



# Jesuit Refugee Service UK

Annual Review 2017–2018



## Our Vision

Our vision is of a world where all who have to flee their homes are welcomed with love. To accompany refugees is to affirm that God is present, even in the most difficult and tragic moments of human history. In companionship with Jesus Christ and serving his mission in the midst of refugees, JRS UK can be an effective sign of God's love and reconciliation.

## Our Mission

JRS UK has a mission to accompany, serve as companions, and advocate on behalf of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. We work with all refugees regardless of their faith.

We give priority to situations of great need, where a more universal good may be achieved, and to needs others are not attending to. We work where we have expertise, can join with partners or enable others in order to become involved.

JRS UK has a special ministry to work with refugees who have been detained or made destitute by the asylum process in the UK, who are among the most excluded groups in society today. The work of JRS UK is rooted in a belief in the dignity of the person and justice in the world.

## Our Values

JRS UK is grounded in Catholic social teaching: our work is based on the principles of hospitality and carried out in a spirit of compassion and solidarity, encouraging participation and community, aiming to give hope, justice and dignity to refugees, people seeking asylum and forced migrants.

As a work of the Society of Jesus, we are called to work with the most marginalised, drawing on the charism and principles of Ignatian spirituality and are inspired by the love and compassion of Jesus for the poor and excluded.

JRS UK has always been a diverse organisation – made up of, and serving, people of all faiths and none, without proselytising in return for services.

## Letter from the Director

Our work to accompany, serve and advocate for refugee friends is needed more than ever.

*"A place where you come and never want to leave."* This is how Becky, a refugee friend, describes JRS UK's weekly Day Centre (see p5). When I look back on 2017/8, I can't help taking pride in her words, because making the most marginalised people in our society feel welcome is at the heart of our mission. As well as practical support, our weekly Day Centre is a place where refugee friends find warmth, companionship and understanding.

But Becky's words also fill me with sadness and – yes – anger, because they are a reminder of what awaits our refugee friends outside our doors, when they step back out into UK society.

People like Becky came to this country when their lives were at risk – when they wanted and needed safety. Instead, they

found the 'hostile environment'. Having tried to seek asylum, they've been left destitute. Not permitted to work or entitled to any Government support, they are left with nothing. Nowhere to live, and no money to buy food.

The injustice we witness in the course of work motivates us to do more. And, so, I can't look back on the year without also looking forward. I hope to see the day when the hostile environment comes to an end, and our society becomes truly welcoming to those in need.

Sarah Teather



## Aims for the year

Provide a warm, calm and welcoming environment to destitute refugees and people seeking asylum through our weekly Day Centre.

Increase our capacity to provide a mixture of practical and pastoral support for approximately 250 refugees each month.

Increase the number of destitute refugees supported with temporary accommodation through the At Home hosting scheme.

Continue – and introduce – new activities and groups for our refugee friends focused on building resilience and companionship.

Provide pastoral and practical support to those held in immigration detention at Heathrow through befriending and welfare services.

Gain regulatory approval to begin providing a legal advice service to those we serve through the Day Centre.

Increase training and support for volunteers across our work, including reflection days and training opportunities.

Increase our advocacy and outreach work to raise the profile of the situation of asylum seekers

Becky at the JRS Summer Party



## Becky

Becky is one of our refugee friends. Becky and her family have been supported by JRS UK for many years. During this year's JRS UK summer party, Becky addressed everyone present to share her gratitude for the work of JRS UK.

“On behalf of myself, my family, and everyone gathered here today, I just want to say a very big thank you to all the groups of people involved in the establishment of this organisation.

“Since I have been visiting different charities for help and support, I have never seen one like this one. All of my friends coming here have similar stories to say about this place – that it is almost like home. A place where you come and never want to leave.

“I am short of words to express my feelings, but in all I say God bless everyone involved with the growth and progress of JRS UK, including all the volunteers and staff.”



Cardinal Vincent Nicholls visits our weekly Day Centre.



# Supporting destitute refugees and asylum seekers

The JRS UK weekly Day Centre offers hospitality and warmth to around 100 destitute refugees each week, where relationships and friendships grow; acting as a counter-culture to the hostility they otherwise face.

