
- Continue to meet charitable governance best practice as we grow and develop.
- Remodel (or identify alternative) premises to meet the needs and wellbeing of our Visitors, volunteers and staff.
- Work actively with other agencies and influencers to promote the value of our work and how this benefits our Visitors, the town and the broader community. Help to address public misconceptions by giving voice to the real experience of our Visitors.

Our Values:

Visitor-focused: We prioritise the interests of our Visitors in the decisions that we make, and recognise the importance of their involvement in decisions that may affect them. We take a strengths-based approach to help people to rebuild their lives.

Inclusive & Egalitarian: We are non-judgemental and accepting. We seek to provide equality of opportunity to allow Visitors to access the help and advice that they need, specific to their circumstances.

We do not probe or ask detailed questions about events leading up to someone making a claim for asylum unless the Visitor chooses to share this with us.

We value our diverse Board of Trustees and Staff team, and welcome Volunteers from throughout the community, making use of their myriad of skills.

We build connections and work in partnership with other organisations wherever possible.

We actively engage with stakeholders in our management and planning to ensure that our provision remains relevant, valuable and appropriate.



Warm & Welcoming: We are proud of our warm, family-like atmosphere. We are informal and friendly, and aim to provide a safe, comforting environment for our Visitors to enable Visitors to integrate into Swindon life in ways that are beneficial for everyone in the community.

Underpinning the informality and friendship, we also pride ourselves on the effectiveness, professionalism, integrity, depth and breadth of the services and advice that we offer.

A new place to proud of – our move to Broadgreen

After 6 months of planning and preparation, we moved into our new premises at Broadgreen Community Centre in January 2023. We were based at St Luke's Hall since we were first established as a Charity in 2022 and had definitely outgrown the space. Especially since the opening of three hotels as asylum accommodation in Swindon during 2021 and 2022, we were struggling for room for advice work, for staff desks, and for a broader range of activities and classes.

We took the keys to Broadgreen in September 2022 and, harnessing the great skills of our volunteers and Visitors, were able to turn a tired and empty space into the vibrant and light-filled building that we now call our home. Our new landlord, South Swindon Parish Council, also improved the building, with a new roof, carpeting, decorating and upgrading the fabric of the building.

With monies set aside, we have invested in new furniture, internet connectivity and laptops, as well as more welcoming facilities for our Visitors. With a Tenancy at Will, we are now concluding a 10 year lease, reflecting the confidence we have for the future and our belief in the value of the support that we deliver.

We finally moved in in January 2023 and celebrated with a get-together in February 2023. The move has definitely lifted the spirits of everyone; staff, volunteers, Visitors and external agencies.

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'When I come here it changes my mood' - Harbour Visitor

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'Inspired by the project, but aware that many others around the country don't have access to such a place. Love the 'buzz' of the place - so much going on - cafe/barbers/ classes/ consultation and advice desks etc. Feel privileged to be part of it all.'

Volunteer

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Our support & activities are all targeted towards helping to equip our Visitors with the skills & resilience, that they need to lead safe and thriving lives in the UK.

Putting the mental health and well-being of our Visitors sits at the heart of everything that we do, in terms of how we give our Visitors space to be heard, how we engage, and the activities we provide.

One of the most vital parts of our work is to provide help and advice to our Visitors. We are also accredited to OISC Level 1 which allows us to offer technical advice on a limited range of immigration matters. The main topics of advice related to Health (743 times); liaison with a solicitor (1164 times); working with DWP (317 times); liaising with schools and education (368 times); and liaising with Migrant Help (259 times).



Our Steps2Work programme has been able to increase its capacity with more staff and volunteer hours dedicated to helping people gain skills and build connections. Volunteering opportunities for our Visitors really took off this year with over 75 placements within a wide range of organisations including Great Western Hospital, British Heart Foundation, the Survivor Shop, and Olive Tree Cafe. A weekly job club also created a dedicated space for people to focus upon their CV's and job search.

Advice sessions take place face-to-face with one of our Advisors or volunteers. We have found that an appointment system, with some space for drop-in's, works best, ensuring that the most important issues are attended to and that people get dedicated time to be heard.

