
Brushstrokes Community Project

MESSENGER

JULY 2022



CONGRATULATIONS ANNA!

"Attending my graduation and putting on the gown was a powerful experience as it allowed me to realise that all that work put in over five years, an intense and at times challenging process, actually came to fruition in achieving my doctorate. Brushstrokes was part of the process in allowing me to have a place to volunteer away from the academic work and allowed me to feel part of a community when at times a PhD can be isolating! So many thanks to Brushstrokes" - Anna Lockey-Scott

BRUSHSTROKES MESSENGER

THIS MONTH AT BRUSHSTROKES:

- Welcoming new staff members to the Brushstrokes team
- Celebrating our family support worker, Anna's PHD achievement
- ESOL success stories
- Migrant Festival at the IKON gallery



Some of our service users at the Men's group, working on the Brushstrokes garden, situated in the parking lot.

July 2022

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR ANNA LOCKLEY-SCOTT!

"Last week, I attended my very belated graduation for my PhD that I finished during the pandemic. Due to finishing during lockdown, I did not have a graduation at the time and received my doctoral certificate very unceremoniously through the post in a slightly bent envelope.

My Phd was in Education at Warwick University exploring the experiences of Muslim pupils in UK schools in the context of Government counter-terror strategies. The focus of my research was to listen to the voices of Muslim pupils from various cities across the country and hear their experiences. Often the pupils expressed feelings of concern that they might be perceived with suspicion as extremists under counter terror strategies and this led to feelings of anxiety about how they expressed and talked about their beliefs. The pupils talked about these experiences among many others in their lives including, their faith, and what it meant to them, as young Muslims as well as being British Muslims as well as their connection with the ummah, the worldwide community of Muslims."

Congratulations, Anna!!

HEALTH CLINIC SESSION FOR AFGHAN WOMEN

This month we helped to host a health clinic session for some of our Afghan women service users. The clinic included help for mental health, Diabetes awareness, etc. The women had the opportunity to share their problems and health issues with the nurses, and midwives and they received flyers and informative leaflets. The women requested that they would like to have this clinic regularly and the health staff agreed.



The group of helpers at the clinic.

MIGRANTS SHARE THEIR OWN STORIES

On the 17th of July the IKON gallery hosted their annual Soap Boxes event where at the gallery a number of people who work and are involved with Brushstrokes took part in speaking for 5 minutes each with ten quick-fire soapbox presentations and a Q&A from individuals and groups supporting migrants in the Midlands, (<https://www.ikon-gallery.org/event/soapboxes>)

This event is part of The Migrant Festival 2022 and Ikon's Arrivals programme for Summer 2022.

What was different about this event is that the main speakers were migrants not only with lived experiences but who have campaigned for both themselves and others.

We heard how it felt like to be in the middle of the war in Ukraine thinking it was your last day and also how people got fed up with delays and the injustice of immigration rules who then went on to go public with their cases, embarrassing the Home Office into positive action.

A concurrent theme of the event was the strength of people refusing to give up.

One of the comments really stuck out when one of the speakers was asked what drives them not to give up hope. She responded with both power and humour.

"Faith and lipstick"



Salman Mirza,
Immigration Adviser



ESTHER - A SUCCESS STORY

Brushstrokes partnership with the NHS, first with the Use-it! Programme and now with HOP, has been running for over four years. During that time, we have seen many health professionals from overseas achieving the standard of English required by their professional body and moving on into work. Esther Salam is one such success story. Originally from Ghana, Esther came to the UK in 2019. As a qualified nurse, she needed to pass her Occupational English Test (OET) before moving forward to do her CBT and OSCE (nursing competence tests). When Esther joined a Brushstrokes OET course in 2021, she had been studying on her own using the internet but had failed OET twice. She was also pregnant but determined to pass her OET before she gave birth. She worked hard in class and at home, even though she wasn't having an easy pregnancy. In January 2022, she passed OET and on 4th February gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. Such is her determination and commitment, she went on to pass both nursing exams and is about to start work as a nurse at University Hospital Birmingham.

Below: Students attending an ESOL lesson.

A few words from Esther:

"I just want to share my OET success story with you.

I wrote OET twice and failed. I joined the Brushstrokes class and with the help of your detailed tuition and materials I was able to pass my exam on third attempt, at 8 months pregnant, wow!

Not only did brushstrokes help me with free funded tuition they also helped me with baby stuff as I was pregnant and needed help.

I am soo grateful to Brushstrokes for making my dream come true. It means a lot to me.

Thank you soo much!"

Well done Esther! We wish you every success in the future.



WELCOMING NEW ARRIVALS!

We have some new staff at Brushstrokes!