Those who attend the Day Centre are destitute. They are not eligible to claim benefits and are prohibited from working, left without financial support from the state, sometimes for many years. In addition to significant physical hardship, prolonged destitution leads to isolation and anxiety.

Our mission to accompany refugees is deeply relational and creates a genuine sense of community, where refugees become friends rather than being seen purely as beneficiaries.

Each week refugees received a £10 cash travel grant, which enabled crucial access to medical and legal appointments; a hot nutritious meal; essential toiletry packs; and support from volunteers and staff.

Throughout the year, our staff and dedicated volunteers accompanied 345 refugee friends registered with our Day Centre, providing practical and emotional support, breaking down barriers of isolation and anxiety.

## The Day Centre in numbers



Volunteers at the Day Centre sort through donations.



Toiletry packs being assembled ready to distribute to refugee friends.

**231** individuals, on average, received support from the Day Centre each month

**22** refugee friends granted leave to remain, now beginning to build a new life

**55** new friends registered at the Day Centre

“It is not enough to give them what they need. I must give in such a way that my giving restores their self-worth, their human dignity, in such a way that their hope and trust in mankind are rekindled.”

*Bill Yeomans SJ in Side by Side, JRS International*

**2,773** toiletry packs distributed

**12,070** weekly £10 travel grants

**345** friends registered with JRS

**52** different nationalities



A JRS UK volunteer talks through directions with a refugee friend.

# Building confidence and resilience

Spring-boarding from the Day Centre, we offer Day Centre Plus activities and Companion Projects for our refugee friends. Day Centre Plus activities seek to build skills, confidence and resilience and participation in the community. The Companion Projects accompany our refugee friends as they explore and develop in their own faith, regardless of their own personal creed.

## Women's Bike Project

Weekly women's cycling lessons, in partnership with The Bike Project

**15 sessions, average of 15 women attending**

## Gospel Choir

Gospel choir, facilitated by Soul Sanctuary

**15 sessions, average of 6 people attending**

## English Classes

Specialist one:one English classes for women whose level of English is too low for ESOL.

**15 sessions for 3 women**

## Men4Men

Monthly men's reflection group facilitated by a Jesuit.

**9 sessions for a dedicated group of 4 men**

## Drama

Drama group, facilitated by RISE Theatre

**4 sessions, average of 7 people attending**

## Women's Prayer Circle

Weekly women's prayer group facilitated by Sr Mary Toner.

**23 sessions for a dedicated group of 6 women**



*The JRS drama group and gospel choir performed at the inaugural JRS Carol Service in December.*

“It is wonderful to witness the pure joy and satisfaction on our friends’ faces as they performed in front of an audience. Held towards the end of Advent, the Carol Service was an incredible way to celebrate Christmas and offered a unique platform where our friend’s unique gifts and voices were recognized and cherished.”

*JRS team member*



# Creating Communities of Hospitality

Our *At Home* hosting scheme aims to provide short-term accommodation placements for refugees at risk of street homelessness, by creating communities of hospitality. We focus particularly on facilitating religious communities to host, but welcome all willing to open their home to a refugee.

The *At Home* hosting scheme continues to grow from strength to strength, offering short-term placements for refugees who would otherwise be street-homeless or in exceptionally precarious living arrangements.

The *At Home* hosting scheme has carefully matched religious communities, parishes, and families, couples and individuals according to the needs of 15 refugee guests taking into account temperament and character.

Regular meetings and deeper reflection mornings facilitated sharing between hosts and encouraged community to develop.

**2,729** nights of stable, secure accommodation

**15** refugees hosted

**15** Communities of Hospitality created

## Special hardship grants

In addition to meeting the basic daily needs of our refugee friends, where funding allows, we provide our refugee friends with special hardship grants to support, for example: travel to Liverpool to submit a fresh asylum claim; travel to appeal hearings; grants for newly recognised refugees whilst they wait for mainstream benefits to kick-in.

We provided

**255 special grants**

this year to support refugee hardship.

“It’s basic things that make the difference: a warm welcome, they use your name, shake your hand, eat food with you, view you as human. This kind of interaction is what provides emotional support for me.”

*A refugee friend*



Hosts reflect on the gifts they've been given through hosting a refugee.



The JRS UK community share lunch together.