With the help of Vodafone and Migrant Help, we have been able to give 943 free SIM cards to our Visitors. This allows people to stay in touch with friends and family, as well as being contactable by key agencies.

Learning English and Maths is key to future independence and potential employment. 30 volunteer teachers delivered classes to 469 students who collectively attended 5548 times - a 28% increase upon the previous year. Maths tuition also continued this year with twice as many students as last year. Our 5 volunteer teachers taught 54 students who collectively attended 324 times.

Around a third of our Visitors are part of family groups, meaning that support needs and interests are as varied as the people we meet each day. With a high number of single men living in hotels close to our Centre, it has been especially important to make space for female Visitors to engage with us. 152 different women have joined in some sort of women's only activity over the course of the year, attending 774 times.

Facilitated by our Female Visitor Engagement Lead, our Women's Group is self-led, with topics and activities selected by members of the group. We have been delighted to see a number of our women having the confidence and presence to lead the group, sharing their culture and experiences.



Similarly, making space for our Youth Group has been especially important. The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children accessing our service grew to 64. Our weekly youth group has proven to be a strong conduit into forming relationships with younger Visitors, many of whom attend college during the daytime.

Our expertise in supporting Age Assessments developed significantly as many of the young men were housed inappropriately in hotel adult accommodation. 157 people attended Youth Group sessions 553 times.

Our people are our greatest asset, bringing diversity of skills and experience to enrich what we do at The Harbour.

The Harbour Project Trustees met seven times during the year. Meeting agendas are managed on an annual cycle with standing items such as financial performance and risk discussed at each meeting. Two trustees, Monica Potter and Basel Esleem left us during the year. Emma Graham was appointed to the board of trustees in May 2022.

We were supported by 98 volunteers over the year who collectively gave over 10,000 hours of their time. All volunteers require a DBS to be in place before they are able to work with us. We conducted a volunteer survey and held regular volunteer get-togethers to ensure views are heard and that we can make volunteering with us as good as it can be.

“ I love meeting people from all walks of life and just doing what I can to try to help the visitors to have happier and safer lives wherever it is that they end up. Even if they're in Swindon for a day or forever, I want to have a positive impact and for the visitor to know that there are people who care’.

Volunteer



Many cite the negative rhetoric around small boats and asylum seekers as a key reason for volunteering with us 'I think the State's approach to asylum seekers and refugees in the UK is shameful, and believe that community efforts, such as The Harbour Project, are key for bridging the gaps that our government refuse to acknowledge or change'.

Patrons	Lord Michael Wills	
	Nicky Alberry DL	
Trustees	David Rowlands	Chair of Trustees
	Faisal Nawaf Mayed	Vice Chair of Trustees
	Ian Robertson	Treasurer
	Monica Potter	Resigned 2/12/2022
	Hadiza Mahuta	
	Basel Esleem	Resigned 27/07/2022
	Neda Krishnan	
	Housam Al- Housami	
	Mari Williams	Secretary to Trustees
	Emma Graham	Appointed 27/05/2022



Staff	Claire Garrett	CEO	
	Nan Bains	Operations Manager	
	Jaz Sumal	Business Manager	
	Giles Matthews	Advisor	
	Mindy Sandhu	Advisor	
	Tom Bain	IA Liaison officer	
	Holly Grey	Young Visitor Engagement Lead	
	Mia O'Sullivan	Female Visitor Engagement Lead Mental Well-being Coordinator	
	Stella Mortazavi	Steps2Work Lead	
	Monty Maneeus	Youth Worker	Resigned 10/04/2022
	Micael Rostami	Youth Worker	Appointed 06/01/2023

Freelance Support	Hannah Moccia	Mental Health Counsellor	
	Rachael Taylor	Bookkeeper	
	Simon Marlow	Project Manager	Premises Move



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2022-23

This year marked the move to Broadgreen Community Centre and we were able to use Designated Reserves put aside in previous years to fund refurbishment works as well as new equipment and furniture for our new premises. The costs of refurbishment are to be depreciated over 10 years, in line with the terms of the lease, drawing down from Designated Reserves.

