Welcome

2019/20 has been a year like no other; the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has been profound for the individuals and communities we work alongside and for the projects that we deliver. Whilst the situation has thrown up challenges for so many, it has also highlighted just how incredible our Oasis Hub communities are. As we have faced some of these immense difficulties together, we have been able to give the depth and breadth of our community work to support many more people in the process. As you’ll read in this impact report we’ve launched an additional three Hub charities across the country.

One of the five ethos statements at the heart of the work of Oasis is ‘a sense of perseverance to keep going for the long haul’ and this has been demonstrated time and again over the last year. In March, our teams adapted quickly and changed delivery models for many of our programmes. We established and developed food security work to meet massively growing need. We developed new models of pastoral support for some of the most vulnerable children, young people and families in our communities. We worked hard to stay connected and to provide families with the ability to get online during the months of lockdown. In addition to all of this, over the summer months our teams worked tirelessly to provide holiday activities for thousands of people who needed it most. We’ve heard repeatedly from community members that when it felt like the rest of society was closing down, they knew that their local Oasis Hub was there for them.

The year has served to remind us all of the need for strong, compassionate and inclusive communities. That’s why we are motivated to build a ground-breaking charity and movement of activists that supports communities to thrive and flourish. Across our network of hubs, our aspiration is to grow youth, children and community work including community cafes, farms, parent and toddler groups, debt advice centres, food pantries, family support services, Oasis churches, mentoring schemes, adult education programmes, healthy living projects and much more. We do all of this alongside our network of Oasis academies and our Oasis housing service.

We are passionate about working in partnership with community leaders, residents, local businesses, schools, faith groups and voluntary agencies. We know that it is the strength of these relationships and our ability to act together that sees long-lasting community transformation take root. So we want to say a massive thank you to you all. You really are helping us to make a difference in people’s lives and we hope you are as proud as we are of the stories and transformation that this report represents.

The OCP Leadership Team
OCP Community Partnership Group are excited to report another year in which we have continued to grow financially with £4.1 million being raised. This represents a 24.5% growth on the previous year.

A surplus of £768,000 (£107,000 unrestricted, £661,000 restricted*) has been posted across the group of hub charities. OCP and the hub charities are very grateful for the financial support from many donors, grant funders and commissioners. It is not possible to list every one of these supporters but without this essential support we would not be able to serve our communities in the way we do.

As expected with the growth in income, expenditure has also increased by 14.1% from last year to £3.3 million. Salaries make up over half our expenditure and, along with other direct costs, represent 93% of total expenditure for the group. This year has been challenging with the impact of Covid-19 but we have been well equipped to deliver many frontline services in the communities that we serve throughout the country.

**Financial highlights**

**Income**
- Oasis Community Partnership Group are excited to report another year in which we have continued to grow financially with £4.1 million being raised. This represents a 24.5% growth on the previous year.
- A surplus of £768,000 (£107,000 unrestricted, £661,000 restricted*) has been posted across the group of hub charities.

**Expenditure**
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**Income**
- £4,102,216

**Expenditure**
- £3,333,546

*restricted funding for multi-year projects

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**Employees**
- 130

**Volunteers**
- 714

**Projects/services**
- 209

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**Number of people who accessed OCP Hub Services and Projects**

- Advice and support services: 4,326
- Community empowerment and well-being: 3,490
- Youth and children’s work: 7,509
- Events and celebrations: 3,740

*This is a 900% increase on the 18/19 figure and is a direct impact of the Covid-19 epidemic.

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*This is a 50% decrease on the 18/19 figures and is a direct impact of the Covid-19 epidemic.

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Annual Impact Report 2019/20
Covid-19 response

Youth and Children’s work

Despite the restrictions placed upon us by the Covid-19 pandemic our staff and volunteers were determined to stay present in their local communities supporting children, young people and families through digital platforms and Covid secure environments.

The impact of the pandemic has hit children and young people especially hard. They have reported feeling lonely and anxious, missing their friends, missing education, unable to maintain a healthy lifestyle, feeling under stimulated and losing social confidence.

We focused our attention on keeping in touch with young people checking on their health and wellbeing, continuing with mentoring sessions, facilitating small group activities, creating and delivering activity packs and where young people had no access to our digital activities, we provided wifi dongles and laptops.