## Cardinal Vincent visits JRS UK

In July JRS UK was blessed with a visit from Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

It was a joyous day, with many refugee friends of different faiths and backgrounds coming especially to see him. He spent time with refugees in the Day Centre, shared a meal and listened to their stories.

Those he met described the reality of the hostile environment and the hardship of their lives as asylum seekers. Describing this as a 'twilight world', the Cardinal said, "What we've heard this afternoon is how deep that darkness is. And in a way how deliberately that darkness is created, in a deeply mistaken sense that treating people this badly will prevent others seeking sanctuary in this country."

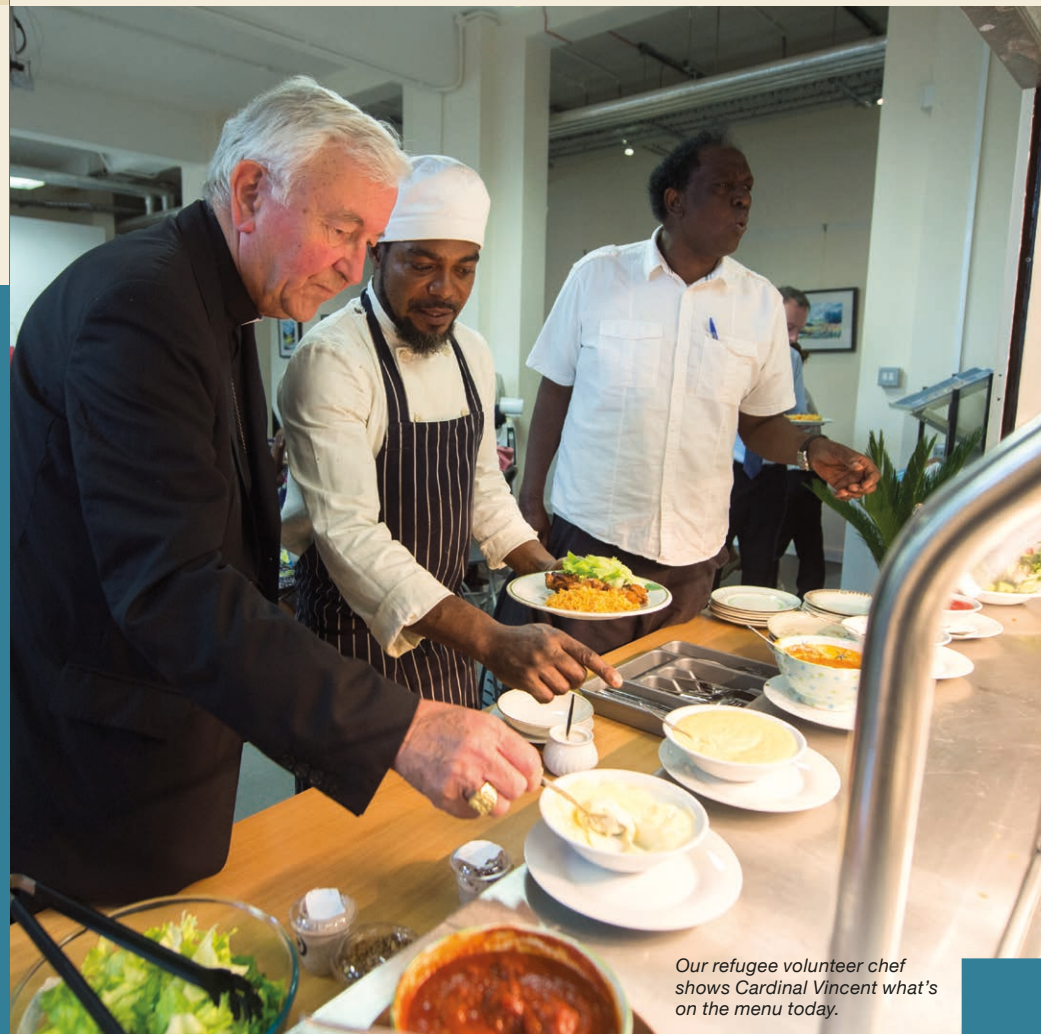
Cardinal Vincent was visibly moved by his visit to JRS UK and told BBC Radio 4's Sunday Programme that the UK government's treatment of asylum seekers was "a shame on our country".