Costs increased 8% year on year. It was a significant achievement to hold our cost base at this level given the dramatic increases in demand that we have seen. Staff costs represent 71% of all costs, underlining the importance of our people as our most valuable asset.

Income in 2022/23 was almost the same as we secured in the previous year. The proportion of income from Major Funders slightly reduced, mainly as a result of a smaller award from NCLF. In 2021/22 we had also received money from NCLF to cover the costs of an independent external evaluation. Reassuringly, income from smaller grants, gifts and donations, and fundraising increased this year, after the reductions felt during Covid years.

This year also marked the ending of two of our largest income streams - NCLF and Swindon Borough Council - and the need to reapply and/or secure new sources of funding for us. This was a cause of concern, particularly as we were also planning to move to new premises whilst responding to the needs of new arrivals in three hotels in the town.

In the summer of 2022 we were re-commissioned for 5 years by SBC to provide support to refugees and asylum seekers in Swindon following an extensive retendering cycle. In parallel, we were also successful in our application to NCLF who are also to fund us for a further 5 years.

A new major funder for us this year is Zurich Community Trust who will support us for 3 years. We also benefited from the closure of a local Trust - Kingshill - who transferred some of their remaining financial assets to us as a contribution towards our property costs.

The Trustees are grateful to Ian Robertson and Rachael Taylor, and Independent Examiner Robert Raynes for preparing and examining the Accounts respectively.

	Income	Expenditure
2021-2022	£334,871	£297,061
2022-2023	£341,347	£320,603

Other Grants & Awards	
Swindon Borough Council/ DEFRA	Postcode Community Trust
Wiltshire Council	Hilden Charitable Trust
ESFA	Jack Lane Charitable Trust
Walter Guinness	Fulmer Charitable Trust

Major Funders	2021-22	2022-23
National Lottery Community Fund	£64,976	£45,243
Swindon Borough Council	£48,939	£51,197
Lloyds Bank Foundation	£34,215	£35,478
National Benevolent	£0	£9,410
Wiltshire Community Foundation	£8,978	£6,022
Zurich Community Trust		£6,822
AB Charitable Trust		£15,000
Blagrave Trust	£32,415	£20,263
Kingshill Trust		£18,000
The Fore	£7,338	£7,483

	2021-22	2022-23
Staff Costs	£194,073	£228,310
Premises & Rent	£18,670	£23,455
IT & Telephony	£13,762	£10,635
Overheads	£11,683	£11,932
Visitor Classes & Activities	£36,232	£29,557
Destitution & Visitor Travel	£6,107	£5,016
Food & Cleaning	£2,747	£3,759
Accountancy & Consultancy	£9,891	£5,948
Travel, Training & Volunteer Costs	£1,766	£282
Fundraising & Publicity	£2,130	£1,709

	2021-22	2022-23
Major Funders	£231,420	£214,918
Gifts & Donations	£43,401	£52,666
Smaller Grants	£48,235	£53,667
GiftAid Donations	£8,012	£10,641
Events	£3,733	£5,829
Other Income	£70	£3,626

