



Welcome to the Solace Newsletter January 2022

Hello Ruth,

Welcome to Solace's New Year newsletter and our round up from the last half of 2021 - an exciting year where we celebrated 15 years of service and moved into our new premises. Read some of the highlights below.

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support.



Filming begins as Solace Online Training is underway!

Exciting times at Solace! Following a successful proposal, we have a grant from the Home Office to turn Solace's 15 years' of combined experience, knowledge, skill and empathy into a fully functional eLearning programme! The programme is designed to create Asylum Seeker 'Champions' amongst other mental health care settings.

We are creating 2 courses. Clinical Director Anne Burghgraef is the course designer and author, writing the content for course 1, and working with others in the team for course 2.

The courses, when finished will be available for health workers. Learners register for the course online and then work through it module by module, until they receive a certificate of completion on finishing.

We are excited by this opportunity to put Solace on the national map, but more importantly, to make a big difference to the lives of asylum seekers in the UK. Our training will provide learners with a depth of understanding, and an approach, that will help people in a way that is broader than Solace can do on its own.

Deadlines are tight so we are really challenged to get the project completed before the end of March 2022. We look forward to sharing the completed training.

Pictured Nicola Pritchard (Film maker) Kev Cooke (Course Production)



A Royal Visit

Solace was party to a royal visit in November, when Solace CEO Kathryn Ashworth and clinician Paul Wood met the Duke of Cambridge. The visit took place in an Afghan 'bridging hotel' in West Yorkshire. Prince William chatted with some of the Afghan families. We were able to have the opportunity to talk to him about Solace and mental health issues for refugees. Read more about the Afghan situation in the following article...



A Response to the Afghan Crisis

When I first met them there was still shock, disorientation, loneliness – and an overwhelming desire to be reunited with family members – wondering how they can get them out of the country, and are governments going to do anything to help? There were questions like, “what is going to happen to me now?” to be answered as best we could. For some, as they settle in and some hope returns, they are able to focus on the desire to learn English, perhaps to become literate or to get an education they wanted but never had in Afghanistan, to work, to make a life here so that they can support their families. Several say they want to give something back to this country for helping them. Paul Wood

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Art Therapy Project

We set up an Art and Wellbeing group and invited participants, living in Sheffield, who had an existing relationship with Solace. The theme of the art work was around journeys and it was an exploration of our client's own journeys prior to working with Solace.

Each member was given the simple brief to think about what their journey has meant to them - a self-portrait in which they could explore any style of painting, using any genre of art. Participants spent time designing their pieces and thinking about what they want to say, and to show others about their work and their journeys.

Aimee Hickman

[Read the Full Article Here](#)



Office Warming / 15 Years Car Park Carnival

Although a balmy later summer's afternoon seems like a long time ago now, it was just September when we invited Solace friends to join us for an outdoor event. This was part of our programme celebrating Solace's 15th year of supporting the wellbeing of people seeking asylum and refugees in the region. We were pleased to show off our new office having moved in the spring.

Seb Mundy, a Facilitative Music Therapist with Nordoff Robbins hosted a music therapy taster session which went down well with everyone there. Seb now hosts regular sessions for our clients at Manor House on Mondays.

The atmosphere was celebratory and the food went down well! The lovely cake pictured was produced by Hawa Bah, from the Solace team. One of our clients cut the cake in a small 'welcome to the office' ceremony!



Supporting the refugee community in Kirklees:

A sense of community was quickly established online, largely facilitated by Solace administrators helping patients get mobile phone data top ups in order to download the Zoom app and attend online meetings. A women's craft group, ESOL classes, an Albanian women's group and a support group for men show the diversity of the online communities that developed and which were, according to the centre's clinical director Anne Burghgraef, 'a real lifeline.'

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Training - Working with Interpreters in a Mental Health Setting Tuesday 9th February and Tuesday 8th March 2022

We regret that both dates for the training session are fully booked.

To express an interest in training provided by Solace, please contact us: info@solace-uk.org.uk

[Flyer for Training](#)

Therapeutic Drama Workshops with Fall Into Place



Playfulness to improve the wellbeing of people who are refugee and asylum seekers in Leeds

People who are refugee and asylum seekers from Leeds recently took part in drama and mindful workshops, aiming to boost their confidence, creativity and mental wellbeing.

These sessions were funded by **Leeds Inspired** and ran throughout October for the members of Solace- an organisation providing therapy for refugees and asylum seekers who have experienced torture, persecution, violence and war.

These workshops included elements of dance, drama, movement and games. The sessions were aimed to encourage members to explore arts and creativity to help boost their confidence and wellbeing. The workshops have been set up by a partnership between Fall into Place Theatre, a charitable arts organisation, and Solace.

Commenting on the success of this project, Kathryn Ashworth, Chief Executive of Solace said "It's been a fantastic experience to work alongside Fall into Place and their team of drama facilitators. We can see the difference the workshops have made to attendees. People who are facing unbelievable difficulties and are struggling with high levels of anxiety

come out of the session with a smile on their face and talk about the joy of participating in the activities. Everyone has asked for more sessions to be arranged!"

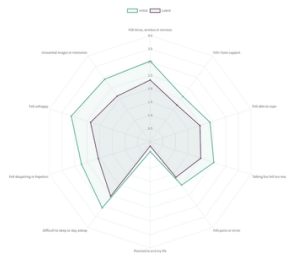
The workshops were a huge success with members wanting these sessions to continue since they felt the workshops helped them feel positive and motivated and build new friendships in trying times.

Sarah Shaw, from Fall into Place Theatre, says about the project; ""It's been such a pleasure to run these workshops - the biggest revelation I've learnt is that playfulness, creativity and laughter can break down any language barrier, and bring people together from all across the world."

The workshops saw members exploring a wide range of activities from mindfulness techniques to childhood board games to dancing to Indian classical movements. The joy was reflected on the happy faces of the members with many describing it as a safe space to be themselves. The purpose of these workshops was to introduce the benefits of drama and mindfulness to members from culturally diverse backgrounds leading challenging lives so that these practices can become a part of their daily lives and encourage deeper friendships.

Fall into Place Theatre and Solace hope to run more workshops next year, and warmly welcome people who are refugees or asylum seekers to express their interest in attending future workshops.

Measuring Impact



Impact and Outcomes Work at Solace

In 2021 we launched our 'Impactasaurus' project - a platform designed to help monitor outcomes. We have worked closely with the developers of the platform, who recently spoke with Solace Operations Manager, Ruth Cooke about impact management.

[Read the Interview Here](#)

Thanks for your support!

Make a Donation - £30 will pay the costs associated with working with an interpreter for one session. Thank you.

Manor House, 1 Manor Street, Leeds LS7
1PZ 01138246796 or 07899304905

[Contact](#)