[ "It's so kind for him to come and visit us here, this doesn't happen at other centres." ]

*A refugee friend*

[ "I visited the Jesuit Refugee Service... It's a very remarkable place offering much needed accompaniment and support to those who come to this country in the most terrible of circumstances seeking sanctuary." ]

*Cardinal Vincent Nichols*



*Our refugee volunteer chef shows Cardinal Vincent what's on the menu today.*





Students at Our Lady's Hackney campaign to end detention

## Detention Outreach

Those who seek asylum in the UK live with the constant fear they may be detained at any moment. Immigration Detention is one of the darkest and most neglected places in our society. Being with people in detention – willingly entering a place others avoid – is accompaniment at work.

Each week our detention outreach team offered pastoral care to people held indefinitely at the two detention centres at Heathrow Airport. Indefinite detention is a deeply isolating experience and can cause high levels of stress and anxiety.

This year we significantly increased our capacity in the Detention Outreach service, recruiting 9 new volunteers and provided extensive training for new and existing volunteers including:

- in-house casework support training
- training on befriending provided by the Association of Visitors to Immigration Detention
- training to identify the victims of trafficking provided by the Santa Maria Group

The time our team – a mixture of staff and volunteers – offer to listen and share is invaluable, and can be deeply transformative. Relationships are formed over the weeks and months that people are in detention.

**28** volunteers provided pastoral and practical support to people in detention

**191** people received regular pastoral and casework support

**298** people received companionship through informal conversations at the welfare drop-in sessions in detention

## Voice from a Volunteer

Anita has been volunteering with JRS UK and the Detention Outreach Team for three years. She shares her reflections on volunteering for JRS UK.

I have always been interested in working with people who are marginalised in our society. I wanted to work with refugees and was interested in JRS's work.

I started volunteering with JRS UK as a social visitor to detention centres in 2015. More recently, I have been supporting the team with clerical and administration support.

An experience which had a profound impact on me as a detention volunteer was when I visited a detainee who asked if we could sit together in silence. We spent some 45 minutes together in silence, which was a very moving and humbling experience for me. Accompanying him in silence showed me that we can connect with each other even in a challenging environment.

I shall be ever grateful to him for sharing with me the powerful gift of silence. What a privilege!

I have often been told by detainees that to know someone out there is thinking of them means a lot, as they realise **they are not forgotten.**

I've become acutely aware of how helpful visits are to those who feel dejected, isolated and vulnerable.





# Raising awareness and advocating for change

We advocate on behalf of refugees and forcibly displaced persons. Through our principle of accompaniment and our values of solidarity and participation, our advocacy aims both to be informed and directed by refugees we accompany and serve.

Our capacity to advocate for the rights of refugees and to raise awareness of their plight, particularly in the Catholic community, significantly increased this year.

## Out in the Cold

Homelessness is a daily reality for our refugee friends, the extent of which was highlighted in our first research report, 'Out in the Cold'. This primary research led by JRS UK found that 62% of our refugee friends had been street homeless in the last 12 months. The report was launched on Homeless Sunday.

## Speaking Out

April 2018 saw the so-called Windrush scandal hit the headline and the cruel matrix of 'hostile environment' policies became part of the public's lexicon. We fought for a change in hearts and minds: to bring the value of each individual back to centre stage of UK immigration policy. The experiences of our refugee friends were published in The Guardian, The Tablet, the Catholic Herald and The Church Times.



## Refugee Stories: Changing the Narrative

One of the highlights of the year was our refugee week conference, 'Refugee Stories: Changing the Narrative', which brought academics together with refugees to reflect on the experience of being a refugee. Amongst those who spoke powerfully about their experience was Cecile, who powerfully shared her experiences of seeking asylum in the UK, including moving from place to place and being made homeless on a number of occasions.



# Staff & Volunteers

A dedicated and passionate team of twelve staff and over seventy volunteers provided a mix of practical, emotional and spiritual support to people who have sought safety and security in the UK.

