

Dear friends

It seems to have been a very odd sort of summer. The new government put to rest the Rwanda scheme and has prioritised assessing asylum claims – all good news, but it seems there are to be no new safe routes for refugees to get to the UK which means more Channel deaths and more exploitation. It is not yet clear if ‘tackling criminal gangs’ will, indeed, tackle criminal gangs or leave the most vulnerable open to prosecution for touching the tiller. The new government’s language and rhetoric have changed very little from the old.

The recent riots and the frightening attacks on asylum accommodation and mosques was an abomination. Yet, the response of the British public who have supported refugees and roundly condemned the rioters also gives hope. Craven District of Sanctuary, of which we are part, will be looking at how to encourage and support respectful conversations with neighbours, friends, and relatives that challenge some of the misinformation that abounds on social (and other) media. I would be very interested in hearing your views and thoughts and if anyone would like to discuss this further, over a cup of coffee perhaps, that would be lovely!

The new government has indicated that it intends to ‘disperse’ asylum accommodation more than at present. Most asylum seekers are housed in ‘hotels’ (stripped of anything ‘hotel like’ before reception). Over the years many of us in Craven have supported asylum seekers and refugees in the area. Most eventually leave for work, more affordable accommodation, or to be closer to their kin or ethnic support network. We will need to think about how best we can support any new arrivals or how we can support other refugee support groups doing the bulk of the work.

Buckden Knit and Natter Group is knitting blanket squares for refugees living in Abigail Housing. Are there any other keen knitters out there who would like to help? Abigail houses destitute refugees, often those refused asylum and awaiting an appeal and who are entirely reliant on charitable help and who would otherwise be homeless (and foodless). I would be pleased to accept any squares and pass them onto Judy.

Knit for Abigail

Can you help make blankets for Abigail Housing residents in Bradford?

Knit as many squares as you can in whatever colour you want and send to:

Tennant House, Malham BD23 4DA.

The squares will be sewn together and given to residents at Christmas.



How?

- Use 4mm (number 8) needles
- Use double knit wool
- Cast on 30 stitches
- Knit 58 rows of garter stitch (all knit)
- Cast off

Alternatively, if you have wool and needles to donate, please give to Judy

Also, we have been gifted a beautiful baby's blanket (1 metre square)

We are selling raffle tickets at £1 each and the draw will be held at Yarndale Festival (Skipton Auction Mart) on 29 September where Skipton Refugee Group is running a stall. The proceeds will go to Abigail Housing.

Tickets: stella@stellaperrott.com



Events

1st November 6pm at St Andrews Church Hall, Newmarket Street, Skipton

Come and enjoy a **fabulous home-cooked Persian meal and listen to Hilary Davies who has recently returned from the West Bank of Palestine** where she was an Ecumenical Accompanier. More information to follow but put the date in your diary. To find out more contact Judy on touredrive432@btinternet.com

One last thing

I will be away and out of the country in December. For the past however many years we have had a collection of toiletries for BIASAN in Bradford. It has been a tremendous Upper Wharfedale initiative and important on so many levels. At a distance, I can do all the usual publicity and arrangements, but I cannot receive the toiletries, sort them, and take them to Bradford – usually before BIASAN's Christmas party, so round about 20 December. Is there anyone/two who would be interested in taking on the task? Generally, I sort the toiletries into their type e.g. 'shampoo' or 'shower gel' and identify those suitable for gifts. This usually takes me a couple of hours. Loading and getting the stuff to Bradford (it will be a car full) is a round trip of about three hours. Sometimes there are 'straggler' donations to pick up on the way. If you think you could or would like to do this, please get in touch.

Enjoy the rest of the summer! And best wishes to you all.

Stella

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