



Bradford Ecumenical Asylum CONCern



to access hostels such as the Salvation Army because they have 'no recourse to public funds' – i.e. they are not entitled to any benefits, housing or health care. There are reports of men and women sleeping at the bus station, in the rubbish chute at a block of flats, in a car, empty shops, offices of religious buildings and in doorways.

BEACON Hosting and Abigail Housing do not have enough places for destitute asylum seekers referred to them (see right).

Many asylum seekers are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder and have to cope with huge emotional problems in addition to destitution. For instance, a young man involved in the Iranian demonstrations in 2009, was held in a cell not only too small to lie down in, but too small to **sit** down in.

Many asylum seekers do not want to be here – they would rather be with their family and friends in their home country – free to live their lives as we do here.

But once made destitute, they are stuck in limbo, too frightened to return home where they believe they face further violence, torture or execution, but unable to support themselves here in any way.

Please pray for these men and women who find themselves in a desperate situation and ask prayerfully how you can respond.

BEACON Hosting project

THE GOOD NEWS:

14 of the 33 people hosted since October 2008 have now been granted leave to remain. These are people who fled extreme trauma in their homelands but who, without a safe place to stay whilst they gathered fresh evidence to resubmit their asylum claims, may well have been forced to return to the country they fled from.

THE NOT SO GOOD NEWS:

Whilst our wonderful group of hosts come back again and again to offer a home and friendship to new people, the project turns away on average three destitute asylum seekers every week. The demand massively outstrips supply. Both guests and hosts speak of the mutuality of hosting and the friendships that develop. We urgently need more people willing to open up their homes – and their hearts – and be a part of a life-changing experience.

For details, call or email Will Sutcliffe:

Mobile: 07505 053149

E-mail: host.beacon@yahoo.com

Proverbs 31:8-9

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.



McKenzie Friends

Imagine that you have fled to this country because your life is in danger, and have applied for asylum here. After your interview you get a letter, with reasons, saying that your application is refused but you have the right to appeal to a tribunal to reverse the decision. You speak very little English; have no understanding of how English law and tribunals work, and solicitors you have approached have refused to take your case, as they believe it has little chance of success. You know very few people – so whom can you turn to for help?

McKenzie Friends! They are recognised by the tribunal system and in the last few years have often been seen in tribunals helping asylum seekers. At present the number of referrals received by BEACON has increased considerably because many bodies that have offered help to asylum seekers have closed, or drastically reduced staff as a result of funding cuts. This means some seeking help have to be turned away. **At present BEACON has 12 active McKenzie friends and needs more volunteers** – could this be something for you? No previous experience is needed and support is offered in initial training, monthly support sessions and further training sessions.

If you think you could help in this very important work please contact:

**Laura at beacon@beaconbradford.org or
Joe Batt 01274 589775**



CHAT

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WELCOME TO FIONA BOUUDON

Fiona has been appointed to a part time post, to develop the work of CHAT. Plans are being made for her to start work early in September.



PRAYER POINTS

Please pray for:

- Fiona as she begins her work with CHAT volunteers
- Destitute asylum seekers
- BEACON Hosts, who offer hospitality in their own homes
- McKenzie friends, who stand alongside those who make appeals for asylum
- All those who challenge injustice

WHEN:

Tuesday 8th November 2011
6pm

WHERE:

Delius Arts and Cultural
Centre
29 Great Horton Road
Bradford, BD7 1AA

Buffet at 6 pm followed by
AGM and speakers