

PARTNERSHIP: CASE STUDY

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Helen Richards,
Project Co-ordinator, RASP



Refugee and Asylum Seekers' Project (RASP): A Pathway to Partnership

By Will Morey

RASP is a V F funded project founded in April 2008 and based in Brighton. The organisation helps welcome young refugees and asylum seekers to their Brighton and Hove community. Through befriending, mentoring and offering a regular drop in meeting, RASP helps bring young people together in a safe, supportive and fun environment to socialise, share and support each other. RASP has a network of committed volunteers who work in a mentoring and befriending capacity with each individual young person. RASP have been working with Pathways to Independence since the project began.

Helen Richards, RASP Project Co-ordinator explains, “We have a fantastic team of volunteers from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. Many of our volunteers are university students studying areas such as sociology, development, anthropology and psychology and are keen to apply their skills to helping support young people and really welcome them to the Brighton and Hove communities.”

RASP work hard to run a variety of events and social activities for young people to attend. RASP focuses on ensuring their activities

are always inclusive and culturally sensitive for young people of all backgrounds and beliefs. RASP is involved in a variety of community projects and events including the Brighton Carnival, the “One World” exhibition at Brighton Museum, where young people learnt photography skills and had an exhibition of their work and the Moulescomb Forest Garden Project where young people got involved in the community allotment. These projects along with regular drop ins, monthly outings and activities help young people to momentarily forget their situation, connect with their community and have fun.

Pathways to Independence works hard to build relationships with a variety of agencies, organisations and Groups. Through establishing partnerships and embracing multi-agency working Ptl believes that everyone benefits, especially the young people.

Alice Conroy, Founder and Managing Director at Pathways explains, “Our work with RASP is a perfect example of where working together and building strong partnerships really works. RASP is a fantastic project that we believe in and see the benefit from. It enables young people to work with someone outside of an agency or traditional

social care structure and to be themselves. They can then build strong connections into their new community.”

Pathways and RASP team members maintain a close relationship and seek to ensure young people are supported in more aspects than just the basics of accommodation and accessing services. Pathways staff encourage and support young people in attending RASP and starting to build connections with new people and their new community.

Helen comments, “Working together with Pathways we can get a more holistic view of the young person. Together we can really help them in all aspects of their journey, be it application, integration or just being there as friendly faces who will listen. Pathways are more like colleagues, an extension of what we are doing. They really know how to make partnerships and multi agency working effective for everyone involved, especially the young people.”

RASP has worked successfully with over 100 refugees and asylum seekers and 80 volunteers and continue to recruit more young people and volunteers all the time.