



St.

Augustine's Centre

Our Mission.

Working together as people from across the world, we celebrate and build a diverse community where everyone is welcome and supported.

From our vibrant community centre in Park Ward, we respond to needs, learn from and share with one another, to live well and challenge inequality.

Our Vision.

Is that asylum seekers and refugees become part of Calderdale life, and alongside our local community in Park Ward, are able to feel safe and empowered.

Our Services.

We offer a warm welcome and safe space to people seeking support and sanctuary; together we share food, stories and build relationships. We provide welfare and specialist immigration advice, training, campaigning, English classes, cultural activities and volunteering opportunities.

sanctuary. community. diversity. collaboration. growth.



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Our Story.

In 1968 St. Augustine's Church began running a pre-school play group. We extended this to community lunches, English classes and social activities in response to local need. When Calderdale became a dispersal area for the asylum process in the early 2000's the outreach extended to people who needed help to settle into life in the UK.

We became an independent charity in 2009, continually evolving and welcoming all, regardless of faith, ethnicity or background. Now Calderdale's specialist charity working with people seeking asylum and refugees as well as local people, we have 16 staff, 120 volunteers and a community of 750 individuals and families from 57 countries.

In partnership with other organisations, we offer specialist advice on immigration and asylum support, and one to one support with welfare, housing, health and access to wider services. We provide hot meals, English language classes, training, cultural, social and wellbeing activities, trips and volunteering opportunities. We have a nursery, spaces for reflection and a befriending and integration service. As a core member of the Valley of Sanctuary, we want to share stories and build awareness about human rights, advocating and campaigning locally and nationally.

Our Values.

- 1. Sanctuary.** We provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe space for all, without judgement.
- 2. Community.** We share food, stories and build relationships together.
- 3. Diversity.** We respect our differences and celebrate our unique contributions. As equal citizens of the world, we enrich Calderdale.
- 4. Collaboration.** We do things with, not for people. We listen to and respond to those who come through our doors. 'Nothing about us without us.' We work in partnership to overcome injustice and inequality.
- 5. Growth.** We empower one another to uphold our human rights and reach our potential, by learning and thriving together.

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About us now.

- We are based in Park Ward Halifax and we operate from **two buildings** (one for our support work and one for our activities work). We have a large garden area half of which is secure and locked at night, the other half of which is open 24 hours a day.
- We have **16 staff** most of whom are part time (11 full time equivalents). We split into three teams:
 - **Support and Immigration** – provision of welfare casework (housing, health, debt, education etc) immigration specialist advice and integration support for new arrivals and people living outside Halifax.
 - **Activities** – provision of English classes, our Welcome Café, arts and sports activities, 'Give With Love' free shop, digital inclusion project, volunteering and befriending opportunities, events, trips, communications and campaigns.
 - **Operations** – finance, fundraising, HR, caretaking and cleaning.
- **120 volunteers** help us to run. They cook, decorate and do DIY, teach English, make podcasts, garden, provide reception duties, run our 'free shop', lead walks and cultural activities, undertake admin, marketing, casework, immigration, financial and befriending duties.
- We work with many **partners** including Artworks, Active Calderdale, Calderdale Council, Citizens Advice Bureau, Happy Days UK, Halifax Opportunities Trust, Hebden Bridge Arts Festival, Light Up BAHC, Luddenden Foot Community Centre, Mothershare, Noahs Ark, Northern Broadside, Opera North, The Piece Hall, Project Colt, Refugee Action, Sister United and Together We Grow – to name a few. We also work very closely with Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary who like us, aim to make the valley a welcoming place for anyone seeking sanctuary.
- Our **financial turnover for 2021** is likely to be around £630K. We have over 60 different income sources! Around 50% of our income come from Trusts and Foundations like the Tudor Trust, Henry Smith Foundation and the Community Foundation for Calderdale. 35% is commissioned work to deliver support, integration and activity services by Calderdale Council and immigration advice by Sheffield University. We receive around £35K a year in donations from the general public. We also earn income through hires, talks and sharing our expertise.

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Our future.

- We have been thinking a lot about our future recently. St Augustine's Centre has always evolved according to need, though remaining true to its founding principles and values. We are at a pivotal point in our history. Our new Centre Director Sara Robinson started in March 2020 and we then had to adapt our services in response to the pandemic. Several new staff roles have been created (three filled by people who have lived through asylum process), our long-standing Chair and founder is moving on and after several decades years our Nursery is closing its doors.
- Earlier this year we held two away days on zoom with all trustees and staff and generated a wonderful visual poster full of ideas about our future (see attached). We are now working on a strategic plan which we hope new Trustees will input into. Key plans include:
 - Increased involvement with people who have lived through the asylum process, across all our work and decision-making processes (including Trustees)
 - Expansion of the Immigration service and Integration programme
 - More cultural activity alongside the well-established welfare and support provision
 - Working with partners to improve local health and housing provision
 - Clearer support for our many volunteers
 - A new website and refreshed 'brand'
 - More campaigning and storytelling activity around issues facing people seeking sanctuary, together with partners
 - An Awareness raising programme across Calderdale, together with Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary
 - Introduction of a special database system to collate all our data into one place and help up show the impact we are having
 - Extension to the Support building to create a bigger, fully accessible reception area, toilet and additional gathering space
 - Development of our garden areas

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