

Annual Report and Accounts

for 2019



**WOMEN
WITH
HOPE**

Foreword from Anthony Wilson: Chair

If the role of the person chairing our Women with Hope trustees body was to lead, I - the only male - would be in the wrong job: but this is an opportunity to serve, which if my name is acceptable to the trustees, I count it a privilege to do. The continuing official policy of fostering a hostile environment brings shame to us all, and any opportunity to mitigate its effects - which extend well beyond its target of 'illegal immigrants', itself illegal when applied to people seeking asylum - is one which we are ready to take: so I thank the trustees for granting me the time and space to make a contribution.

Our first annual report is, rightly, over the name of Rosemary Crowley. She has been our inspiration and anchor, from stepping in as de facto convenor of the growing group to handling its emergence as an independent charity. Our trustees range in experience from intimate personal knowledge of an asylum system whose precept is based on mis-trust and disbelief embedded in racism, to those who have served in the management of other charities: just how effective this range has been is proved in the annual report. I commend it to our participants and users, our supporters, and enquirers who may wish to join in any of our activity.

As we prepare this report at a time of international emergency around the Covid-19 virus, the immediate future of groups which have depended on personal face to face interaction is problematic. It is fortunate that we have our structure in place, and its viability will be tested in 2020, the year ahead.



WOMEN WITH HOPE

Annual Report of Women with Hope for the Year 2019

Women with Hope came out of Hope Projects, a Birmingham charity set up to relieve destitution amongst asylum seekers and refugees. In 2013 Hope Projects established a knitting group for destitute women asylum seekers living in the accommodation it provided. It was then known as Hope Women's group. Over subsequent years the group extended both in its activities and in the immigration status of the women who wanted to attend. This resulted in the development of a larger group which includes refugee women and other women within the UK asylum process. It also resulted in an extended range of activities, thus taking the group out of the remit of Hope Projects and creating the need for a separate charity. Women with Hope, the new charity was formally inaugurated on 20 February 2019 and became a registered charity in October 2019.

2019 was a busy year as well as a turbulent year. Busy because of the work involved in inaugurating and registering the group as a charity and all of the activities attendant upon those processes. Turbulent because of the very real risk we faced in maintaining the group whilst seeking a new place to meet. Historically the group met at one of the Hope Projects houses, but when that became no longer appropriate we started our long journey to our current home at Selly Oak Quaker Meeting House. In the period in between we have met at five different locations and we are now enjoying one of our longest periods of stability of location for some time.

Throughout the turbulence the group has stayed together and new women have joined. Activities have expanded well beyond knitting. Though we still sometimes knit, we also engage in many other activities, including learning and developing our knowledge of the immigration processes and systems through workshops led by experts and engaging in campaigns which promote our objectives, for examples such as the *Lift the Ban* campaign regarding right to work. On the recreational side we have enjoyed sessions with many volunteers on baking, singing, dancing and listening to and writing poetry. In addition we have been fortunate in enjoying the expertise of Birmingham Women's Aid and Birmingham MIND to facilitate our learning and understanding of the many health issues that affect female asylum seekers. Workshops have been held on such topics as FGM, Domestic Violence and Depression to give just a few examples.

In August thirty women and five children were hosted to a picnic in Lichfield by Lichfield Hope Support Group and other local supporters. This took place on what was probably the wettest day in August so the term 'picnic' needs to be interpreted broadly. Nevertheless a good time was had by all.

Members of Women with Hope have also been closely involved in contributing to *Women for Refugee Women's* research on destitution resulting in its new report, "*Will I ever be safe?*" - *Asylum seeking women made destitute in the UK*, launched in February 2020. In facilitating the report Women with Hope hosted a number of consultation and discussion workshops and in addition a number of women were individually inter- viewed.



Malika Al Haddadi leading a poetry workshop in October 2019



WOMEN WITH HOPE

Heartfelt thanks are due to -

Phil Davis & Hope projects for ongoing support and accommodation and continuing administration of our funds throughout the process of change.

Liz Clegg & the Meena Centre for the very warm welcome they gave to us in our time of need and for the generous donation made after the Meena Centre had been sadly forced to close down

Dennis Minnis & New Communities who welcomed us to the New Communities Centre after the Meena Centre closed. Sadly the space was not large enough for continued use but we appreciated it greatly at the time .

Clare Peat and Selly Oak Meeting who have welcomed us to Selly Oak Meeting House and helped us to settle in. For the first time, we can now add baking to our list of activities!

All of the workshop and session leaders and contributors, of which there are too many to list for their many and varied contributions of skills and expertise that have made our meetings worthwhile in so many different ways.

Lichfield Hope Support Group for its financial support in our most difficult times and for the Lichfield picnic

Niamh Bryan for her wonderful one-woman commitment in raising funds for us through a book and coffee morning at her home in Lichfield.

Women for Refugee Women for all of their ongoing support, both financial and practical.

The Roughley Trust and AW60 for their generous funding awards that have given us for the first time a year free from money troubles .

Adrian Martyn for generously offering to independently examine our financial accounts

Trustees

The charity trustees listed below includes women who have had direct experience of the UK asylum system.

Anthony Wilson (Chair) Senait Jones (Treasurer) Agnes Tanoh, Tahira Jabeen, Bridget Obi, Judith Tweddle, Barbara Forbes, Rosemary Crawley.

**Women with Hope
Financial Account
1 January - 31 December 2019**



WOMEN WITH HOPE

Income	
Opening Balance	4,000.00
Donations received	1,530.00
Grant income	7,216.00
Operational income	224.00
Total	12,970.00
Expenditure	
Travel	2,015.00
Food & refreshments	177.52
Volunteer expenses	160.00
Premises rental	807.00
Entertainment	310.00
Insurance	240.80
Admin & Legal	226.00
Total	3,936.32
Closing balance held at The Reliance Bank	9,033.68

Notes:

1. *Women with Hope developed out of Hope Projects Women's Group and has been in existence for a number of years.*
2. *Women with Hope was inaugurated as an independent organization on the 20 February 2019, though this account covers the full year of 2019.*
3. *Women with Hope gained charitable status on 31 October 2019 and shortly thereafter Hope Projects transferred the balance of funding held on its behalf into the Women with Hope Bank account.*
4. *Donations received comprise:*

<i>Meena Centre</i>	<i>£1,000.00</i>
<i>Lichfield Hope Support Group</i>	<i>£300.00</i>
<i>Niamh Bryan</i>	<i>£230.00</i>

5. Grant income comprises:

AW60 Trust	£216.00
Roughley Trust	£7,000.00

6. Operational income is derived from sessions by Women for Refugee Women for research purposes.

7. Women with Hope does not yet have a Reserves Policy. In accordance with our Financial Controls policy adopted in September 2019, this will be reviewed in the first Trustees Meeting after the Annual General Meeting.

The surplus of £9,033.68 shown at the end of 2019 is analyzed as follows:

Grant income for 2020:	£7,216.00
Donations:	£1,530.00
Total	£8,746.00

Against budgeted expenditure for 2020 of £8,220.00 this creates a surplus of £813.68 to carry forward.

Treasurer: Senait Jones

Independent Examiner Adrian Martyn



WOMEN WITH HOPE

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1186078