THE OUTCOME WHEEL

Harbour Project – Outcome Wheel

Voice

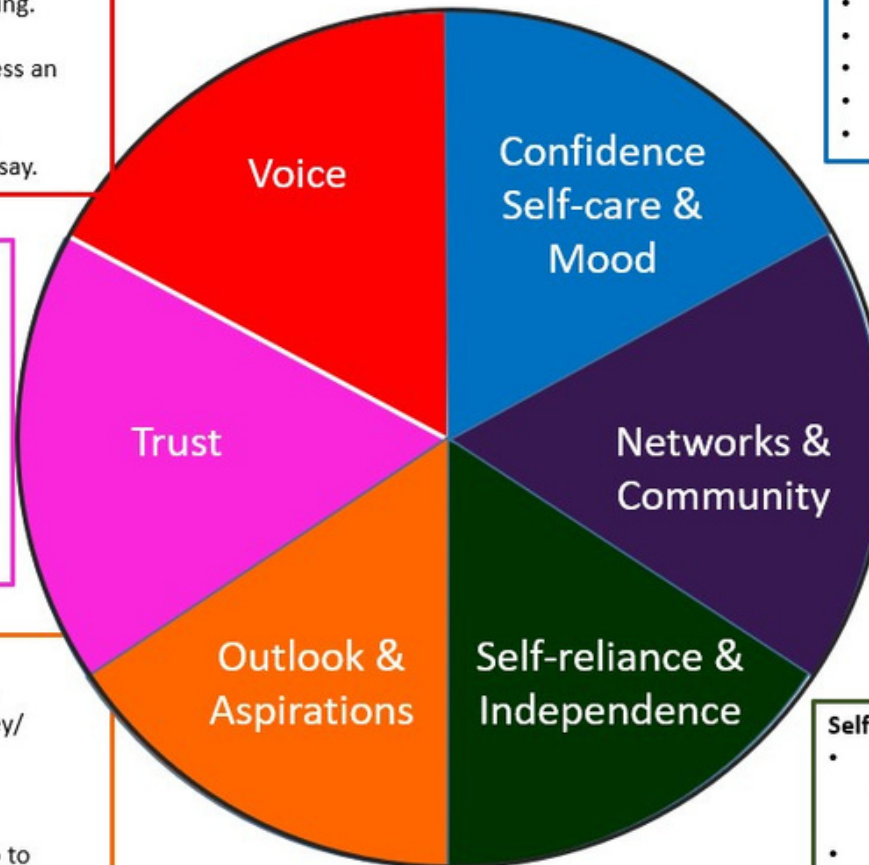
- English language skills. Ability to understand/ articulate questions/ ask if not understanding.
- Confidence to ask questions.
- Wanting to have a say. Confidence to express an opinion and offer feedback and ideas.
- Taking active ownership of their own case.
- Prepared to support others in having their say.

Trust

- Trusting Harbour, who we are as people.
- Trusting that we work with positive intent – no agendas, favouritism or sharing information.
- Trust to share their story and information with us.
- Recognition of expertise of Harbour - seeking us out based on experience.
- Who they turn to at a time of need.

Outlook & Aspirations

- Time horizon of need & valuation of self-worth
- short-term = food/ accommodation/ money/ health
 - Short/ medium term = wanting to learn/ engagement in activities
 - Medium = 'I'm bored' – can I volunteer/ go to college/ get involved in something new/ worthwhile
 - Longer term = rebuilding careers/ lives/ new skills



Confidence, Self-care & Mood

- Confidence to contact Harbour and ask for help
- Confidence to engage in conversation
- Confidence to join in activities
- Personal presentation
- Interest in physical & emotional wellbeing.
- Anxiety/ stress/ anger/ concentration.

