

**Trustees' Annual Report for the period**

|      | Period start date |       |      |    | Period end date |       |      |
|------|-------------------|-------|------|----|-----------------|-------|------|
|      | Day               | Month | Year |    | Day             | Month | Year |
| From | 1                 | April | 2017 | To | 31              | March | 2018 |

Office of the Scottish **Charity Regulator****Reference and administration details**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Charity name</b>                    | Forth Valley Welcome                              |
| <b>Other names charity is known by</b> | FVW; Stirling Citizens for Sanctuary; SCfS        |
| <b>Registered charity number</b>       | <b>SC046404</b>                                   |
| <b>Charity's principal address</b>     | SBC Family Life Centre, 67 Murray Place, Stirling |
|  |   |
|  |   |
|  | <b>Postcode FK8 1AU</b>                           |

**Names of the charity trustees on date of approval of Trustees' Annual Report**

|   | <b>Trustee name</b> | <b>Office (if any)</b> | <b>Dates acted if not for whole year</b> | <b>Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)</b> |
|---|---------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Donald Black        | Secretary              |  | OSCR   |
| 2 | Jean Evans          |                        |  | FVW Trustees   |
| 3 | Hugh Grant          | Treasurer              |  | OSCR   |
| 4 | Alan Howes          |                        |  | FVW Trustees   |
| 5 | Savitri Maharaj     | Chair                  |  | OSCR   |
| 6 | Susan Mitchell      | Strategy Coordinator   |  | FVW Trustees   |
| 7 | Abigail Moriarty    |                        |  | FVW Trustees   |

**Structure, governance and management**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Type of governing document</b>          | Constitution  |
| <b>Trustee recruitment and appointment</b> | "The board may at any time appoint any person to be a charity trustee - by way of a resolution passed by majority vote at a board meeting."<br>(Constitution, paragraph 18) |

## Objectives and activities

### Charitable purposes

The purposes of Forth Valley Welcome are:

- the relief of unemployment among refugees through (a) support towards employment, such as with job seeking, sourcing training, work placements etc., (b) support such as with language (Arabic speakers are among our volunteers), social and emotional support, mentoring and coaching within a Social Enterprise context.
- the advancement of citizenship or community development through (a) social inclusion and awareness raising events & sponsored events within the communities where the refugees settle.(b) seeking opportunities for the refugees to contribute to their communities and (c) through successfully integrating into the local economy.
- the relief of those in need by/through providing a befriending service and activities promoting inclusion and raising awareness.

### Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

FVW activities cover a range of areas which fall broadly under the three headings of service delivery, liaison with other agencies and governance.

#### **Service delivery**

Running a befriending service for Syrian families settled under the VPRS  
Providing material needs for families  
Providing transport and support for hospital appointments  
Running a monthly 'Snack and Chat' event for Syrian families in the region  
Organising social and recreational outings  
Awareness raising sessions in local schools and for community organisations

#### **Liaison with other agencies**

Support for local adult learning provision  
Joint work with socially responsible national charities and voluntary groups  
Liaison with other groups within Scotland and UK to campaign for greater support for refugees

#### **Governance**

Clear strategic plan and policies for management of FVW operations  
Fundraising to support staffing costs and ongoing activities.  
Monitoring and evaluation of activities

## Achievements and performance during the reporting period

### Service delivery

#### *Running a befriending service for Syrian families settled under the VPRS*

- **Befriending service.** We engaged with 20 Syrian refugee families in Clackmannanshire and 4 families and one single person household in Stirling (112 individuals in total). This is an increase of 8 families since March 2017. We aim to link families with volunteer befrienders, who visit their assigned families regularly (weekly or fortnightly), help with medical appointments, go on social outings, and liaise as needed with other teams. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, 16 households had at least 2 befrienders, which is our minimum desired number. Due to a shortage of local volunteers, 4 Clackmannanshire families had no befriender, and a further 5 families there had only one befriender.

#### *Providing material needs for families*

- **Material needs service.** This is run by a team of volunteers led by one of the trustees. The team channels donations of clothes, toys, and household items to the Syrian families. We use a **Material Needs request form**, in English and Arabic, which is given to newly arrived families for them to request clothing, household items, and other needs. In October 2017 we gained the use of a **storage facility** in Dunblane and worked with the befriending team to take the families to visit the store to select items. In May 2017, we started a **home set-up project**, liaising with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils to prepare homes for newly arriving families. We improved our **logging** of material needs requests, incoming items and outgoing items.
- **Computers and software.** We provided refurbished laptops to the new families. We also provided several families with dual-language software for preparing for the driving theory test.
- **Crisis and Care fund.** We continue to provide this fund to help with one-off payments for unexpected costs, e.g., emergency UK travel to visit sick relatives.
- **Positive Activity fund.** We introduced this fund to help with activities that promote language learning, employability, and social integration. Examples include subscriptions for Girl Guides and Cub Scout troops, and contributions towards the cost of driving lessons. We are very pleased to report that several Syrian men have now gained full driving licenses, and some of the women have passed the theory test and are preparing for the practical test, with our support.

#### *Providing transport and support for hospital appointments*

- Volunteers regularly transport families and support them at medical appointments at hospitals, dentist and GP surgeries.

#### *Running a monthly 'Snack and Chat' event for Syrian families in the region*

- **Snack and Chat events.** We held 6 Snack and Chat social events, which were well attended by Syrian families and befrienders. We introduced a "Bring and Share" element to the catering, where volunteers and Syrians can (optionally) bring food to share, and this has been very popular. We had presentations for the adults on First Aid, Scottish culture, and tips for learning English, and play sessions with Enjoy-a-Ball for the children. At the December event, the children had a very welcome visit from Santa, and some of the Syrian men tried wearing kilts. From 2018, at the request of the Syrians, we moved Snack and Chat from Stirling to a venue in Clackmannanshire, with the first event there taking place in March 2018.