**Between October 2017 and September 2018, the paid JRS UK staff team were:**

**Nicolette Busuttil**  
Communities of  
Hospitality  
Coordinator (until Feb  
2018)

**Aidan Cantwell**  
Operations Manager

**Sophie Cartwright**  
Policy Officer

**Liliane Djoukouo**  
Day Centre &  
Administrative Assistant

**Beatrice Grasso**  
Detention Outreach  
Manager

**Nicholas Hanrahan**  
Community Outreach  
Officer

**Megan Knowles**  
Communications and  
Development Manager

**Sou Huoy Lam**  
Office Administrator

**William Neal**  
Communications  
Assistant

**Jonathan Parr**  
Assistant Director

**Sarah Teather**  
Director

**Naomi Turner**  
Communities  
of Hospitality  
Coordinator  
(from Feb 2018)



“When I talk to you guys, I feel at peace. This detention, it’s bad... but at least I found good people. This is one thing I look forward to.”

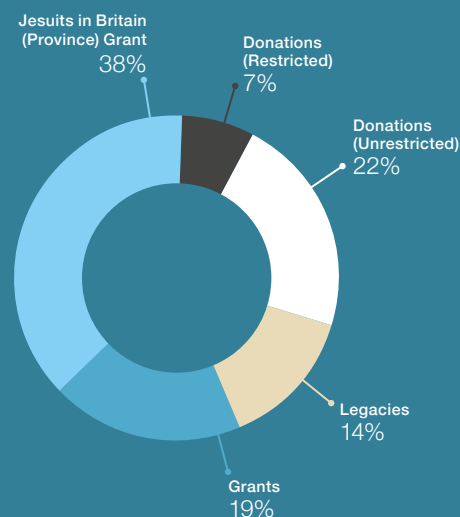
*A friend in detention, who had been detained for almost 11 months*



# Income & Expenditure 2017/18

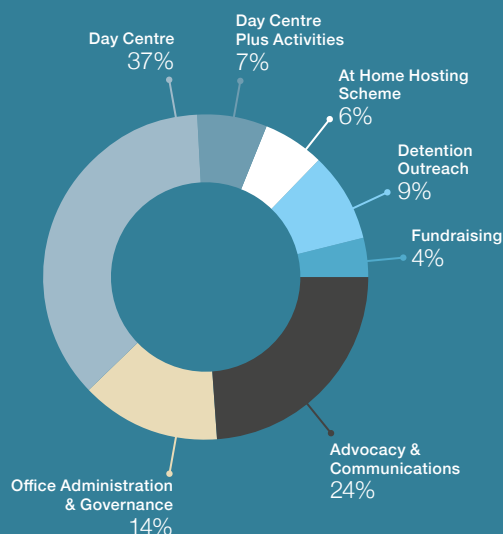
## Income

Jesuits in Britain (Province) Grant	£335,543
Donations (Restricted)	£57,617
Donations (Unrestricted)	£194,649
Legacies	£119,000
Grants	£166,521
Trading income & interest	£512
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£873,842</b>



## Expenditure

Day Centre	£280,836
Day Centre Plus Activities	£50,420
At Home Hosting Scheme	£42,313
Detention Outreach	£66,203
Fundraising	£26,891
Advocacy & Communications	£181,751
Office Administration & Governance	£105,539
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£753,953</b>



A copy of full audited accounts are available on request.

## Governance

JRS UK is a work of Jesuits in Britain, who are governed by a Board of Trustees, chaired by the Provincial, Fr Damian Howard SJ. We have a close working relationship with the global work of JRS through the International office in Rome and the European office in Brussels.

We work in partnership with other religious congregations, humanitarian organisations and with refugees themselves, encouraging co-responsibility, communal discernment and participative decision-making.

We endeavour to be openly accountable for our work. We have an independent bank account, budget, and payroll. The Jesuits in Britain delegate oversight of JRS UK to a Management Committee chaired by Fr Paul Nicholson SJ, who is also a trustee of the Jesuits in Britain. Our Management Committee includes Jesuits, other charity practitioners, and refugees we accompany. The Management Committee reports to the British Jesuit Provincial.

*The Jesuits in Britain are The Society of Jesus Trust (of 1929) for Roman Catholic Purposes. Registered as a Charity in England & Wales (230165) and Scotland (40490).*





## Thank you!

Our work would not be possible without the generosity and kindness of individuals, religious congregations, communities, and foundations. You enable JRS UK to continue to accompany, serve and advocate for the rights of refugees and people seeking asylum.



