

## Why the crisis?

Syria's nearly five years of brutal civil war – together with attacks from ISIS – has created the greatest human tragedy in living memory.

- Almost 500,000 Syrian people have died
- Some 11 million – nearly half the population – have fled their homes
- Almost 5 million are in vast camps in neighbouring countries

These broken people are not economic migrants chasing a better future. They are refugees from war – and would return to their homes if they could. Their only choice was to risk their lives by fleeing for safety and survival. Many left with only the clothes on their back and what they could carry.

Those homeless people include 30,000 unaccompanied children now in camps in France and Kent. Most are alone because desperate parents paid all they had to gangs to transport them to Europe – seeing this as their children's only hope for a future. Others have been orphaned by the conflict, or separated from parents in the chaos. Many of these children now lack appropriate adult care, receive no education and are at great risk from physical and sexual exploitation.

## The commitment of the UK Government is–

- To resettle in the UK at least 20,000 Syrian refugees from the camps by 2020
- To resettle a further 3000 vulnerable children and their families from the Middle East and North Africa region in the next 5 years

## To help make this happen churches are being welcomed to –

- Play a lead role in welcoming and helping these refugees rebuild their lives
- Provide the unaccompanied children with secure long-term foster care

Source – 'For Refugees'. For more information see their website [www.forrefugees.uk](http://www.forrefugees.uk)



## Refugee Week – 20-26 June 2016

### JOURNEY TOGETHER

A unique photo exhibition  
for Refugee Week



### Programme of Events

Tue 21st June 7.30pm - Opening Event  
including food, talks & music

Wednesday 22nd June 7.30pm - Look Beyond Borders talk and artistic response  
presented by Woking People of Faith

Thursday 23rd June 5.30pm - 'Forced to Flee'  
ISL Youth Theatre production about refugees

Thursday 23rd June 7.30pm - 'Stations of the Cross'  
service: A meditative act of worship

Saturday 25th June 11am - 1pm Two Chairs  
Exchange Dialogue - Face To Face (WPOF)

Saturday 25th June 2pm - 5pm 'A Conversation  
With' 3 Refugees tell their story (WPOF)

Sunday 26th June 10.30am - Service for  
Refugee Week

Daily photo exhibition: Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> - Sat 25<sup>th</sup> June, 9am - 4pm

Woking URC White Rose Lane, GU22 7HA | [wokingurc.org.uk](http://wokingurc.org.uk) | [office@wokingurc.org.uk](mailto:office@wokingurc.org.uk) | 01483 763078

**Who will help the  
refugees  
To cease their  
endless walking,  
While the ones  
who claim to care  
Continue endless  
talking?**

Words John L. Bell,  
© WGRG,  
c/o Iona Community,  
Glasgow.

**At St Andrew's we want to encourage anyone who would like to get involved supporting refugees. Please let Helen in the office know what you are doing.**

## Ways we can help:

- 1. Work with our local authority** – Woking Borough Council have already approached a multi-agency group in Woking including faith representatives.

WAVS have agreed to coordinate the volunteers and have issued the following advert:

### **The Woking Family Support Team**

Could you offer voluntary support to vulnerable families in Woking? Do you want to make a difference, share your skills and help change lives?

The Woking Family Support Team coordinates services and provides meaningful support for Woking families. We are innovative, passionate and strive to go the extra mile to make a difference. Our role is diverse and we support many families across the Borough, including refugee families under the Government's relocation scheme.

The support from our partners and volunteers is greatly valued and we are looking for local residents, both men and women, with skills, time and passion to get involved. If you are pragmatic, positive and have good empathy whilst able to keep professional boundaries then we would like to hear from you.

Currently we particularly need:

- Arabic speakers/translators
- ESOL (or other qualified) teachers
- Befrienders and Mentors for both English and Syrian families

**To find out more then please email us and request a registration form at [familysupport@wavs.org.uk](mailto:familysupport@wavs.org.uk)**

- 2. Sponsor a family** - From May 2016 churches can sponsor a family to come to your community. Churches will not need to pay for housing etc but it is suggested £4000 may be required for other expenses. The Church would play similar role to the Council offering help and advice on Housing/benefit/ schools/healthcare/English teaching/etc and acting as mentor/case worker
- 3. Raise awareness** in your area
  - host an event to educate and motivate your church or community
  - become an Ambassador for refugees by establishing a local group to pray, advocate and care for refugees.
- 4. Give a Welcome Box** – to welcome to the neighbourhood but also build the foundation for lasting friendships. [www.cinnamonnetwork.co.uk/refugees](http://www.cinnamonnetwork.co.uk/refugees).
- 5. Mentor a young person** – Refugee Support Network provides training for local youth workers to mentor young refugees. [www.Refugeesupportnetwork.org](http://www.Refugeesupportnetwork.org)
- 6. Foster a child** – there are currently 1000 unaccompanied children in Kent alone. [www.homeforgood.org.uk](http://www.homeforgood.org.uk)
- 7. Teach some English** – Faith Action have developed a 'Creative English' program that local churches can run to help refugees develop the language skills they need. More information from [www.faithaction.net](http://www.faithaction.net)
- 8. Raise vital funds** to help organisations and *For Refugees* to act on behalf of refugees and the churches. There are many charities involved