Thank you to all in the youth team. You have been amazing working with young people and helping them to maintain calm during such uncertain times. Thank you for creating a safe, friendly platform for them to explore and express their emotions.” Parent of a young person

The laptop and data was an overwhelming gift. It has made such a difference to my life and I can study better now. If I was allowed to (during lockdown) – I would give you a big hug!” 14-year-old young person

Thank you so much for getting in touch with me every week – your encouragement and support helped me really manage my health and routines better during lockdown – stopped me from going crazy.” Young person

This is just such a lifeline. I don’t even know what to say - this is just the nicest thing anyone has done for me. Thank you so much, I can now do my homework online and talk to my friends again.” Young person

These activity packs helped me in a massive way during isolation with 4 children stuck at home - they gave us craft things to keep us entertained my youngest was well surprised, so thank you.” Parent

The boxes are a great help and have encouraged my kids to want to do more outside. Cooking together with the meal box is an amazing idea!” Parent

The pack has helped me and my child through COVID-19 as it has given us some activities to do together. We loved the messy play and we are really looking forwards to our next pack.” Portable Play & Stay feedback from family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children and young people supported</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March/April</td>
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<tr>
<td>keep in touch calls with young people</td>
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<tr>
<td>mentoring sessions with young people</td>
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<tr>
<td>small group sessions with young people (e.g. arts and crafts, music, choir, games, exercise, cooking etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resource/activity packs delivered to young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT hardware products delivered to young people (e.g. wifi dongles, laptops etc) distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals (6 months)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Portals: 1,223
Mentoring: 1,488
Small group sessions: 425
Resource pack: 701
IT hardware: 93

Totals (6 months)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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Covid-19 response

Family support

The social and economic pressures of the Covid pandemic have been enormous for families on low income, creating a perfect storm of financial hardship, lack of work, children not at school and none of the normal support networks. Parents have been dealing with loss of income, struggling to pay for food, utilities, housing and child related costs. They have been landed with unexpected home-based education and lots of isolation and anxiety.

It was clear early on in the pandemic that our two main priorities had to be pastoral support and emergency food, recognising that mental health and hunger were the real issues that families were dealing with.

We ensured that we kept in touch with families to check on their wellbeing and needs through regular ‘keep in touch’ calls or doorstep visits. We ran lots of fun digital activity sessions engaging the whole family in activities that supported health and wellbeing and education and, in conjunction with these sessions, we created and delivered family resource and activity packs so that everyone was able to take part. So the biggest shift in our activities was the provision of food. We created new partnerships and sought support and funding enabling us to increase our food provision over the 6 months to meet the need.

“We are short of words - the Oasis Family Support team is the best of all” Parent

“Thank you Oasis for doing this you are amazing. I feel much better now I know the family can eat” Parent

“Look mum, we’ve got toilet rolls” Child

“I'd like to thank absolutely everyone who has made sure we have had amazing food parcels every week. My son and I have been overwhelmed by the quality and amount of amazing items we’ve received.” Parent

“We would like to thank everyone that have ensured we have such great food parcels, and given up their time and risked their own selves to deliver to us every week.” Parent

“Thank you, I can’t tell you what this means, if I could send you flowers I would. This is the best help ever, I’ve had a bad day, so any good news is amazing” Parent

“Thank you so much for the food parcel, really appreciate it and the game we are just about to start playing, thanks again.” Parent

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At very short notice we were able to organise ‘summer sessions’ in 22 locations, a covid-compliant version of our Plate-Up holiday club which provides children and young people with a free daily lunch in the holidays, plus fun activities such as sports, crafts and music as well as activities and outings for families. This year looked very different. We delivered 26,821 meals plus digital sessions and socially distanced activities entirely outdoors with restricted numbers.

**Summer Sessions 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer Sessions</th>
<th>Children aged 5-11 engaged</th>
<th>Young people aged 12-16 engaged</th>
<th>Number of families reached</th>
<th>Digital Summer Sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>753</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>997</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Attendances to digital sessions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face-to-face sessions</th>
<th>Face-to-face sessions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,277</td>
<td>610</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteers supporting delivery of Summer Sessions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>232</td>
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**Meals provided at Summer Sessions**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26,821</td>
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</table>