Networks & Community

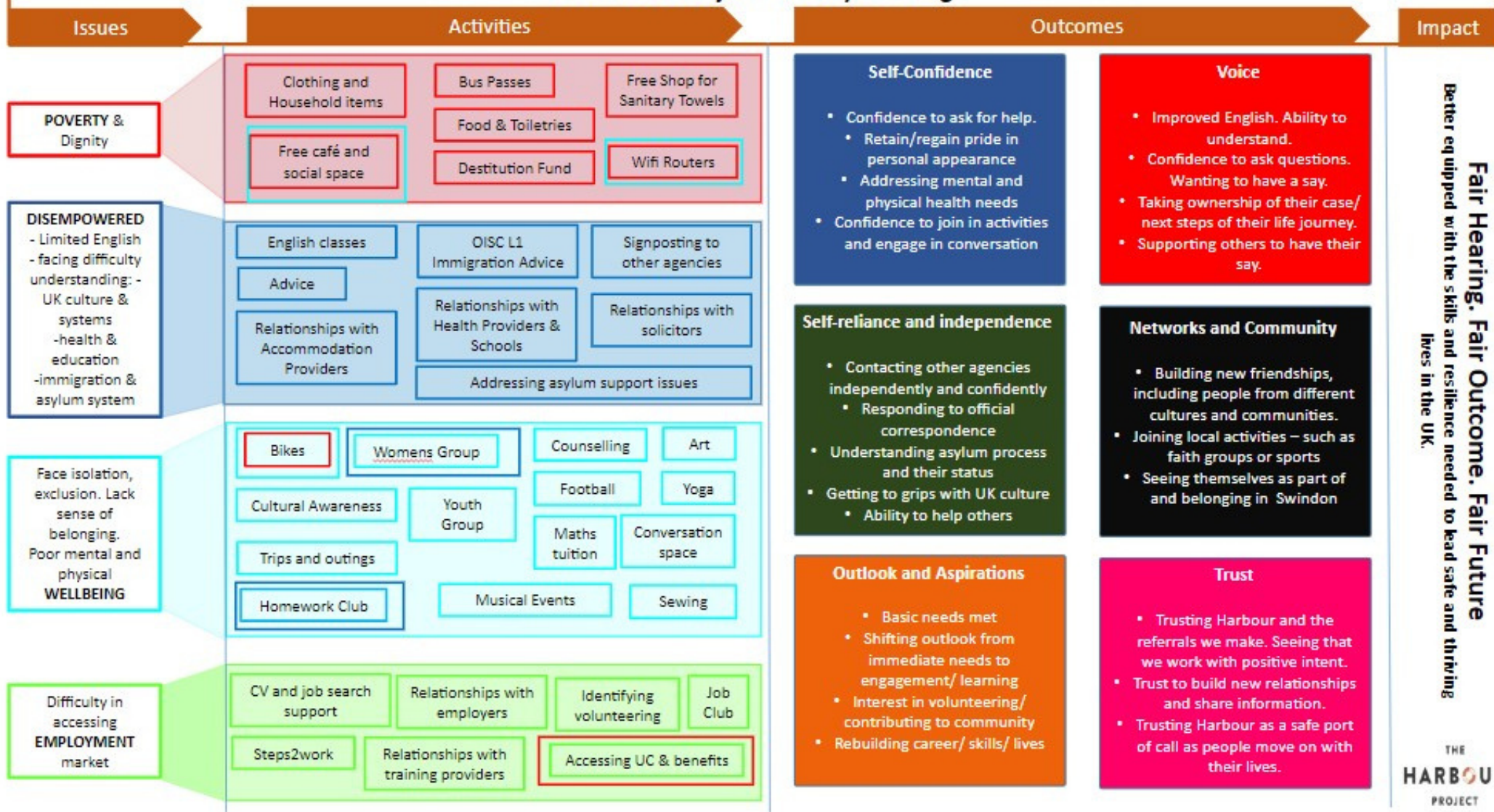
- Do they have friends? How many people do they know in Swindon?
- Have they been able to build a local support network – sport/ church & faith groups/ education.
- Are they learning to navigate the town and find people & places?
- Do they feel part of the community?
- Do they see themselves settling in Swindon?
- Have they been able to make friends from cultures/ communities different to their own?

Self-reliance & Independence

- Do they know what other agencies to contact for help & how to find information? (eg, Housing Teams/ Migrant Help). Could they do this without our help?
- Do they understand official correspondence?
- Understanding asylum/ refugee process and their status
- Understanding of UK culture, protocols, legal system
- Ability/ confidence/ willingness to help others.

WE USE THE THEORY OF CHANGE MODEL TO SUPPORT OUR VISITORS

The Harbour Project – Theory of Change



**Broadgreen Community Centre,
Salisbury Street
SN1 2AN**

**Office hours: Mon-Fri 9am to 3pm
Advice hours: Mon-Fri 11am to 2pm**

Tel: 01793 611682

✉ info@harbourproject.org.uk

🌐 www.harbourproject.org.uk

f **The Harbour Project**

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Welcome to
**BROADGREEN
COMMUNITY CENTRE**



THE
HARBOUR
PROJECT

