



### Golden Jubilee Thanksgiving

Saturday 11th May witnessed the anniversary service of 50 years of the religious profession of Sister Margaret Walsh. The event in Birmingham was attended by hundreds of well wishers from many community projects including Hope, The Sanctuary, Women Of The Diocese Group, Sisters of the Infant Jesus, St. Wilfred's Catholic Church, representatives from The Catholic Arch Diocese of Birmingham, and Brushstrokes Community Project. It was a great celebration of the wonderful work she has completed over the past 50 years and she was hugely commended



by all on the untiring support she and all the projects have given to thousands of people.

**THANK YOU SISTER, FOR ALL YOUR DEDICATED YEARS OF SERVICE.**

Martin McNally (Brushstrokes Volunteer Coordinator)

*Sister Margaret receiving a celebration cake from Brushstrokes. Pictured are Mary Tomlinson, Margaret Walsh and Martin McNally. Many thanks to Carol Mendez, Brushstrokes Monitoring & Administrative Officer, who made the beautiful cake. Sister Margaret Walsh is the founder of Brushstrokes Community Project having established this work to seek out and support the 'hidden poor' of Smethwick in 1999.*

Ramadan Mubarak. We wish all our Islamic friends and supporters a very peaceful Ramadan.



Hi! My name is Lucy and I am delighted to be joining the Brushstrokes family as Resources Coordinator. I have been volunteering here since January 2018, registering clients for the Immigration Clinic and supporting Martin and his team of volunteers with the Community café. Since starting to volunteer, I have become more interested in the stories of our service users and have enjoyed welcoming people into our offices. I have been trained as an Asylum Guide and am currently working through the asylum process with two local clients.

With a background in Primary education and a big smile, I am looking forward to taking on my role within resources. I hope that I will be able to provide a service for our clients that helps them to acquire some of the clothing, food and resources they need during their time in our Brushstrokes Community. I am always requesting new donations and would definitely like to hear from you if you can offer a few hours a week to volunteer and help with our food and clothing distribution.

I look forward to seeing you soon.  
Lucy



## Fire Safety Lessons for Brushstrokes' Students



Many thanks to West Midlands Fire service community support trainers, Sharon and Pauline, for helping Brushstrokes' Better Health ESOL students gain a better understanding of road and fire safety. The safety session, organised by Jane, Brushstrokes' ESOL Coordinator, covered subjects such as car and road safety, safe use of candles, cooking, smoke alarms and carbon dioxide detectors. Thank you to all involved in this informative presentation.

Better Health is a project aimed at improving the self confidence and basic language skills of people living across Sandwell. For more information on accessing this course please contact Jane or Nigel on 0121 565 2234. To request a free home Safe and Well check please phone the West Midlands Fire Service on 0800 389 5525. For all genuine fire emergencies always dial 999.



## Introducing and Welcoming Sija



My names is Sijabulisiwe but please, call me Sija. Prior to coming to Brushstrokes I was working in a law firm as an Immigration Paralegal. I enjoyed what I was doing but I wanted a bit of change and Brushstrokes fits in well with what I was looking for. I joined the team here in mid April as the EU Settlement Scheme Project Coordinator. It's a new, challenging and different role for me but I am enjoying it. I love how community-centred the team and all the projects we collectively work on together are. My passion is to help other people in any way and in any capacity that I can and I think I am in the right place to do just that! I am excited for what the future holds. *Brushstrokes extends a happy welcome to Sija and is glad to include this service as part of its remit to assist people as they pursue legal residence status.*



## Brushstrokes Community Project warmly welcomes Jas as our newest member of staff.



Hi, my name is Jas and I am a Senior Advice Worker for the Settling Well project. My role is to work in partnership with Citizens Advice Sandwell in the delivery of specialist casework for Sandwell residents where immigration status is complicating entitlements to housing, health and welfare benefits.

For assistance please contact Jas on 0121 565 2234.

We are delighted to have Sister Hortense volunteering her services with us for the present time. Hortense is a member of the religious order of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Northfield and comes from Madagascar. She says 'I am very happy to be at Brushstrokes. It is very important and interesting to me to meet people from many countries. Here I see people from all over the world but you are all united.'

Thank you for your contribution to our work, Hortense.



# Being THANKFUL

In the Bible Luke describes the account of ten lepers who were healed by Christ. As nine of them went on their way exuberant over their newly restored health only one turned back to say thank you to Jesus. It's an important lesson in gratitude and one that never fails to move us at Brushstrokes when someone who has previously received support and assistance from us returns to express thanks.

In May we received a visit from a

beaming Stella and her daughter who wished to show their appreciation to Brushstrokes Immigration Advice service, for successfully guiding them through their residence application process, with a delicious home-made cake. Here they are pictured right with Lucy and Salman.

Likewise, Mark and his wife Collette returned to us to say thank you for helping him secure local full time employment and for unravelling complicated housing and benefit issues. Here (below) is Mark and his lovely family beside Brushstrokes Senior Advisor, Harriet.



Recent thanks received for Salman Mirza, Immigration Adviser. 'Brother you saved my life! Your passion to make a difference in the world is unbelievable. You put your heart and soul into your endeavours and surpass any personal goal you could have set. You inspired me so much. I feel that more people should strive to have the strength and passion that you exemplify in everyday life. You have walked with me through some of the most terrible times in my life and for that I am eternally grateful .

Thank you so much.  
From Nas.





Brushstrokes Community Project is urgently in need of the following items to give out to vulnerable people. We would be most thankful for any help offered:  
Nappies, baby milk, kitchen utensils, pots and pans, children's clothing, women and men's clothing, items of school uniform, shoes and trainers.

**For resource enquiries please contact Lucy on 0121 565 2234.**



We are also in great need of volunteers to help with our administration duties (filing, word processing, data inputting, etc.). If you have an administrative background and can volunteer for half a day per week if possible we would love to hear from you.

**Please contact Carol on 0121 565 2234.**

## What's on at Brushstrokes 2019

### Monday

Advice and Information: 0900 — 1200 drop-in.  
Resources distribution (appointments only).  
ESOL/IELTS classes.

### Tuesday

Food distribution (1200 — 1500).  
ESOL classes.  
Beginners IT class (1500 — 1650).

### Wednesday

Advice and Information: 0900 — 1200 drop-in.  
Work Club 1500 — 1700 (appointments only).  
Resources distribution (appointments only).

ESOL/IELTS/Life in the UK classes.

### Thursday

Food distribution (1200 — 1500).  
ESOL/IELTS classes.

### Friday

Immigration drop in service (0900 — 1100).  
Knit and Natter (10.00 — 12.00).  
Community Café (1200 — 1400).  
Resources distribution (appointments only).

### Contact us:

Brushstrokes Community Project  
St Philips Parish Centre  
Watt Street (off Messenger Road)  
Smethwick, B66 3DA

Phone: 0121 565 2234

E-mail: [info@brushstrokessandwell.org.uk](mailto:info@brushstrokessandwell.org.uk)

Website: [www.brushstrokessandwell.org.uk](http://www.brushstrokessandwell.org.uk)

### Brushstrokes receives support from:



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