**Lovely to be back at the farm, it’s such a nice local space and the kids love it.”**

**This has been a lifeline for my family, I don’t know how I would have coped without the summer sessions.”**

**I have loved being with my friends and not staying at home bored.”**

**My son had lots of fun this morning and was happy to see some of his old friends from pre-school, thank you!”**

**Thank you for doing the forest school, my son had so much fun and wanted to know when it’s on again!”**

**It feels good to be back and know the school looks like, I feel better about September already.”**

**We were extremely worried about how much lockdown has affected Sam but over the last few weeks we have seen our bubbly outgoing boy return. Thanks to the summer sessions we are ready for September whatever it may bring.”**

**Thank you for creating a safe environment and providing games and lunch.”**

8. **The summer sessions have been absolutely brilliant for all 3 of my children, something for them to look forward to during the day, it has kept them motivated and with something different to try.”**

9. **My son has had the pleasure of attending a variety of sessions from the beginning and it has been a wonderful enriching learning and social experience.”**

10. **The craft session was really enjoyable and fun, enjoyed making the furry monsters and making bracelets out of beads.”**

**“It feels good to be back and know what the school looks like, I feel better about September already”**
In our targeted work we use ‘Outcomes Stars’ - a family of evidence-based tools for measuring and supporting change. In 2019/20 we mapped the progress of 122 young people accessing one to one mentoring support. A ‘distance travelled’ report measures the change achieved for young people who completed two or more Star readings between July 2019 and August 2020. The distance travelled was measured between service users’ earliest and latest Star readings in this period.

This chart shows the percentage of service users who made progress, maintained at end point, maintained not at end point and dropped back in each of the outcomes areas.

The highest percentage of service users making progress between their earliest and latest Star reading in this period was in the area ‘Choice of behaviour’ (52%). The highest percentage of service users dropping back was seen in the area ‘Education and work’ (15%). In each area a high percentage of service users maintained their reading between their earliest and latest Star.

These service users either ‘Maintained at end point’ – meaning that they had a reading of 5 on their earliest reading in this period and maintained this reading by their latest Star.

**IN 1+ OUTCOME AREAS**
Percentage of young people making progress in at least one outcome area: 85%

**IN 2+ OUTCOME AREAS**
Percentage of young people making progress in at least two outcome areas: 66%

**IN 3+ OUTCOME AREAS**
Percentage of young people making progress in at least three outcome areas: 48%

**OUTCOME AREAS SHOWING PROGRESS**
Average number of outcome areas in which someone is making progress: 2.5
Daniella, aged 14, was struggling with her self-esteem and had anxiety issues as well as not sleeping, finding science classes difficult and experiencing problems with her friendship circle. All of which resulted in her refusing to engage fully in her education, even choosing to opt out of some of her classes.

Rowan, the Education Achievement Officer at Oasis Hub Oldham began working with Daniella at the beginning of 2020. ‘We began by building relationship, understanding what was going on in Daniella’s life and finding out what she enjoyed and what pushed her buttons’, said Rowan. For example, when Daniella found it hard to stop in class it was agreed that she could see Rowan, who would spend time with her doing calming exercises and developing strategies to deal with the anxiety that caused her to leave the class. When she felt better she returned to her lessons.

‘The mentoring sessions have really improved my self-image. They make me feel good about myself. I want to be an actor and study at drama school.’

Daniella engaged in regular mentoring sessions with Rowan. ‘We worked on Daniella’s wellbeing, how to cope after her family breakdown, developing strategies, how well she was communicating, her relationship building with peers and her friendships,’ said Rowan. Initially these sessions were face-to-face and then when the Covid lockdown came into effect, the sessions went online. During lockdown Daniella engaged in regular mentoring sessions with Rowan. ‘We began working with Daniella at her home.

Daniella has now returned to school and has entered year 10. She has a much stronger sense of self, her confidence and self-esteem have improved, she is getting on better with her peers and her button,’ said Rowan. For example, when Daniella found it hard to stay in class it was agreed that she could see Rowan, who would spend time with her doing calming exercises and developing strategies to deal with the anxiety that caused her to leave the class. When she felt better she returned to her lessons.

Daniella became an avid watcher of the Netflix series ‘Riverdale’ and came into effect, the sessions went online. During lockdown, she began working with Daniella at her home.

The young man disclosed he had missed six months of school. He was also suffering from weight gain and had lost all hope for his future. The hospital referred Tyler to the Oasis Youth Service (OYS) and Matt, a trained mental health youth worker, arranged to meet him at home.