## Special thanks for their support of our work this year go to:

Austrian Catholic Centre	JRS Europe	Sisters of the Holy Family of Bordeaux
Bernadette Charitable Trust	Jesuits in Britain	Slade Family
The Bike Project	Keble College Chapel	Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries
Black Family	Little Company of Mary	St Alban & St Stephen
Bommer Family	Logan Family	St Aloysius Church
Catholic Church of Sts Peter and Paul	London Churches Refugee Fund	St Benedict's Abbey
Catholic Womens League	London Oratory School	St Benedict's School
Community of the Glorious Ascension	Loreto College	St Bridget's Moresby
Congregation of Jesus	Loreto Sisters	St Francis Xavier Church
Congregation of La Sainte Union	Manresa Link	St Ignatius Parish
Convent of Poor Clares	Mazars Charitable Trust	St Joseph & St Clare
Corpus Christi Church	Medical Mission Sisters	St Joseph's RC Church Mossley
Cronin Family	Methodist Church Fund for Human Need	St Mary & St Anselm
Daughters of Mary and Joseph	More House Catholic Chaplaincy	St Thomas More Catholic Church
Daughters of the Holy Ghost	Murphy Family	St Wilfrid's Parish
Davis Family	Nagly Family	Soul Sanctuary
Denny Family	National Justice & Peace Network	Stonyhurst College
Faithful Companions of Jesus	Newman Association	Szczuka Family
Farm Street Parish	O'Connor Family	Taggart Family
Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood	Oratorian Community	The Community OLM
Friends of Blairs Association	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	The Most Holy Trinity Church
Godfrey Family	Pret A Manger	The St Vincent de Paul Society
Hamrah Trust	Religious of Christian Education	The Ursuline Sisters
Heythrop College	RISE Theatre	Tower Hamlets Foodbank
Holden Family	Sisters of Charity of St Jeanne Antide	Tromans Family
Holy Apostles Catholic Church	Sisters of Christian Instruction	Ursuline College
Holy Child Associates	Sisters of Mercy	Ursuline High School
In-kind Direct	Sisters of St Joseph of Peace	Ursuline Sisters
Ivereigh Family		Wimbledon College
		Wrap-up London





## Accompany

## Be part of our community

JRS UK wouldn't be who we are without the special people who dedicate their time, energy and passion through volunteering. Volunteers support a range of our work – from fundraising and supporting the Day Centre, to packing toiletry packs and visiting people in detention.

Interested in volunteering?  
Contact **uk@jrs.net** or call  
**020 7488 7310** to find out more.

## Help us to support refugees

### Donate:

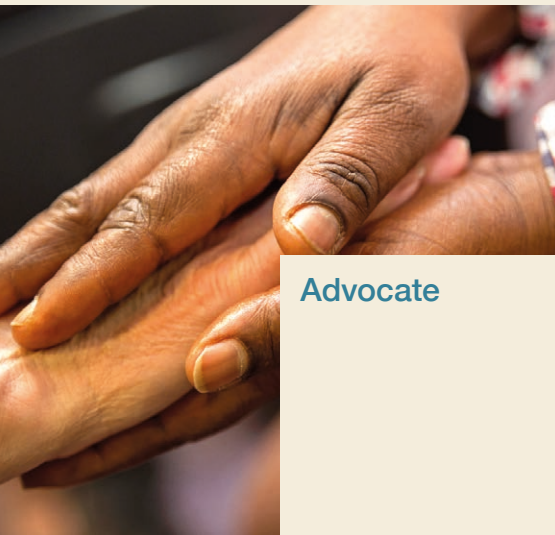
On our website: **[www.jrsuk.net/donate](http://www.jrsuk.net/donate)**  
Call us: **020 7488 7310**

### Raise awareness:

Follow us: **@JRSUK**  
Like us: **/jesuitrefugeeserviceuk**  
Subscribe: **[www.jrsuk.net/subscribe](http://www.jrsuk.net/subscribe)**



## Serve



## Advocate

Jesuit Refugee Service UK  
Hurtado Jesuit Centre  
2 Chandler Street  
London E1W 2QT

**020 7488 7310**  
**uk@jrs.net**  
**[www.jrsuk.net](http://www.jrsuk.net)**

