

Welcome to Part 1 SWVG Training

- This training package should take you about two and a half hours to complete.
- This training is for everyone involved in SWVG, whatever role they hope to take. There is further training for those who want to become visitors, teachers or work on the helpdesks.
- You will need to have access to the internet to view the linked videos and web pages. It may be easiest to put the PowerPoint into slideshow mode, but on the slide that discusses safeguarding, you will need to press ESC in order to click on the embedded safeguarding documents.
- After you have completed the package, we will arrange an online meeting with others to discuss how you found it and how you might become more involved with the charity, and to enable personal contact with SWVG members. As much of the work we do is about the development of personal relationships, we will offer an experiential course in communication when it is possible.



Southampton & Winchester Visitors Group

Aims of this learning package

To enable you to:

- Understand the current environment and national situation for people seeking asylum.
- Discuss why people seek sanctuary and some of the needs of people seeking asylum.
- Explain how SWVG started and how we work together with people who are seeking asylum.
- Find out about each of the SWVG groups.
- Explore aspects of safeguarding and read our SWVG policy.
- Be aware of the SWVG further Training and Support Programme for potential visitors and teachers.

[Hyperlinks](#) are in blue and underlined. There are also [Questions](#) in blue.



We believe that:

- People seeking asylum have a clear right to protection under the international laws that the UK has signed up to
- All claims should be heard and dealt with promptly, fairly and fully
- No-one seeking asylum in the UK should be forced into danger or destitution and everyone seeking asylum deserves respect, dignity and compassion

Asylum and Refugees

The following pages give some information and definitions of refugees and asylum seekers.

Before you start, what do you think is the difference?



Some definitions

A migrant is simply someone who moves from one country to another – some do so voluntarily, some are forcibly displaced

A refugee is someone who has had to leave his/her country and who is afraid to return there 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion' ([1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](#))

An asylum seeker is a person who has crossed an international border and is seeking safety or protection in another country. In the UK, asylum seekers are refugees who have claimed asylum and are awaiting a Home Office decision as to whether they can stay here.

A person granted [Leave to Remain](#) in the UK by the Home Office may be given Refugee status or humanitarian protection. (Note the difference between a refugee and a Refugee with status).

Asylum and Refugees

- Please view this short [TEDEd video](#) giving an overview of refugees and asylum seekers..

Asylum and Refugees

The UNHCR website provides us with a good picture of the global situation. Please explore it a little and then test your recall by answering questions on the following slides.

According to the UNHCR...

[UNHCR web site](#)

According to the UNHCR...

How many people are forcibly displaced in the world?

- 108.4 million
- 10.84 million
- 108.4 thousand
- 125.6 million

Asylum and Refugees

According to the UNHCR...

How many people are forcibly displaced in the world?

- 108.4 million

Which are the top three countries from which refugees come?

Syria
South Sudan
Ukraine



Syria
Ukraine
Afghanistan



Syria
Venezuela
Afghanistan



Asylum and Refugees

According to the UNHCR...

How many people are forcibly displaced in the world?

- 108.4 million

Which are the top three countries from which refugees come?

Syria	19%
Ukraine	16%
Afghanistan	16%

Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK

Some myths

PSSST...!



Myth
They have no
right to be here.

Fact

The UK signed the 1951 Convention of Refugees - anyone has the legal right to come here, apply for asylum and remain in the UK until a final decision is made on his or her asylum application. However the 2023 Illegal Migration Act removes this right, so we have national and international legislation in conflict.

Myth
They are illegal.



Fact

There is no such thing as an illegal asylum seeker. Entry using false documents is recognised as the only way many people can reach a safe country. However, again the 2023 legislation contradicts this internationally accepted approach.

This section tells you more of how people become displaced and what they might expect on arriving in the UK.

Please make some notes on what you think and feel about each video.

