



A huge Thank You to all who have helped to make the move into our new location as comfortable as possible. We are very grateful to the friends and supporters who assisted us and also to those who are exercising patience with us as we strive to work with new systems and procedures. We are determined that the move will result in a more effective service as well as retaining our renowned warm welcome to all.





### Thank you Jia



We extend very grateful thanks to young Jia Hui of King Edward VI Five Ways School, Birmingham, who, as part of her school's Charity Challenge, raised £48.30 for Brushstrokes Community Project. Jia said that Brushstrokes was the first charity that came to her mind as her mum (pictured) had previously been assisted by the project. Jia collected money from the congregation of St Francis Catholic Church and was proud to deliver this in person to our new centre. We are very thankful to Jia Hui and wish this lovely, caring young lady every success in her educational studies.



Hi! My name is Karolina Singh and I recently joined Brushstrokes as part of the EUSS advice team. EU stands for European Union and SS is for the Settlement Scheme. What does it mean? Together, with my teammates, I'm here to assist vulnerable EU citizens and their family members gain settled and pre-settled status. It's important because gained status secures the EU citizen's rights in the UK after Brexit. We are providing free and professional support including completion of the application process, accessing the ID app, giving of immigration advice, and where necessary, assisting in communication with the Home Office. Our EU Settled Status Advice Clinics are taking place here at Brushstrokes in Smethwick but also in Oldbury, Walsall, West Bromwich and West Birmingham. Do you struggle with English? Are you IT-skills limited? Or maybe you just need a helping hand? Book your appointment with one of us today!

*Karolina can be contacted on 0121 565 2234*

### Best Wishes to Thomas



We acknowledge the sterling efforts of Thomas Taggart, whose work as Domestic Assistant at Brushstrokes came to an end in August 2019. Thank you Thomas, for all your hard work in keeping our centre clean and tidy over the past three years. We will miss your friendly morning banter and wish you every success in the future.





### Free Clothes at Brushstrokes

Due to the generosity of Brushstrokes' friends and supporters we are now experiencing a surplus of stocks of men's, women's and children's pre-used clothes. If you, or someone you know, need any items of clothing, please bring a bag and visit Brushstrokes Community Project on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday between 10.00 and 14.00.



### Do you want to be part of a team that empowers asylum seekers to take control of their asylum journey?

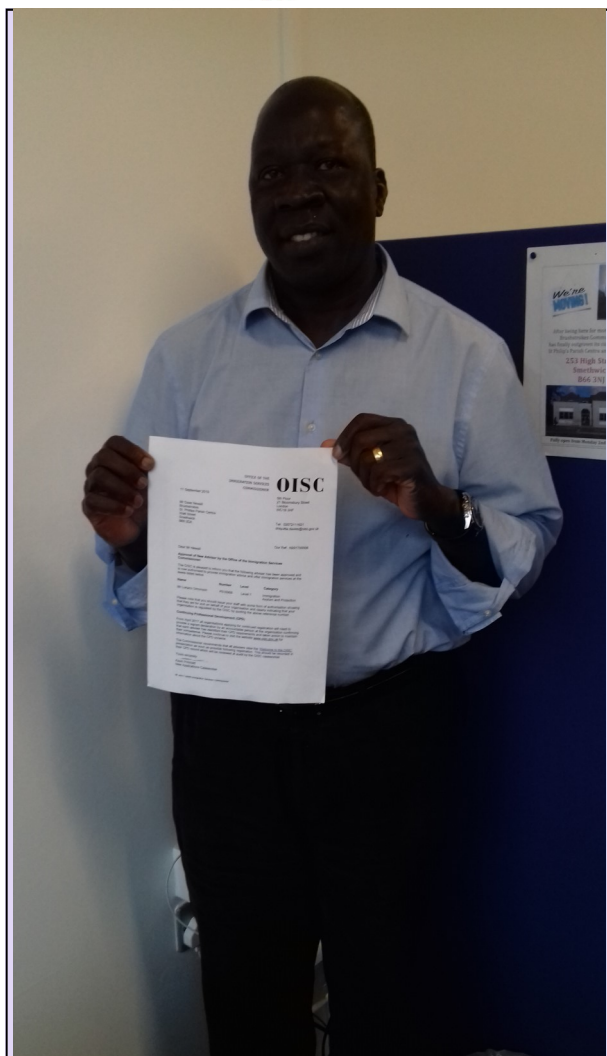
#### Do you have:

- A positive approach to working in a multi-cultural and multi-racial setting
- Basic IT skills
- A commitment to empowering other people and promoting independence
- Willingness to develop new knowledge and skills
- Other language skills are helpful but not essential
- Approx. 5 hours a month to meet your client/s

#### Brushstrokes and Refugee Action will provide:

- In depth, specialist training on the asylum process
- Induction, and ongoing support/supervision
- Travel expenses and other incurred expenses relating to the role

**For further role specific enquiries please contact:**  
Lucy@brushstrokessandwell.org.uk 0121 565 2234



We are delighted to offer congratulations to Brushstrokes Early Action Adviser, Lukano Omunson, for successfully achieving the OISC Level 1 qualification. Lukano is now qualified to give Level 1 advice in immigration matters.

We are very grateful to Barratt Homes Halesowen for organising a team of volunteers from their offices and maintenance departments to visit Brushstrokes in order to carry out necessary DIY jobs around the new centre as part of their Employee Volunteer Programme initiative. Their valuable contribution included putting furniture together, fitting display boards and constructing shelving. They also lent helping hands to our busy resources room and sorted clothing prior to distribution. Massive thanks to Rob (pictured below left with Resources Assistant, Fatmire), Matt, Mark, Julie and Sara. Thank you also to Toby and Amanda of Barratt Homes for your continuous support of our project.