We are thrilled to welcome Kateryna and Sema to the Brushstrokes team...



KATERYNA: Employment Adviser

"My name is Kateryna and I've recently been employed as an employment advisor, I am working alongside my colleagues within the Advice and Information team. My role involves advising and helping clients to access employment and training opportunities. This will enable them to achieve their potential. Part of my role involves working with other organisations and networking."

SEMA: Immigration Adviser

"I am an OISC registered Immigration Advisor at Brushstrokes. I am also a foreign qualified lawyer who has LLB Law and Master of Laws (LLM) from Turkey and Graduate Diploma in Law from Birmingham City University.

Previously, I worked in various law offices as an Immigration Advisor. My previous work enhances my communication skills and best immigration practice to support clients. I have experience to deal with most of the immigration cases including Spouse, Leave to Remain (5 years or 10 Years Route), Fee Waiver, British citizenship registration for children, Naturalisation, Work visa- Work visa dependents visa, Indefinite Leave to Remain etc. I enjoy and happy to support clients and be part of the team at Brushstrokes."



MEN'S GROUP

With all this Mediterranean weather hanging about our shores lately, it called for some tasty Mediterranean-inspired food for our men's group cookery class. A massive thanks to chef Saleya from West Smethwick Enterprise for guiding our lads through today's session at the steaming Brushstrokes kitchen. Main course was chicken peri peri with a lip-smacking and healthy couscous salad. Dessert came in the form of a fruit salad. One service user commented: 'This was the first time I've tried couscous and it was delicious.' Another modestly said 'our cooking is amazing, 100%'.



Some of the food we prepared with the Men's group



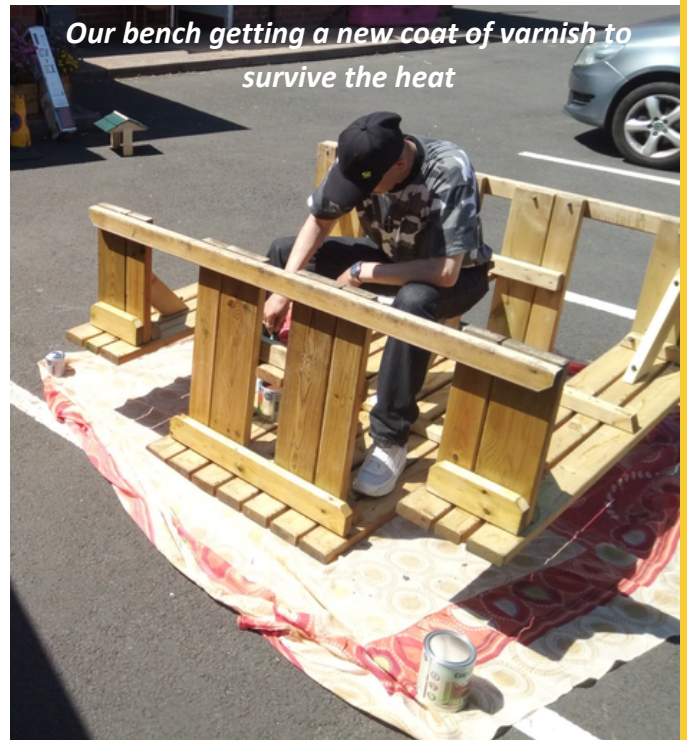
Some of our Men's Group regulars



Some of the Men's group attendees receiving a new bench and saw.

A massive thanks to Hannah for responding to our recent request, and donating us a new work bench and saw. These will be a massive help to our activities going forwards.

The Brushstrokes community has been a hive of activity. Men's Group has been spending time in the garden area, painting planters that they've constructed, and transplanting seedlings to the aforementioned planters. We've also been varnishing the bench so it withstands the harsh and changing British climes. Games Zone has proved similarly busy, with loads of bikes being fixed and then distributed to our service users. We've also fitted in time for a bit of table tennis.



Our bench getting a new coat of varnish to survive the heat

WOMEN'S GROUP

Our Brushstrokes Women's group is still going strong. Recently, we got our ladies together to talk on myths and misconceptions regarding child birth. This was an interesting session as it allowed our members to speak upon how child birth was for them, what they would do differently next time or how they would advice another person going through child birth. We went over some case studies which enabled our women to put themselves in the shoes of some people hypothetical scenarios, and discuss how they would navigate through the issues.



