



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

Welcoming and helping refugees and asylum seekers - Culture School

This project was inspired by the current refugee crisis in Europe and looks at:

- How the people and communities of Cardiff and other British cities can come together to welcome and help refugees and asylum seekers.
- How they can help refugees and asylum seekers arrive and settle into British life.

Goal

- To ensure that newly-arrived Syrian refugee families integrate peacefully into Welsh society, understand Welsh culture and the Welsh way of life, gain access to public/ community educational initiatives, and enable stakeholders to understand and support their rights to quality of life.

Objectives

- Welcome the newly arrived Syrian refugees to their new home, while providing them with the key tools for their cultural transition, peaceful integration and community cohesion.
- Promote safe and easily-accessible cultural integration by advocating for appropriate learning environments for refugees and asylum seekers.
- Support the vulnerable attendees with their confidence levels by increasing cultural and community cohesion.

Actions

- The Integration Courses assisted the attendees with their cultural transition, providing support and advice to help them to:
 - make Wales their home,
 - learn about Welsh values, and
 - find out what to expect in their new home.
- The Culture School mobilised volunteers and local communities to come together and provide a range of additional cultural learning opportunities and community activities.
- The courses were held in community buildings across the city, including mosques and community hubs, building on previous community engagement.

Outcomes

- Every Syrian refugee family placed in Cardiff and the Vale Of Glamorgan was included in the project (8 families)
- 100% participation in all 4 days of events and 100% satisfaction with the events
- The biggest impact that the Culture School achieved was to create a community that supports and encourages each other.

Next steps

- Expand the Culture School for refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan as well as any Syrian families placed in the area in the future.
- Submit the Culture School report to the Council's Leadership and Organisational Groups.
- Establish the Culture School as a social enterprise with the business structure of a Community Interest Company, limited by guarantee, within the City of Cardiff Council.

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