- Please view this 15 minute video of a [Syrian family's refugee](#) journey.
- Please view this 5 minute video about [claiming asylum](#) in the UK
- Please watch this 5 minute video about the [initial screening](#) interview. (Note the rules have changed slightly since this video was made and this 12 minute video explains the [inadmissibility rules](#) brought in during 2021)

- Watch this video that discusses how hard it is to get [Right to Remain](#).
- The [Right to Remain Toolkit](#) is a **very** useful resource to support people seeking asylum.
- The life of people seeking asylum is very hard under the [hostile environment](#).
- This [clip](#) shows a little of life for a person seeking asylum. The funding has increased somewhat since it was made: to £49.18 per week for those buying their own food or £8.86 for those in catered accommodation (latest figures are [here](#)).



The situation locally:

Some facts and figures:

Southampton and asylum seekers

How many asylum seekers are there in Southampton?

40

400

4000

How many people live in Southampton?

263,769

26,369

2,647,975

Some facts and figures:

Southampton and asylum seekers

How many asylum seekers are there in Southampton?

400 

How many people live in Southampton?

263,769

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Some facts and figures:

Southampton and asylum seekers

How many asylum seekers are there in Southampton?

400 ✓

How many people live in Southampton?

263,769 ✓

Some facts and figures:

Southampton and asylum seekers

Southampton (population 263,769) is host to about 400 people seeking asylum.

People seeking asylum represent just **0.15%** of the population.

SWVG



Please click on the links in paragraphs below and read the material on the website.

Here you can learn a little of the [history of SWVG](#), and [how we work](#).

SWVG members believe in justice and fairness, and that all people seeking asylum have the right to respect and compassion; SWVG works in a collegial way; among SWVG members there is a high level of trust; we always embrace change; SWVG works closely with other organisations; we aspire always to improve and develop both ourselves and SWVG as an organisation.

SWVG is also involved in advocacy and [campaigning](#). There are about 400 people seeking asylum in Southampton and last year some people were lodged in a hotel near Winchester. SWVG works with some of these people by providing visitors, English teachers, some financial support, a drop-in centre with a helpdesk at the Avenue Multicultural Centre, and another helpdesk at a hotel that currently houses people seeking asylum.

An important feature of SWVG is that we work through long-term relationships with people who are seeking asylum and who need our help. Also, SWVG works co-operatively with other local asylum charities such as the [CLEAR](#) project, and [Southampton Action](#).

We have a team of visitors and English teachers who work with clients. Please read [here](#) to find more about being a visitor and [volunteering](#) in other ways.



SOUTHAMPTON ACTION
PEOPLE TO PEOPLE SOLIDARITY

Some facts and figures: how much do you know about SWVG?

When did people first get together to help the Kurds?

- 1979
- 1989
- 1999

When did they first work with asylum seekers?

- 1992
- 1989
- 2001



Some facts and figures: how much do you know about SWVG?

When did people first get together to help the Kurds?

1989 ✓

When did they first work with asylum seekers?

1992

1989

2001



Some facts and figures: how much do you know about SWVG?

When did people first get together to help the Kurds?

1989 ✓

When did they first work with asylum seekers?

2001 ✓



Some facts and figures: how much do you know about SWVG?

SWVG has more than **20 years** of experience with the asylum system.



How we work with people people seeking asylum :

- Empowering and enabling by befriending *; providing information and signposting
- Provide activities
- Teaching
- Practical help: bikes/ phones/ IT
- Facilitating “cooking with Friends”
- Working on an allotment with each other

* We continue to use the traditional term “visitor”, derived from our original work in prison visiting, as it is still used in our title.

How SWVG supports volunteers:

- Initial and on-going training
- Support Groups
- Experienced members who have areas of expertise
- Regular General meetings
- Weekly briefings
- Regular newsletters
- Support via WhatsApp Groups



SWVG also:

- Works with national groups to campaign and advocate for the rights of people seeking asylum
- Has a communications group
- Runs fundraising events
- Prepares grants for funding
- Has an outreach group

You may be able to join any of the following groups depending on the level of training you have completed:

- Befriending
- Information Helpdesk at AMC and/or hotel
- Teaching
- Activities
- Allotment
- Bike Hub
- Cooking with Friends
- Communications
- Campaigning
- Outreach
- IT
- Grants
- Fundraising events

What can you do and when?