OYS worked with Tyler to rebuild his confidence in gradual steps, first taking short trips out to local parks and then accompanying him on various activities, such as dog walking. Matt and his team supported Tyler and his family in their meetings with the Education Welfare Officer to find a new educational placement where he could feel confident.

This lad is such a lovely young man, it was a shame that he lost so many months of his young life to the fear of gang violence but now he has a really bright future ahead of him.”

A year later, Tyler has just been signed off from OYS. He returned to school and, despite missing so much education, he gained several GCSEs. He began eating healthily and attending the gym regularly, and both his fitness and his confidence have improved. He has been accepted into a sixth-form college and is keen to forge a career as a nurse or police officer.

Says Youth Worker Matt, ‘Tyler’s case highlights the fact that when clinical staff are able to really communicate with their patients and ask the right questions, underlying concern can be addressed. This is such a lovely young man, it was a shame that he lost so many months of his young life to the fear of gang violence but now he has a really bright future ahead of him.”

Tyler’s story

Ignoring violence

Building aspirations

Daniella’s story

A & E in July last year urgently with a medical complaint. The on-duty consultant spoke to him at length and learnt that he had been assaulted by members of a local gang twice in January and February of 2019 and had subsequently met the lady for fear of further gang violence. On each occasion, the lady was the one who would be able to drive him, did he leave the house to go to church or visit a friend.

The mentoring sessions have really improved my self-image. They make me feel good about myself. I want to be an actor and study at drama school.’

‘This lad is such a lovely young man, it was a shame that he lost so many months of his young life to the fear of gang violence but now he has a really bright future ahead of him.”

OYS worked with Tyler to rebalance his confidence in gradual steps, first taking short trips out to local parks and then accompanying him on various activities, such as dog walking.
Leo is 15 years old. He has attended holiday provision at Oasis Hub Hobmoor for the last 4 years. Leo has been diagnosed with autism and found attending his local secondary school extremely challenging. His mental health deteriorated significantly until he no longer attended. He is passionate about football and sport, playing in local teams as a goalkeeper. He has a season ticket for Birmingham City F.C. and attends every match. Leo was not able to participate in formal education but signed up to the Sports Leaders Level 1 course. During the course he learned new skills and grew in confidence.

He completed the course gaining his Level 1 and also received ‘The Spirit of Leadership’ certificate for his dedication to the holiday club. He is now too old to be a participant at the holiday provision but has committed to coming along as a volunteer and leading activities for other young people. He is very proud that he has achieved his first formal qualification and this has given him a tremendous boost.

He now attends a local college four mornings a week studying GCSE Maths and English and volunteers at the Community Centre when he feels able to, putting to good use his new skills. In the future, his goal is to become a Sports Coach.

April is 16 and is in her first year of Sixth Form. She has been involved with Oasis Hub North Bristol’s youth health and participation project for four years. In the beginning, April attended a one-to-one support programme based around personal and emotional development and twice-weekly drop-in sports and fitness sessions.

When April first became involved in the project she was very shy, struggling with lack of self-esteem, anxiety and lack of confidence. However, over time, she gained enough confidence to volunteer in some of the Hub projects including helping the youth homeless project, a ‘random act of kindness’ project and a body positive project.

More recently, April has expressed an interest in working with younger children and started running her own arts and crafts activities during the Oasis Hub drop-in. This led to her volunteering at a local after school club for 4-11 year-olds where she has just been employed as a sessional worker.

‘Through my involvement in the youth health and participation project, I am now able to deal with my feelings and emotions. The staff have helped me with my confidence and I am so proud of my involvement in the body positive project. It felt good knowing that by doing this project, I was able to help other young people as well as helping myself.’
Growing our response to food poverty

The UK has one of the highest rates of food poverty in Europe. Covid-19 has made things worse and lifted the lid on the hidden extent of food poverty.

In 2019/20 we supported 25,808 people with food parcels and cooked meals compared with 3,459 in the previous 12 months!

In total we supported 30,737 people in our advice and support programmes

“We can’t help kids unless we help the parents. I honestly don’t know what I would do without the level of support that Oasis provides.”

