



# City of Sanctuary Strategy Development 2022 - 2025

*Contributing to the movement by promoting a culture of welcome*

<https://cityofsanctuary.org/>

# Where are we now?



- 👤 115+ local **City of Sanctuary groups** across the UK
- 👤 Streams of Sanctuary - Schools, Universities, Colleges, Libraries, Theatres etc of Sanctuary
- 👤 Local Authority Network
- 👤 Sanctuary Ambassador Network



# Draft: City of Sanctuary Strategy 2022 – 2025

*Vision - 'The UK will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution'*

# How can we bring about the changes we want to see?



- Contact theory - building relationships of solidarity
- Turning 'Empathy into Action'
- Movement Building

## THEORY OF CHANGE - Social Contact → Movement Building

We maintain that in order to achieve our vision, and realise the change needed to make the UK more welcoming, we must contribute to building the movement through encouraging and inspiring the involvement of more people in promoting welcome.

### Micro level - Social Contact Theory - How we create change at a local or regional level

**WHO:**  
CoS UK through providing support for the network and the network itself-  
**1. CoS groups (and then their local network of pledged supporters - both individuals and organisations)**  
**2. Streams of Sanctuary e.g. schools, universities**

### Macro level - Movement Building - How we create change at a UK level

**WHO:**  
CoS UK working with:-  
**1. CoS groups**  
**2. Streams (see separate strategy for details)**  
**3. Partnerships including mass membership organisations**  
**4. Refugee Sector partnerships/coalition campaigns**

### HOW: Through the practical application of our network principles\*

#### Turning empathy into action i.e. relationships of solidarity

**Connecting people** through welcoming activities and streams of sanctuary. This encourages friendships, changes attitudes and motivates action for positive change.

#### Involving people in campaigning and advocacy

**Movement building** by engaging the mainstream through streams activities and **Sanctuary Awards** and mobilising the network behind campaigning and advocacy initiatives.



#### Micro level examples



Mrs Y (a destitute asylum seeker) meets Mrs B at a knitting club (a welcoming activity). As Mrs B learns from Mrs Y about her journey and unmet need for protection she becomes inspired to get involved in campaigning activities.

A teacher/librarian/nurse (streams work) meets Abdul at an awareness session and learns more about the asylum system, and is motivated to stand in solidarity for a humane asylum process.

Mr A who fled persecution befriends Mr B, at a local community centre. When Mr A is refused asylum and detained, Mr B is so outraged, that he writes to his MP.

#### Macro level examples

In 2015, after much public pressure, the UK Government agreed to implement a resettlement programme for Syrian refugees allowing 20,000 to be located in the UK by 2020. The Syrian situation also led to a large grassroots response across the UK and as a result of this 'revolution of generosity' our network has grown considerably.

The public response to the Windrush scandal forced the government to re-examine its Home Office policies and procedures.



City of Sanctuary

# The Movement



**Aim : Mobilise supporters and work with others to build a united voice to advocate for people seeking sanctuary across the UK.**

The changes we want to see:-

- People can seek safety in the UK, no matter how they came here
- People can live in dignity while they wait to hear if they can stay
- A fairer, faster and more efficient system to decide whether people will be granted protection
- Refugees and their local communities can build better futures together. Local councils in areas where refugees are dispersed to should be adequately supported



# Network Principles

- 🔗 Create opportunities for relationships of friendship and solidarity between people living in receiving communities and people seeking sanctuary;
- 🔗 Communicate a positive vision of welcome by promoting the counter-narrative to negative rhetoric and celebrating the contribution of people seeking sanctuary;
- 🔗 Work with people seeking sanctuary, ensuring that they are not just active participants but are empowered to be part of decision-making processes at all levels and in all activities;
- 🔗 Promote understanding of asylum and refugee issues, especially by enabling the voices of people seeking to be heard directly;
- 🔗 When possible (if your context allows) mobilise support for campaigns which aim to make a difference to the lives of people seeking sanctuary;
- 🔗 Facilitate partnership working and network development across places of sanctuary and support collaboration on common cause issues.



# Charter – 2022-205

- 🏹 Vision & Values remain the same
- 🏹 Network principles - more specific about mobilising and promoting the counter-narrative
- 🏹 Recognition of the ‘networks’
- 🏹 Included a summary of our theory of change
- 🏹 Clarity of terminology
- 🏹 Clear on the organisations strategic objective
- 🏹 Included the newer networks – Sanctuary Ambassadors & Local Authority



# City of Sanctuary UK

## Strategic Objectives

- 1 Provide network coordination and support to the City of Sanctuary network of groups in order to increase the number of groups, bring about an expansion in the activities undertaken and improve the engagement and participation of people seeking sanctuary;
- 2 Facilitate communications across City of Sanctuary networks to share information, promote a positive message of welcome for people seeking sanctuary and enable the voices of people seeking sanctuary to be heard directly;
- 3 Develop and promote Streams of Sanctuary and awards work in order to embed the message of welcome within mainstream spheres of society and ensure that people seeking sanctuary are engaged, and can participate, in streams and awards initiatives;
- 4 Contribute towards movement building through building partnerships, ensuring the participation of people seeking sanctuary and mobilising support for advocacy and campaigning initiatives.

# Reflections ...



-  What is our future story?
-  What do we achieve the change we want to see?
-  Where should City of Sanctuary UK focus their efforts and their resources?

Thank you – Solidarity with People  
Seeking Sanctuary



**TOGETHER  
WITH  
REFUGEES**