Bishop David

## Blessing at Brushstrokes

Brushstrokes Community Project was honoured to be visited by the Auxiliary Bishop of Birmingham, David McGough, on the 17th September, alongside other special guests and friends, for the official blessing of our new centre. Bishop David led us in a poignant reflection and reminder of our work as well as a prayer of peace and blessing. Other speakers included Sister Margaret Walsh, the founder of Brushstrokes; Sister Rosemary Kean, Province Leader, Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd; Kevin Caffrey MBE, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Father Hudson's Care; Fr Damian Ozokwere CSSp, parish priest at St Philip Neri Catholic Church; and Dave Newall, Brushstrokes Project Manager.



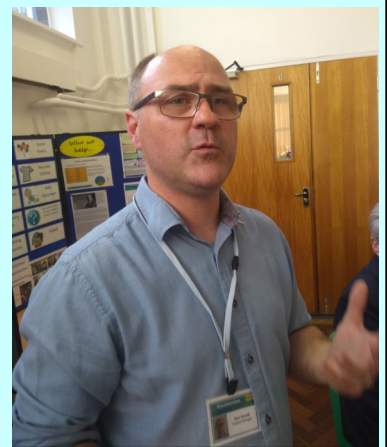
Sr Rosemary Kean said that she hoped the partnership between the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd and Brushstrokes, and which helped establish the new centre, would be a very long one. It also represents their first project partnership since the merger of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity with the Good Shepherd Sisters.



(Above) Sr Rosemary Kean

Included in Dave Newall's address were these powerful words from *The Church of Mercy* by Pope Francis: 'What does serving mean? Serving means giving an attentive welcome to a person who arrives. It means bending over those in need and stretching out a hand to them, without calculation, without fear, but with tenderness and understanding, just as Jesus knelt to wash the apostles' feet. Serving means working beside the neediest of people, establishing with them first and foremost human relationships of closeness and bonds of solidarity. Solidarity, this word that frightens the developed world. People try to avoid saying it. Solidarity to them is almost a bad word. But it is our word! Serving means recognising and accepting requests for justice and hope, and seeking roads together, real paths that lead to liberation.'

Thank you to all who attended this wonderful occasion and thank you to all who consistently uphold us in prayer and good wishes.



(Above) Dave Newall



(Left) Sr Margaret Walsh,  
(Below left to right) Dave Newall,  
Sr. Margaret Walsh, Bishop David McGough,  
Fr. Damian Ozokwere,  
parish priest of St Philip Neri RC Church,  
Smethwick.



(Above) Father Hudson's Head of Community Projects, Jo Watters, who has done so much to support and encourage the staff of Brushstrokes Community Project.







### Triumph for Takesh

Brushstrokes CP joined forces with Migrant Voice and Birmingham Live to secure a great result for Jamaican-born Takesh. Takesh (pictured above left) had been living in the UK for over 30 years and had made repeated applications for residence to the Home Office. Thank you to Salman Mirza, Brushstrokes' Immigration Adviser, for his endeavours in helping Takesh to win her case.

Brushstrokes runs a free immigration surgery every Friday between 0900 and 1100. All are welcome.

### Shoe Rack Success for Lucy

Brushstrokes Resources Coordinator Lucy proudly pictured with her new shoe rack (which she put together herself) with which she is now able to display all types of donated footwear.



Members of the Brushstrokes' team organised a community film screening and discussion at Thimble Mill Library which raised over £250 for funds. The film, *The Public*, highlighted themes such as homelessness and helping others — an issue which goes to the very core of Brushstrokes' work. An introduction was given by Chevenese Witter who talked about the support Brushstrokes had given her and how this had inspired her to help others in their process of settling in the UK.

*Salman Mirza*





As part of our partnership working with NHS Learning Works and the Use-It! project, we have begun an Occupational English (OET) course for overseas health professionals. The General Medical Council and Nursing and Midwifery



Council will both now accept OET as the English Language requirement for nurses and doctors. Many of our IELTS students have been requesting an OET course as they feel it is more achievable than IELTS. Although the standard of English required is the same for both, the OET test and course materials are medically contextualised so the vocabulary is familiar and the test is more relevant to their profession. Teacher, Dee Sturman, has completed training with OET and we are working towards our status as a Premium Preparation Provider. This will make us one of only three providers in the West Midlands. We are currently running two IELTS courses and an OET course.

Jane Alsop—Brushstrokes ESOL Coordinator

### Reception Recruitment

Would you like to be part of a happy, helpful and hospitable team of reception volunteers? Brushstrokes is now looking for new volunteer members to help cover the welcome area during the hours of 0900 and 1500, Monday to Friday. If you are confident, friendly and calm and able to offer even a couple of hours per week we would be very interested in hearing from you.

To discuss the role further or to arrange an informal visit please contact Nigel on 0121 565 2234.



## What's on at Brushstrokes 2019

### Monday

Advice and Information: 0900 — 1100 drop-in

Resources distribution

ESOL/IELTS classes

### Tuesday

Food distribution (1200 — 1500)

Resources distribution

ESOL classes

Beginners IT class (1300 — 1430)

### Wednesday

Advice and Information: 0900 — 1100 drop-in

Work Club 1430 — 1630

### Resources distribution

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)

EU Settlement Scheme Clinic (0900 — 1200)

### Contact us:

Brushstrokes Community Project  
253 High Street,  
Smethwick,  
B66 3NJ

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:



Charity no. 512992

Parish of St Philip Neri



Deeley



FareShare FoodCloud



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SISTERS



Charity  
no.  
234216



Sisters of  
the Good  
Shepherd



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