Women's group discussion





Brushstrokes
Community Project
*Strengthening and supporting refugees and migrants
 across Sandwell, West Birmingham and beyond*



YOU ARE INVITED TO A SESSION ON:
UNDERSTANDING THE NHS
AT
BRUSHSTROKES COMMUNITY PROJECT

WEDNESDAY 20TH JULY 1 - 2:30PM
WEDNESDAY 17TH AUGUST 1 - 2:30PM

BRUSHSTROKES COMMUNITY PROJECT,
253 HIGH STREET, SMETHWICK, B66 3NJ

PHARMACIES /
 ACCESSING
 MEDICINES

HOW TO REGISTER
 WITH SERVICES

WALK-IN / URGENT
 TREATMENT SERVICES

DOCTORS/ GPs &
 MEDICAL CENTRES



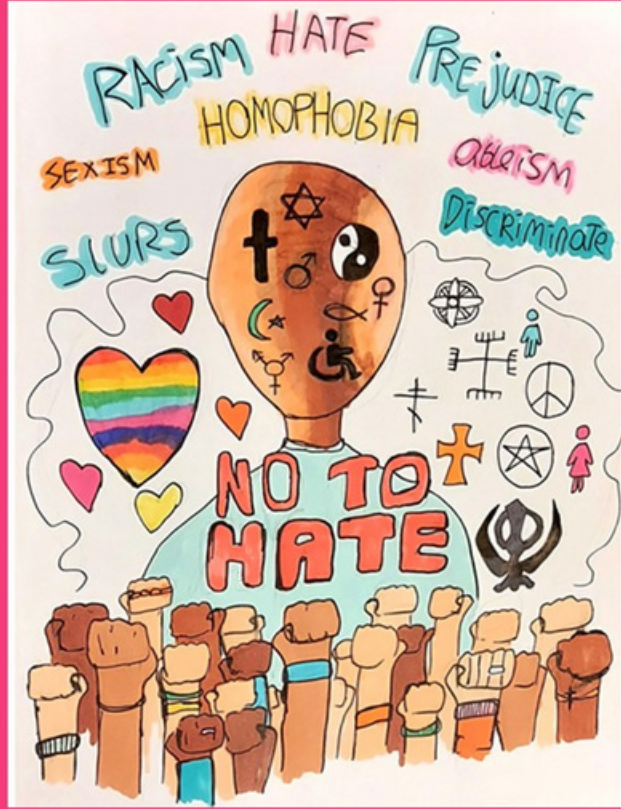
DENTISTS &
 OPTICIANS

EMERGENCY SERVICES /
 ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY

MENTAL
 HEALTH

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES
 - PREGNANCY, CHILDREN

**CONTACT BRYAN ON 07827 258 680 WITH QUERIES &
 TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE**



Brushstrokes Community Project



**HATE HARMS
TOGETHER WE CAN
END THIS**



YOU'RE INVITED TO AN AWARENESS SESSION ABOUT:

HATE CRIME

DELIVERED BY:  **COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM**

MONDAY 22ND AUGUST 11AM - 12:30PM

BRUSHSTROKES - 253 HIGH STREET - SMETHWICK - B66 3NJ

- WHAT IS HATE CRIME?**
- HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED HATE CRIME?**
- HOW CAN YOU REPORT IT?**
- WHAT'S BEING DONE TO TACKLE IT?**
- HOW TO ACCESS SUPPORT.**

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES, OPINIONS & QUESTIONS

ANY QUERIES, CONTACT BRYAN ON 07827 258 680

VISIT TO:



FRIDAY 26TH AUGUST

10AM - 11:30AM

MEET AT BRUSHSTROKES RECEPTION AT 9:15AM

ESOL &
ENGLISH

IT

SOCIAL JUSTICE &
COMMUNITY

MATHS



PERSONAL & SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT

SKILLS
FOR WORK

TASTER
COURSES

EDUCATION

1018 Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6LH

Come & learn about a college with many practical courses, some specifically aimed at asylum seekers & refugees.

Highly recommended by Brushstrokes service users & staff

Free Thinking Course for survivors of trauma, modern slavery and trafficking, providing a safe place to learn and progress. Many past students on this course are refugees or asylum seekers.

Significant support to help you study - subsidised classes.

"Thank you for delivering a fantastic course and looking after us all on this residential course. Lovely grounds to have access to while learning."

CONTACT BRYAN ON 07827 258 680 WITH ANY QUERIES & TO REGISTER

Brushstrokes Community Project

*Strengthening and supporting refugees and migrants
across Sandwell, West Birmingham and beyond*

DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

Improving your digital skills will allow you to effectively job search, learn how to read and respond to emails, how to browse the internet for information, check your online banking and more!

WHERE WE ARE

253 High Street
Smethwick
B66 3NJ



FOR MORE INFORMATION

please call us at
0121 565 2234 or email us at
Qurrat@brushstrokessandwell.org.uk



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Contact us:

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www.brushstrokessandwell.org.uk



Brushstrokes is supported by:

