Brighton & Hove Refugee & Migrant Forum

Directory of local services for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in Brighton & Hove (updated February 2014)

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More information about these services and signposting for professionals working with refugees, asylum seekers and other vulnerable migrants can be obtained by calling the Chair of Brighton & Hove Refugee Forum on 01273 292572 or by emailing lucy.bryson@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk
**Advice and Practical Support**

Brighton Voices in Exile

55 Upper North Street, Brighton BN1 3FH  
01273 328598  
bvie@hotmail.com  
Working hours: Monday to Wednesday 9.30am to 5:30pm

Brighton Voices in Exile offer advice, casework support and a hot meal cooked by volunteers at their drop-in service on Tuesdays from 10.00am -12.00pm. They can also offer appointments on Mondays and Wednesdays. Brighton Voices In Exile is registered with the Office Of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to level 1.

Make referrals via bvie@hotmail.co.uk or by calling them on 328598, explaining what the case is about – rather than simply signposting clients to their premises.

BVIE support people with immigration, health, financial and accommodation problems, as well as support with education, volunteering and employment.

**Black and Minority Ethnic Community Partnership**

The BMECP Centre, 10A Fleet Street, Brighton, BN1 4ZE  
Tel 0300 303 1171  
Fax 0300 303 1172  
resourcecentre@bmecp.org.uk  
www.bmecp.org.uk  
Working hours: 9.30am to 5.30pm

BMECP provides support to BME communities in Brighton & Hove and offers a One Stop drop-in service for refugees and asylum seekers every Friday at the BMECP Centre, from 11am-3pm. Advice is provided by Migrant Helpline and MACS (see MACS and Migrant Helpline services below). There is also advice on hate crime and neighbourhood disputes from the Hate Crime Co-ordinator. This is also an opportunity to meet other refugees and migrants and share refreshments.

**Migrant Help (formerly Migrant Helpline)**

Brigstock House, 78/86 Brigstock Road, Thornton Heath, Croydon CR7 7JA  
Telephone Advice: 0208 6834767  
mhl@migranthelpline.org  
www.migranthelpline.org.uk

Migrant Help (formerly Migrant Helpline) offer support and advice for asylum seekers including access to Home Office asylum support and accommodation (sometimes known as NASS). Migrant Help can offer limited advice to those who have recently received a positive outcome on their asylum application and signpost for further advice.

They run advice surgeries at the One Stop Shop for refugees at the BMECP Centre on Fridays (11am – 3pm) - see above. Migrant Help are registered with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to Level 1.
Money Advice and Community Support Service (MACS)

24 Old Steine, Brighton BN1 1EL
01273 664040 (advice line open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 12 noon, Tuesday and Friday 2pm – 4pm)
info@macss.org.uk
www.macss.org.uk

Advice and support with claiming benefits, budgeting, debts and other issues for people granted refugee status or leave to remain. As well as offering telephone advice on the number above, MACS also provide this in person at the BMECP one Stop Shop on a Friday – see Page 2. They have a member of staff who accredited with the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner to Level 1.

Brighton Unemployed Centre Families Project

6 Tilbury Place, Brighton, BN2 0GY
Telephone: 01273 671213 / 601211
Email: info@bucfp.org

Advice, hot food and practical support.

Citizenship

Brighton & Hove Citizenship and Nationality Team

Brighton & Hove Register Office, Brighton Town Hall, Brighton BN1 1JA
citizenship@brighton-hove.gov.uk or 01273 292016

There is more information on the Council website here:

Advice on the process of applying for British Citizenship, including a checking service for application forms and the arrangement of citizenship ceremonies. Call for an appointment.

To arrange for a ‘Life in the UK’ test, this has to be done on-line at https://www.gov.uk/book-life-in-uk-test and you are notified of the test centre once you have registered.
Community Safety / Racist and Religiously Motivated Incidents

Community Safety Casework Team

3 Palace Place,
Brighton
BN1 1EF
Casework Helpline 01273 292735
Communitysafety.casework@brighton-hove.gov.uk
www.safeinthecity.info
Working hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Brighton & Hove City Council’s Community Safety Casework Team works closely with the police to offer help and advice if people suffer racist and religiously motivated incidents, other forms of hate crime or anti-social behaviour. Home visits and interpreters can be arranged where necessary. Calls to the above helpline will be responded to within one working day. This team also provides advice for other professionals.

Detention

Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (GDWG)

The Orchard, 1-2 Gleneagles Court
Brighton Road, Crawley, RH10 6AD
Tel: 01293 657070
Fax: 01293 474001
info@gdwg.org.uk
www.gdwg.org.uk
Working hours: Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm

The GDWG was set up in 1995 to offer friendship and support to asylum seekers and immigration detainees being held in detention at Gatwick Airport. Amongst other things, this includes emotional and practical support through our volunteer visitors, as well as legal signposting.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

Rise

Helpline number 01273 622822
www.riseuk.org.uk

Rise supports women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse in Brighton & Hove. Rise services include: refuge accommodation, resettlement, crisis appointments, counselling, housing, legal and financial advice, solicitors appointments, support groups, play therapy, 1-to-1 support and training and preventative education.
Education and Schooling

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

Fairlight School
St Leonard’s Road
Brighton
BN2 3AJ
01273 292521
emasadmin@brighton-hove.gov.uk
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk
Working hours: Term time and school hours only.

This team provides support to children in schools and home-school liaison for families if English is not their first language.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

There are a number of ESOL providers in the city and the classes and courses they offer change frequently so are not listed here. Some community providers offer free or low-cost ESOL to anyone, irrespective of immigration status or benefit entitlement, but state funded providers (those funded by the Skills Funding Agency) will seek proof of entitlement to state-funded ESOL.

Brighton & Hove City Council Community Skills and Learning

01273 294287 Monday – Thursday office hours
csl@brighton-hove.gov.uk
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk

General advice line for information about local colleges and other providers of ESOL provision and other adult education courses in the city. The ESOL offer from local providers changes frequently so it is best to contact the Community Skills and Learning Team and they can signpost further.

Some of the providers of state-funded ESOL classes are:

- The Friends Centre
- The Workers Educational Association
- City College Brighton & Hove
- Varndean College
- Portslade Aldridge Community Academy

Migrant English Project

Cowley Club, 12 London Road, Brighton,
BN1 4JA
01273 696104(answered on Mondays only)
mepbrighton12@gmail.com
www.mepbrighton.com
Working hours: Mondays 10.30am - 4:30pm, no appointments required.

The MEP is an informal, welcoming space for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, providing free English lessons, support, basic advice and signposting, and a friendly place to meet other people and have a chat. It is an independent initiative, run by volunteers, and involvement and input from anyone is welcomed. The project is very busy and it tries to accommodate everyone but sometimes, if there isn't enough space, people are asked to comeback in the afternoon.

Cornerstone Community Centre,
Church Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 2FL 01273 327757
cornerstonecommunitycentre@hotmail.com
www.cornerstone-hove.org.uk

There are sometimes low-cost ESOL classes at this Centre

Family Services

MOSAIC Black and Mixed Parentage Family Group

Community Base, 113 Queen's Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG
01273 234 017
info@mosaicbrighton.org.uk
www.mosaicequalities.org.uk
Working hours: Tuesday to Thursday 10am – 5pm

MOSAIC creates safe, supportive, anti-racist, culturally diverse environments for their members, representing their interests and promoting a positive sense of identity. Activities: Under Fives’ group, monthly newsletter, monthly Bring a Dish, gathering of members and their families with workshops, performances, music and more.

Bilingual Family Groups

Conway Court Children’s Centre, Clarendon Road, Hove BN3 3WR
01273 266011 Mondays 1pm – 2.30pm

Hangleton Park Children’s Centre, Harmsworth Crescent, Hangleton, BN3 8BW
01273 295272 Fridays 10.30am – 12.30am

Tarner Children’s Centre, Ivory Place, Brighton BN2 9QE
01273 296700 Wednesdays 12.30pm – 2.15pm

A group for parents of children aged 0-4 years or expecting a baby - if English is not their first language. Toys and activities for children while parents can get advice and support.
Family Tracing and Family Reunion Travel Assistance

British Red Cross International Family Tracing Services

Client Service Support Freephone number: 0800 0280 831
Email: enquirieskentandsussex@redcross.org.uk
Working hours: Monday to Friday 9am –5.00pm

The British Red Cross International Family Tracing (IFT) Services helps to restore and maintain contact between families separated by armed conflict, migration or disaster by using the global Red Cross and Red Crescent network. The IFT team can also provide a service for sending Red Cross messages, certificates of detention for those imprisoned overseas and also provides services inside immigration detention centres.

British Red Cross Family Reunion Travel Assistance Scheme

Client Service Support Freephone number: 0800 0280 831
Email: enquirieskentandsussex@redcross.org.uk
Working hours: Monday to Friday 9am –5.00pm

The British Red Cross Family Reunion Travel Assistance Scheme pays for and arranges travel to reunite refugee families. The scheme organises and pays for family members’ travel to the UK only. To be eligible, they must already be in possession of visas and able to provide evidence that they are unable to afford the cost of flights.

Both of these Red Cross teams can also help vulnerable refugees and asylum across Sussex to find and access other relevant services where necessary.

Harmful Traditional Practices

This includes practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), honour-based violence and forced marriage.

If you suspect that someone is at risk of a harmful traditional practice or if you are at risk yourself, please report this to Sussex Police (on 101 or 999 in an emergency) or to children’s social services for a child (to the Advice, Contact and Assessment Service on 295920) or adult social care for an adult (Access Point on 295555).

Health Visitors

Specialist Health Visiting Team for BME communities and travellers

Moulsecoomb Children’s Centre, Hodshrove Lane, Brighton BN2 4SE
Candy Barrett or Amanda Brooks on 01273 296531

candy.barrett1@nhs.net or amanda.brooks3@nhs.net

Working hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm
Health visitors are qualified nurses who visit households with children under school age. They can provide medication, healthcare and advice on a wide range of issues facing young families.

**HIV services**

Sussex Beacon

01273 694222  
[www.sussexbeacon.org.uk](http://www.sussexbeacon.org.uk)

The Sussex Beacon is an independent charity and centre of excellence providing a range of specialist HIV treatment and support services. The Women and Families Service at The Sussex Beacon supports families and provides groups for women living with HIV, crèche facilities, 1-1 emotional support, a space to discuss HIV, finance, immigration, housing and your future and your family. We run workshops, events and courses within the local community.

**Housing Advice**

Housing Options, Brighton & Hove Council

City Direct Centre, Bartholomew Square, Brighton, BN1 1JP  
01273 294400  
[housing.advice@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:housing.advice@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
[www.brighton-hove.gov.uk](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
**Working hours:** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Homelessness Prevention services for people in housing need.

Private Sector Housing, Brighton & Hove Council

Customer Service Centre, Hove Town Hall, Hove, BN3 3BQ  
(Help may not always be available without a prior appointment)

01273 293156  
[psh@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:psh@brighton-hove.gov.uk)  
[www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/psh](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/psh)  
**Working hours:** Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Advice and assistance for people with disrepair etc problems in privately-rented housing

BHT Brighton Advice

Community Base, 113 Queen’s Road, Brighton BN1 3XG  
01273 234737
A range of specialist advice including housing advice to those in need
www.bht.org.uk

Rough Sleepers Services

Call 01273 234010 to refer someone who is sleeping rough to this specialist service run by Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI)

Interpreting Services

Sussex Interpreting Services (SIS)
Community Interpreting / Bilingual Advocacy / Translation / Health Promotion / Training / Independent Complaints Advocacy Services (ICAS) / Healthwatch Brighton & Hove
Community Base, 113 Queen’s Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG
01273 702 005
info@sussexinterpreting.org.uk
www.sussexinterpreting.org.uk
Working hours: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm
24/7 emergency services 07811459315

Sussex Interpreting Services (SIS) is an independent social enterprise and charitable company. SIS aims to ensure equality of access to publicly funded services through maximum meaningful communication across barriers of language, culture, knowledge and status for people with language needs within BME, refugee and asylum seeker and migrant communities.

