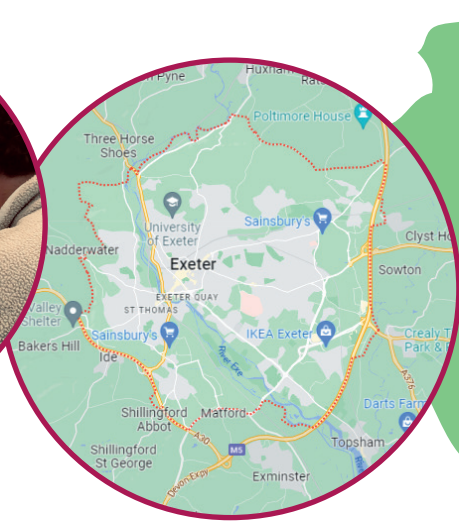


Public Health Outreach Team Insight Snapshots 2023

#2 EXETER



PROJECT: SUPPORT FOR AFGHAN REFUGEES IN BRIDGING HOTEL



“
Wellbeing Checks
helped to understand
needs and hopes of
residents.”

IN A NUTSHELL...

The Bridging Hotel, Exeter, provides accommodation and resettlement support for mainly qualified Afghan professionals and their families through the Nowzad rescue scheme. This Insight Snapshot relates to work of the Outreach Team from October 2022 to December 2022 with health and wellbeing assessments with the 55 people in the Bridging Hotel.

NEEDS, GAPS AND BARRIERS

- Some of the refugees have been living in the Hotel for over a year. Although some have settled into life in the UK, they can't properly rebuild their lives while living in a hotel.
- The refugees seeking help are mainly male. This may be cultural. The net effect is that the needs of the women in the Bridging hotel may be masked and the women may take longer to integrate into life in the UK.
- Language barriers. Although the refugees have English lessons some have a lot more experience with an education system than others, and that has played a huge role in the speed of learning the new language.
- The reliance on good IT skills to access public health and other governmental systems is a big change for many of the families who aren't up to speed on how the bureaucracy in this country operates. Adjusting to a huge cultural change. Some of the older individuals display a lot of anxiety associated with seeking the help they need.

CASE STUDY: DIFFICULTIES OF A SKILLED PROFESSIONAL TO MOVE ON FROM THE HOTEL

'H' is a woman who was a qualified vet in Kabul. She is well educated, has no children and is currently studying again to get her veterinary license to practice in the UK. She works part-time at a veterinary practice in-between her studies. Her English is impeccable. She has been at the hotel for a year but with her part time job she can't afford a private place to live in Exeter. She has exams in two months and is stuck in a cycle of not being able to make any accommodation decisions for herself with the frustrations of having to re-study a practice that she's worked in already for 5 years.

COMMUNITY VISION – WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

Devon County Council gives some support to the refugees in the hotel in the form of a Help Desk to assist the refugees to find the routes through the public systems – housing, benefits, education, employment, to help them learn how to help themselves in a UK society. At the time of the involvement of the Outreach Team, a resettlement team was being recruited to be based in the hotel but had not yet been appointed.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH OUTREACH TEAM

The Outreach Team initially gave support to staff the Help Desk. In November 2022 they devised a Wellbeing Check based on questions in a Health Wheel (Mathewman). The purpose of the Wellbeing Check, translated into Pashtu and Dari, was to:

- A. give insight into the feelings of the Bridging hotel refugees
- B. create a well-being baseline to guide the new resettlement team in planning support for refugees in the hotel in the future.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

The Outreach Team provided vital temporary staffing capacity for a project that had to be set up at short notice. The initial request to provide practical support at Help Desk was 4 days

Wellbeing Checks helped the new resettlement team to understand needs and hopes of residents and provided a baseline for conducting the Wellbeing Check again after 3 months to assess progress and areas for further support

Interviewed at least one member of each of the families in the Hotel. Wellbeing Check gave refugees an opportunity to speak and be heard. The Outreach Team had only time to speak with 20 adults

Helped to highlight shortcomings, e.g., hotel that is shared with other residents is not ideal environment for children without a play area

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMISSIONERS

Roll out the Wellbeing Checks to other Bridging Hotels in Devon, training resettlement staff in its use and how to encourage residents to engage with it.

Community Support by Will Lovell, Steve Feasey and Sharron Sandell of Devon Public Health Outreach Team. Snapshot Designed by Devon Communities Together.

Health and Wellbeing Wheel

Please mark your scores to help you track your overall health and wellbeing and identify the areas where you need more support.
6 = maximum wellbeing, 0 = minimum wellbeing