In total we supported 30,737 people in our advice and support programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health and wellbeing</th>
<th>Personal &amp; spiritual</th>
<th>Debt advice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,772</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<th>One-to-one family support</th>
<th>Advocacy</th>
<th>Food poverty</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>872</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>25,808</td>
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</table>
A mother's story

Fatima was referred to an Oasis Debt Advisor by a member of staff at her children’s school. She was at risk of being evicted within a week due to rent arrears and had a number of other urgent debts. She had been working part-time on a low wage and her previous benefit payments had been stopped. Due to the health needs of one of her children, she was unable to work and as a result did not have enough money to pay the bills or keep her family fed. She was referred to the Oasis community team through the Council’s NRPF office to apply her benefit claims.

Fatima told us she had been called into the Home Office to lift the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) which means she had no entitlement to welfare benefits, home office support for asylum seekers or to public housing. The mother had a serious chronic health condition and had ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’ which means they had no entitlement to welfare benefits, home office support for asylum seekers or to public housing.

Two days later Fatima was referred to Oasis. We advised her to appeal the decision and referred her to the Oasis community team for assistance. A member of our debt team visited her family and it was apparent that they lived in one small room between the mother and son, and a small amount of subsistence. We then helped her get in touch with the local MP who then helped to secure the NRFP decision lifted. This was granted by the Home Office.

Later Oasis staff and volunteers helped her find more permanent accommodation in a two-bedroom flat and to apply for various benefits and subsidies for her and her son. ‘We then helped her get bus passes for her and her son. ’We were able to give her an emergency food parcel from our foodbank and she met with one of our debt and benefits advisors. The advisor went to court with her, to try and help save her home.

Finally, after three trips to court, Fatima was allowed to stay in her home. Her advisor helped her negotiate her debts and income more than doubled. This was lifted. This was granted by the Home Office.

"We were able to give her an emergency food parcel from our foodbank and she met with one of our debt and benefits advisors. The advisor went to court with her, to try and help save her home. Finally, after three trips to court, Fatima was allowed to stay in her home. Her advisor helped her negotiate her debts and income more than doubled. This was lifted. This was granted by the Home Office."

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Fatima's children excelled in their exams and the mental and physical health of the whole family has vastly improved since having some financial stability. Fatima is now well on her way to becoming debt free.

Fatima's story

Freedom from debt

A mother's story

Imagine being homeless, chronically ill, with a child and no entitlement to any help or support. This was the case for a mother and her children who were referred to the Oasis community team through Oasis Academy South Bank in London. Their immigration status was ‘No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)’ which meant they had no entitlement to welfare benefits, home office support for asylum seekers or to public housing. The mother had a serious chronic health condition and was unable to work.

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“We then helped her to negotiate through the Council’s NRPF Team, who were able to provide one small room between the mother and son, and a small amount of subsistence. We then helped her get in touch with the local MP, who then helped to secure the NRFP decision lifted. This was granted by the Home Office."

Fatima’s story

Freedom from debt

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Fatima was referred to an Oasis Debt Advisor by a member of staff at her children’s school. She was at risk of being evicted within a week due to rent arrears and had a number of other urgent debts. She had been working part-time on a low wage and her previous benefit payments had been stopped. Due to the health needs of one of her children, she was unable to work and as a result did not have enough money to pay the bills or keep her family fed. She was referred to the Oasis community team through the Council’s NRPF office to apply her benefit claims.

Fatima told us she had been called into the Home Office to lift the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) which means they had no entitlement to welfare benefits, home office support for asylum seekers or to public housing. The mother had a serious chronic health condition and had ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’ which means they had no entitlement to welfare benefits, home office support for asylum seekers or to public housing.

Two days later Fatima was referred to Oasis. We advised her to appeal the decision and referred her to the Oasis community team for assistance. A member of our debt team visited her family and it was apparent that they lived in one small room between the mother and son, and a small amount of subsistence. We then helped her get in touch with the local MP who then helped to secure the NRFP decision lifted. This was granted by the Home Office.

Later Oasis staff and volunteers helped her find more permanent accommodation in a two-bedroom flat and to apply for various benefits and subsidies for her and her son. ‘We were able to give her an emergency food parcel from our foodbank and she met with one of our debt and benefits advisors. The advisor went to court with her, to try and help save her home. Finally, after three trips to court, Fatima was allowed to stay in her home. Her advisor helped her negotiate her debts and income more than doubled. This was lifted. This was granted by the Home Office.’

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Fatima’s children excelled in their exams and the mental and physical health of the whole family has vastly improved since having some financial stability. Fatima is now well on her way to becoming debt free.