Vandu Language Services

01273 473986 and (0800) 0087650 (out of hours emergency number)
info@vslanguages.com
www.vslanguages.com
Training, language, interpreting and translation services

Legal advice

There are a number of agencies in the city who are regulated by the Office for the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) to Level 1. This means that they can give basic advice on immigration applications within the rules and help clients to complete standard forms such as applications for naturalisation as a British citizen etc. Those agencies with OISC Level 1 accreditation are:

- Brighton Voices in Exile (see above)
- Migrant Help (see above)
• Money Advice and Community Support Service (see above)
• The Nationality Checking Service within the Register Office (see above -- for naturalisation requests only)
• The Citizen’s Advice Bureau based at Hove Town Hall, 1 Tisbury Road, Hove, BN3 4AH
  01273 223951
  http://www.brightonhovecab.org.uk/

For more complex immigration issues, an immigration solicitor or specialist caseworker is needed. (NB only asylum cases and some specific cases involving domestic violence or human trafficking are eligible for legal aid funding) In Brighton & Hove, the following organisations and firms offer immigration advice:

**BHT - Immigration Legal Service**

**Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG**
  01273 234755 (advice line)
  ils@bht.org.uk
  www.bht.org.uk

For telephone advice or to arrange an appointment, call the advice line between 10-12.30 on Tuesday or Friday.

Independent professional legal advice and representation about immigration and asylum matters by appointment and telephone. Offers legal aid funded services.

The following two local commercial firms offer immigration legal advice.

**Paul Ward Solicitors**
James & Co, Premier House, 11 Marlborough Place, Brighton BN1 1UB
  01273 602783
  9.30 – 5.30pm

**Irving & Co Solicitors**
Premier House, 11 Marlborough Place, Brighton BN1 1UB
  01273 311177

**Mental Health**

**Black Minority Ethnic Psychotherapeutic Counsellor**

**Brighton and Hove Wellbeing Service**
Telephone: 0300 002 0060
Email: BICS.brighton-and-hove-wellbeing@nhs.net
Working hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Clients need to be referred to the counsellor through their GP. However, the counsellor is happy to discuss options; please call 0300 002 0060.
BHT Mental Health and Wellbeing Service (including Threshold Women’s Counselling)

79 – 83 North Street, Brighton, BN1 1ZA
Tel: 01273 827001
wellbeing@bht.org.uk
http://www.bht.org.uk/services/mental-health-and-wellbeing/

Working hours: Monday & Tuesday 9am - 5pm Women only
Wednesday – Friday 9am – 5pm men’s and women’s services

This service offers a variety of activities that help people to learn ways to cope with the challenges and changes they may be faced with. This includes one-to-one sessions and Wellbeing Groups with trained counselors, life-skills workshops, peer support, casework, one to one support sessions and a drop-in service.

Women only services and a crèche are provided by Threshold.

Community Resilience Panel

Meets every Monday at 6pm at Brighton Junction. Enables survivors to support each other and to raise awareness of refugee health and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Volunteers get training to become a workshop leader and will learn new skills in stand-up comedy and public speaking. The project is for refugees, asylum seekers, destitute or failed asylum seekers and others with a personal knowledge of mental health issues, especially PTSD and depression.

info@refugeeradio.org.uk
07920 886356

Media

Refugee Radio

We have a unique radio project in the city. (www.refugeeradio.org.uk) provides an opportunity for refugees to talk about their experiences and to play music from their countries. These programmes can be downloaded from their website or heard locally on Radio Reverb. Also live every Sunday 8pm on Radio Reverb 97.2FM