- Following Part 1 training you can join and participate in any of the groups and do anything except befriending / teaching independently and being rostered on the Information Desk
- Following Parts 2 / 3 Training you can volunteer on a 1:1 basis with someone seeking asylum

Being a volunteer:

What do you need to be able to give as a befriender? (*Hint: it's not money....*)



Being a Volunteer

What do you need to be able to give as a visitor? (*Hint: it's not money....*)

Time

Qualities

Skills



Being a member:

What do you need to be able to give as a visitor? (*Hint: it's not money....*)

Time

About an hour a week with the client, plus time for preparation, follow-up, seeking advice and support meetings – usually about 4 hours a week



Being a Volunteer:

What do you need to be able to give as a visitor? (*Hint: it's not money....*)

Time

About an hour a week with the client, plus time for preparation, follow-up, seeking advice and support meetings – usually about 4 hours a week

Qualities

A degree of emotional resilience

Ability to be a member of a team and also to work on your own initiative

Patience

The ability to maintain confidentiality



Being a Volunteer:

What do you need to be able to give as a visitor?

(*Hint: it's not money....*)

Time

About an hour a week with the client, plus time for preparation, follow-up, seeking advice and support meetings – usually about 4 hours a week

Qualities

A degree of emotional resilience

Ability to be a member of a team and also to work on your own initiative

Patience

The ability to maintain confidentiality

Skills

Good communication and listening skills, being a facilitator

Practical problem-solving skills



Being a Volunteer:

You are not alone as a member - SWVG has a comprehensive support mechanism

Training

Comprehensive initial training plus website material for reference
Opportunities for ongoing training and to attend conferences as required

Back up

Support and advice from the Co-ordinators and others in SWVG

Group support

Regular support meetings for problem-solving and sharing knowledge and experiences
General member meetings on topical issues every two months



ADMINISTRATION

Administrator: David Rees
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Secretary: Jessica Hasan
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BEFRIENDING

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SUPPORT GROUPS

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MEMBER TRAINING

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TRUSTEE BOARD

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SAFEGUARDING: Judith Evans
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SWVG Group Contacts

ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE SEEKING ASYLUM

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COOKING WITH FRIENDS

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OUTREACH

vacancy

IT

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Hazel Inskip hazel.inskip@swvg-refugees.org.uk

WINCHESTER EVENTS (fundraising)

Anne Leeming
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SOUTHAMPTON EVENTS (fundraising)

vacancy

Safeguarding 1

Safeguarding is everyone's duty, and the safety and welfare of our clients is paramount in all that we do. Each of us has a role to play in keeping our clients and ourselves safe, and passing on any concerns that we may have. It's been well documented that new migrants, people seeking asylum and those recently granted leave to remain are in the highest category of those who might be at risk. SWVG is required by the Charities Commission to ensure that all volunteers, whatever their remit, are fully up to date with safeguarding and are aware of possible signs of various types of abuse.

SWVG has a robust safeguarding policy on our website which you can read [here](#) together with an incident reporting form. All volunteers must be familiar with these.

Safeguarding 2

- Recognising signs that radicalisation may be taking place is an important part of safeguarding, and there is a link to the Southampton City Council e-learning module entitled [Raising Awareness of Prevent](#).
- Please complete the e-learning module. We can assure you it's not too onerous, but be aware that if you have a concern, then **SWVG's trustees** should be contacted (not the Council). There is a longer (40 min) government interactive training which is interesting, and you may also want to explore it.