#### *Organising social and recreational outings*

- **Trips:** As the number of families has increased, it became too difficult to organise whole-group outings so the focus has been on smaller activities. In April, we worked with Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), and Picture the Possible (a photography social enterprise) to take 5 families to visit Flanders Moss. We produced souvenir photobooks for the families who went on this trip, containing photographs taken by the children. During the summer, we provided £50 grants for befrienders to go on trips with their assigned families to local attractions, such as Stirling Castle and the Safari Park. We worked with Allan Park South Church to include some Syrian families in their summer beach trip. We cooperated with the Clackmannanshire Community Learning Development team to organise a celebration for Eid-ul-Fitr. We organised a trip to the MacRobert pantomime for 50 people (Syrian families and befrienders) with tickets kindly donated by the MacRobert Arts Centre. We helped to organise sessions for women on self-defence, yoga, and cycle training.
- **Walk and Talk:** Following the Flanders Moss trip, we worked with volunteers from SNH and SEPA to organise a small group activity, in which Syrians and volunteers went for a gentle walk together and practised English. Three events were held in Stirling, each attended by 3 or 4 Syrian adults.

#### *Awareness raising sessions in local schools and for community organisations*

- We gave presentations about Forth Valley Welcome to many groups including the Mothers Union, the Scottish Episcopal Church Diocesan Gathering, St John's Episcopal Church, Fintry Kirk Guild, Stirling Voluntary Enterprises, and 9<sup>th</sup> Alloa Guides. These have been useful in attracting donations, volunteers and offers of services.

#### **Liaison with other agencies**

##### *Support for local adult learning provision*

- We worked with Clackmannanshire Learners International and Stirling School of English to support Syrians to take advantage of summer and weekend English learning opportunities that complement Council ESOL provision. We worked with Stirling Council to run a very successful series of sessions on Empowering Women.
- We helped some Syrians with employability through facilitating opportunities for women to cater for events, and to take up volunteering.

##### *Joint work with socially responsible national charities and voluntary groups*

- We worked in liaison with many other organisations including: Stirling Council; Clackmannanshire Council; Picture the Possible; SNH; SEPA; The Conservation Volunteers; Clackmannanshire Learners International; Play Alloa; Stirling Baptist Church Family Life Centre; Allan Park South Church; Alloa Ludgate Church; Stirling University Islamic Society; Macrobert Arts Centre; 9<sup>th</sup> Alloa Guides; Central Scotland Regional Equality Centre; Scottish Refugee Council; and many others.

##### *Liaison with other groups within Scotland and UK to campaign for greater support for refugees*

- Our trustees maintain contact with Citizens-UK Refugee Welcome groups across Scotland and the UK through email mailing lists and social media. We became an organisational member of the Scottish Refugee Council. We also maintain links with City of Sanctuary groups across the UK. We attended meetings of the Scottish Government Integration Forum, the COSLA National Learning Event on ESOL and Refugee Integration, and various meetings at Scottish Government, including the launch of the New Scots strategy.

#### **Governance**

##### *Clear policies for management of SCfS operations*

- We extended our range of policies to include an Incident Reporting policy, a Volunteer Problem Solving Policy, and a Positive Activities Fund Policy. We also began drafting a new Data Protection Policy and carried out a data audit and consent refreshment exercise in preparation for the introduction of GDPR in May 2018.
- Following the very successful appointment of a Volunteer and Project Coordinator last year, we appointed a part-time Support Worker in February 2018. The support worker will focus primarily on Clackmannanshire, and one of her first activities was to take over the organisation of Snack and Chat, which has moved to Alloa.
- In June we ran a training session on Syrian culture for volunteers and others involved with refugee resettlement (including Council staff, Education staff, Girl Guides leaders, and staff from Play Alloa).
- We held three volunteer induction and training sessions and saw a small net increase in the number of active volunteers (from 64 to 70). Shortage of volunteers in Clackmannanshire remains a problem, and we are focussing our volunteer recruitment efforts there.
- Following a consultation with volunteers, we changed our name to Forth Valley Welcome. The new name was approved by OSCR in November 2017 and was launched at the end of March 2018.
- We appointed two patrons, Sir George Reid and Mr Ayman Jarjour, who have been extremely supportive of us.

##### *Fundraising to support staffing costs and ongoing activities.*

- Fundraising activities undertaken during the reporting period include: a concert in Gargunock and an online Christmas Appeal set up on BT MyDonate. Successful funding applications were made to Robertson Trust, Voluntary Action Fund, and SCVO. Donations were received from individuals throughout the year via our webpage and Facebook site; and from individuals and organisations who donated funds from events or talks run by them.

##### *Monitoring and evaluation of activities*

- The main method of monitoring and evaluation has been the ongoing feedback received from volunteers. We introduced regular **Volunteer Networking Meetings**, held quarterly, which provide an opportunity for volunteers to meet each other as well as staff and trustees and give feedback. Four meetings took place during the reporting period. Processes are being developed for more detailed, quantitative monitoring of activities, for example, number of volunteer hours donated, and quantities of material needs items given to the families. The introduction of a Material Needs log will help with the monitoring of material needs requests and activities.

## Financial review

**Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves**

FVW aims to maintain sufficient reserves to allow operation for six months.

**Details of any deficit**

None

**Donated facilities and services (if any)**

None

## Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

**Signature:**



**Full Name:** Savitri Maharaj

**Date:** 24/12/2018

**Position:** Chair