

Issues raised at the volunteer Meeting

2nd February 2019

A number of issues were raised to do with our work. Some of these represent things we, as organisers, need to improve on. Others are about constraints we face from lack of resources or outside agencies. I've commented on these in italics below

- **Confidentiality for the families – There's no easy way to know when it is appropriate to share information about the people who've been housed here.** *We have had many discussions with the council about this. There is a genuine issue of confidentiality, particularly with families who have only just arrived. As time goes on however there is some relaxation because people are naturally mixing more. It remains vital to be as discreet as possible when new families arrive.*
- **Dumfries based – because the families are based in Dumfries it leaves large parts of the area with little or no contact with them.** *The families are generally housed within 20 miles of Dumfries itself. This is a shame for those of us who live some way out and find it difficult to help as we'd like to. However it's important for those who come here in terms of access to people with shared cultures and experience. Previous migration strategies which have pushed families out more widely have resulted in isolation and lack of support.*

We are looking for ways to bring the families out of Dumfries itself so that they can experience the diversity and richness of our region. Any ideas for initiatives with this would be very welcome! There are some outlined in the "Ideas" document.

- **Training for conversation classes.** *There is a need for more training and I'm hoping to organise some in the next couple of months.*
- **What do we have the capacity to do, and what can't we do.** *Honestly there are times when we are somewhat overwhelmed by the number of things we'd like to do. Its often hard to recognise when we can't manage things.*
- **Clear instructions on packing requirements** *This is a problem because the needs for different groups along the refugee road can change. At one point there will be an urgent need for sleeping bags for example, but by the time we are ready to send that need could have been fully met. We*
- **Entrenched attitudes in Rural Areas – outside Dumfries** *I'm looking for possible training in the best way to tackle these. If I can find it I'll organise training sessions. In the meantime if anyone has ideas for websites/facebook pages or other reliable source of useful ways to combat these attitudes **please please** pass them on to me and I'll share them as much as possible.*
- **Homelessness/Rough sleepers even in small towns.** *I know I speak for everyone in MOOL in saying that we would love to be able to help people in these situations. Regardless of how someone becomes displaced we would want to help. If anyone knows of an organisation helping such people who might be able to use our resources or some of the donations of furniture and other goods from the depot please put them in touch with us.*

- **Confusion – We aren't always as clear as we should be about what a meeting is intended to achieve** *I can only apologise if I haven't been as clear about the purposes of meetings as I could be. I'll try to make it clearer in future.*
- **Where does befriender fit – council confusion** *To be fair to the council the role of befriender is one which has changed over time. The council are about to start a new round of training (something we've been pressing them for over quite a long period). If you're interested in befriending please come along to the Northwest Resource Centre on 20th February between 12 and 2 or between 6 and 8 pm and find out more.*
- **Tangible and immediate asks** – When asking for volunteers or donations we need to
 - Make it clear what we are asking for
 - Give them something which they can do straight away