Further training

Part 1 is a short online discussion which will be arranged with other potential members, to explore what you have learnt from this presentation

Part 2 and 3 builds on and expands what you have learnt in Part 1 and will be a face-to-face session running from 08.45 - 5pm

Aims:

To enable you to...

understand the needs of people seeking asylum

develop an awareness of the legal system for people seeking asylum and support systems in the UK

clarify the role of befrienders; teachers and desk support

understand the importance of the SWVG support systems for SWVG members (especially those who are having direct contact with people seeking asylum)

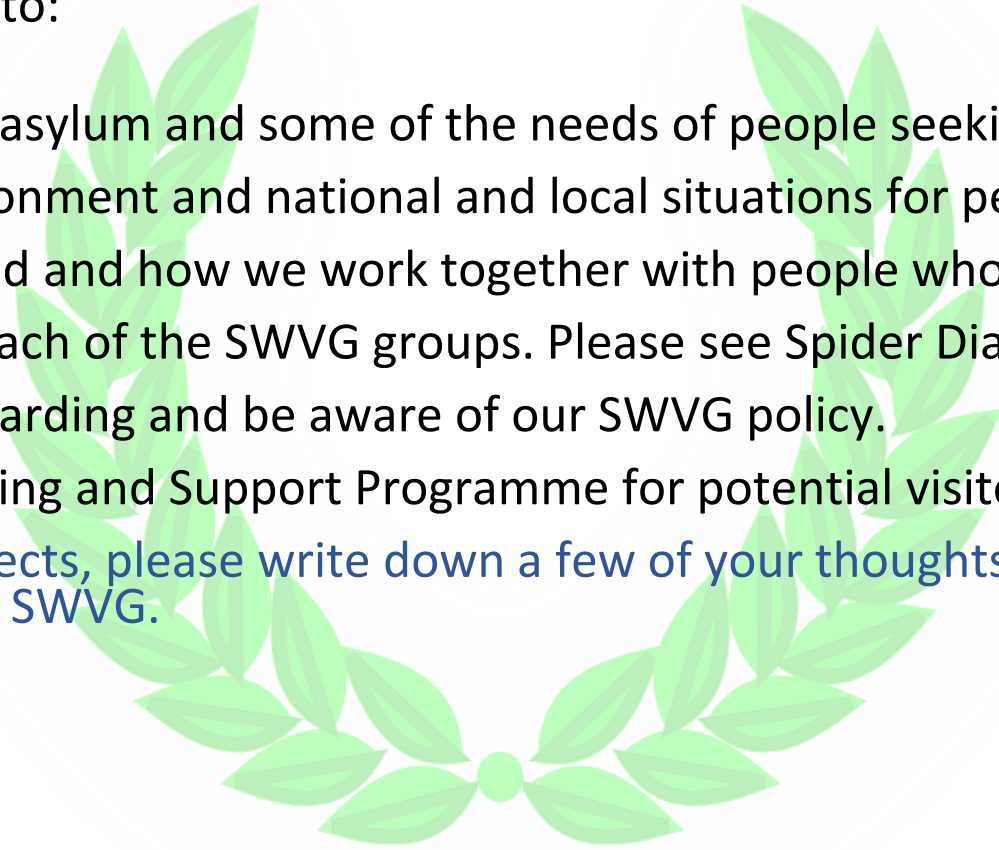
transfer skills of communication; listening and assertiveness to those from different cultural groups

Thank you for completing this programme. Congratulations!

We hope you are now able to:

- Discuss why people seek asylum and some of the needs of people seeking asylum.
- Explain the current environment and national and local situations for people seeking asylum.
- Explain how SWVG started and how we work together with people who are seeking asylum.
- Find information about each of the SWVG groups. Please see Spider Diagram.
- Discuss aspects of safeguarding and be aware of our SWVG policy.
- Describe the SWVG Training and Support Programme for potential visitors and teachers.

Having explored these subjects, please write down a few of your thoughts about asylum and how you might like to work with SWVG.



Next steps

If you haven't already volunteered to work with SWVG, and would like to do so, please complete an [application form](#) and send it to Jessica at jessica.hasan@swvg-refugees.org.uk

You are now ready for the Part 1 training session.