Modern Slavery and Trafficking

Modern Slavery is a term used to describe human trafficking, forced labour, slavery and servitude. Human trafficking occurs when people are moved from one place to another with the use of force or deception for the purpose of exploitation – eg in the sex industry, in organised crime or for forced labour. Victims of modern slavery are often migrants. This crime is hidden from view and there are many barriers to victims reporting what has happened to them.
There is more information on this crime, including a downloadable ‘Brighton & Hove Stop the Traffick’ information pack on the Safe in the City Website http://www.safeinthecity.info/getting-help/modern-slavery-and-trafficking

If you suspect that someone has been a victim of modern slavery or you are a victim yourself, call the Police (on 101 or 999 in an emergency) or take advice from the Salvation Army on their confidential referral helpline on 0300 3038151 (available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If the victim is a child or may be a child, call the Police or Social Services in the same way as you would report another child protection concern.

Refugee and Migrant Community Organisations

There are a number of small Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) representing people from different countries who have arrived in Brighton & Hove as refugees over the past 20 years. As these groups do not have paid staff and tend to operate via private numbers and home addresses, please contact the Chair of Brighton & Hove Refugee Forum, Lucy Bryson on 01273 292572 or BMECP (see above) for further details.

Returning to country of origin

Choices Assisted Voluntary Return Service

This national service to provide independent and impartial advice for some categories of migrant who wish to return to their home country is run by Refugee Action. You can find out more by visiting their website www.refugee-action.org.uk and by calling the freephone number 0808 800 0007.

Sexual Abuse and Violence

Survivors’ Network
6a Pavilion Buildings, Brighton, BN1 1EE
www.survivorsnetwork.org.uk
info@survivorsnetwork.org.uk

01273 203380

Helpline: 01273 720110, Text helpline 07797 804020 or email help@survivorsnetwork.org.uk
Helpline hours: Wednesdays and Fridays 7pm - 9pm

DropIn: Mondays and Thursdays 7pm – 9pm

This is the Rape Crisis service for Sussex. This means that Survivor’s Network will support women who have experienced:
• rape or sexual assault
• childhood sexual abuse
• ritual / organised abuse
• unwanted sexual experiences

They also support friends, partners, parents, external agencies and other supporters of those impacted by sexual abuse and violence

**Social Care for adults with No Recourse to Public Funds**

Assessments for people with No Recourse to Public Funds

01273 296362 or via PRS duty team 290440
Olivia.Byrne@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk
PRSduty@brighton-hove.gcsx.gov.uk

In some limited cases the Local Authority may have responsibility to accommodate and support people with no recourse to public funds, such as an asylum seeker, refused asylum seeker or someone with insecure immigration status. In these cases the person must have an assessed community care need such as severe mental or physical ill health, disability or old age, and this care need must meet the legal threshold for support. If you wish to refer yourself or someone else for an assessment, please contact the No Recourse to Public Funds Officer using the number or email above.

**Young People**

16+ team (incorporating young people’s asylum service)

01273 295788
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk
Working hours: Monday to Thursday: 9am – 12.30pm and 1.30pm – 5pm
Fridays: 9am – 12.30 pm and 1.30pm – 4.30pm

This team, within Brighton & Hove City Council’s Children’s Services, assesses and provides accommodation and social work support to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and young people who arrive in Brighton & Hove. They also support young people once they have left care, generally up to the age of 21.

**Pathways to Independence**

59 Church Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 2BD
01273 733303
sam@pathwaystoinddependence.org.uk
www.pathwaystoinddependence.org.uk
Working hours: Mondays 9am – 5pm and Wednesdays 12 noon – 5pm

Supported housing, activities and services for young people who have arrived in the UK alone and claimed asylum.
Right Here Brighton & Hove

Sussex Central YMCA, Reed House, 47 Church Road, Hove, BN3 2BE
01273 222565
www.right-here-brightonandhove.org.uk

Free resilience building activities and volunteering opportunities for 16-25 year olds. This project promotes emotional wellbeing and mental health amongst young people.

Refugee and Asylum Seeker Project (RASP)

Facebook (raspbrighton). Helen and Nadine 07500 271887 brightonrasp@yahoo.co.uk

This project runs group activities for young refugees and asylum seekers, mostly at the Young People’s Centre in Ship Street.