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Ahmed is a Syrian refugee originally from Damascus and now living in Scunthorpe in the North of England with his wife and two young children. Ahmed and his family have experienced intolerable fear and destruction and have had no respite from the ongoing conflict in Syria. During his exile, Ahmed became involved with JRS, the Jesuit Refugee Service, an international organisation offering education, support and a community that is not afraid of injustice and discrimination.

Ahmed is a master craftsman, trained in upholstery, having trained with famous companies both in Syria and Beirut. Because of the Civil War Ahmed’s livelihood was destroyed and he was unable to support his family. Determined to provide a better life for his children, Ahmed did not give up and he found help through the United Nations Refugee Organisation, who have helped him to find a safe home in Scunthorpe.

Tyrone, the Oasis Hub Leader in Scunthorpe, met Ahmed in early 2019 in the playground at Oasis Academy Henderson Avenue as Ahmed dropped his children off at school. At that point Ahmed was newly arrived in England for four years and although he had spent time learning English, he had struggled to get any work or volunteering opportunity. As the relationship grew, Tyrone wanted Ahmed back in Syria and told him as an unrecruited volunteer to his upholstery trade and his first commissions. Tyrone encourages Ahmed to get involved in the project and support Ahmed to develop his business model and the hope is that he will eventually have a thriving upholstery business.

Ahmed is a local parent with a young family and Ahmed’s enthusiasm for the project has been immense. Ahmed now has a workspace within the Crosby Collective, access to tools for his upholstery trade and his first commissions. Tyrone continues to support Ahmed to develop his business model and the hope is that he will eventually have a thriving upholstery business.

For Ahmed the impact of being back in a workshop doing what he loves and what he has spent many years training for has been transformative. The support from Ty has been amazing, I am so glad that I’m still here, I have a workspace within the Crosby Collective, access to tools for my upholstery trade and my first commissions. Tyrone continues to support Ahmed to develop his business model and the hope is that he will eventually have a thriving upholstery business.

Friendship and confidence through volunteering Amber and Jackie

Amber and Jackie have become key volunteers within the Hub. They led the food pantry project, sourcing donations, placing orders, taking referrals, and making up parcels. Most importantly, they befriended the people who access the pantry, offering help and support and giving them a safe space to talk. They have a real heart for the future of the Hub and me and I am determined to make a success of this opportunity.

Amber and Jackie have become key members of the team. They are the outreach leaders of the Hub and play a huge role in the community, volunteering with the Hub’s food pantry for emergency food for her family and the transport to get her husband in hospital in Milton Hill. The Hub was able to provide emergency food parcels for Jackie and support her to access the financial help she required.

Road to employment Shelly’s story

Shelly lives in a small flat with her partner and three young children. Shelly was suffering from a serious long term injury to her arm which needed lots of physio treatment. She also has depression and struggles with anxiety and agoraphobia. Consequently she spent more and more time at home and gradually cut herself off to continue to live alone and not mix with people. Oasis Hub North Bristol runs a charity shop selling donated clothes and other items and offers volunteering opportunities for local people. Shelly says that when she visited there was a volunteer opportunity at the shop and plucked up the courage to find out more. ‘It took three attempts before I had enough courage to come through the door. It was the best decision I’ve made in ages,’ she says.

Shelly’s confidence grew as she became more involved in the shop and she was subsequently successful in her application for a shop assistant role. She now works three days a week in the community shop and her confidence has really soared, serving customers, learning and growing as an8 assistant. The Hub is now run totally by them supporting Blossom and the food pantry project. ‘The food pantry is incredibly popular. I have seen their confidence and leadership blossom and the food pantry project is now run by Shelly who has been so successful in her role as assistant.’

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Who Are Oasis?

The Oasis vision is for community – a place where everyone is included, making a contribution, and reaching their God-given potential.

We have been pioneering sustainable, holistic community development for 35 years. We work in many communities affected by inequality that impacts all areas of life. We work in a joined-up way across our communities to create change – economically, socially, physically, and spiritually – in education, housing, justice, health, youth, and family support; and with people of all ages and in all situations.

We believe that things can change. Where systems leave communities disadvantaged, we’re bold about pioneering alternatives and trying new things. We’re not satisfied with the status quo where it keeps people trapped in poverty, or constantly at risk of exclusion.