



Refugee Support
Devon

Refugee Support Devon
Business Plan 2024-27

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1. Introduction

The Business Plan:

- outlines the work of Refugee Support Devon
- sets out our Strategic Goals for the 3-year period 2024-2027

2. Our vision and mission

Our vision is to support our clients in feeling safe and more settled in Devon during their journey as asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants.

Our mission is to better support the evolving needs of our clients by strengthening our organisational resilience.

In delivering our mission we strive to put those we work with at the centre of our processes. We welcome and seek out cooperative and partnership working with other organisations which share our priorities and values.

3. Who we are

Refugee Support Devon is a Charitable Company without share capital limited by guarantee, registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. We are the only county wide organisation in Devon whose sole purpose is to support those seeking sanctuary here.

RSD is overseen by a Board of Directors (also called Trustees) who have overall responsibility for governance, management and finance. Trustees are volunteers and are chosen to ensure a wide and complementary range of relevant skills and extensive relevant experience.

RSD recruits and maintains a committed and experienced staff team, many of whom have worked (and volunteered) for RSD for many years.

RSD relies on a large team of trained and dedicated volunteers.

RSD encourages and supports both staff and volunteers to acquire and develop skills to enhance the services that RSD is able to offer.

4. Who we work with

RSD works with refugees and their families who live in Devon or are being offered resettlement in Devon. We also offer help to a growing number of migrants who are vulnerable but without refugee status based in Devon who cannot access statutory support services or obtain help from other NGOs. Their vulnerability may result from immigration status, lack of resources, individual circumstances or a combination of all these.

Refugees and their families have almost invariably been forced to flee war, violence or persecution, may have endured dangerous and traumatic journeys and been separated from loved ones. They often face further hardship once in the UK. They are a legally and socially marginalised group of people who frequently experience destitution, trauma, stress and language barriers. They may face long periods of uncertainty while waiting for their applications to be processed.

Even when people are granted leave to remain in the country, life can continue to be extremely challenging.

Many of the people we help find us through personal recommendation. Others are referred from organisations with whom we have close contact. RSD seeks to find new ways to ensure we are reaching as many potential service users as we are able.

5. How we know what is needed

RSD has developed a significant local and regional profile, building up extensive knowledge and experience working with asylum seekers and refugees since 2001.

We actively seek feedback from service users through questionnaires, meetings and events. We recognise that the onus is on us to listen with sensitivity and attention.

We have developed robust systems for collecting data and monitoring our services. We continue to enhance these systems for evaluating the outcomes of our work with clients and to incorporate what we learn from feedback surveys into our planning and development processes.. Data is analysed at bi-monthly Board meetings to ensure the delivery of the services that are needed.

We have recently taken steps to implement and embed a new monitoring and evaluation system using the Triangle Star. Staff and volunteer training in the use of this system to regularly monitor client progress and outcomes will take place in the autumn of 2024. We will also gather feedback from clients through outcomes, surveys and consultation meetings with them held three times a year, as well as encourage them to tell their stories.

RSD is constantly monitoring and acting upon what are often rapid changes to national and international migration policies and patterns. Our strong relationships with the statutory sector (eg the Home Office and Devon's Local Authorities) make RSD a trusted partner in delivering contracted services.

RSD is well-networked with voluntary and third sector organisations nationally and regionally where each can enhance and support the services the other is able to provide.

6. How we are funded

RSD is an independent voluntary organisation. We are primarily dependent on grants from charitable trusts and donations. We also have a strong local fundraising income stream, as well as income from service level contracts with Local Authorities.

RSD works hard to explore all potential Trust Fund applications but does so at a time of huge demand on limited resources in the charity sector. These funds tend to provide project focused grants. It can thus be a challenge for RSD to maintain core funding.

Our independently examined accounts are available on request.

7. How we plan our work

A new 3-year Business Plan is prepared every 3 years and approved by the Board of Trustees. This sets out the goals and priorities for the following 3 years.

An annual Operating Plan is produced and approved each year. This is an internal working document which sets out how we plan to implement RSD's goals and priorities.

8. How we assess quality

Performance indicators: Each objective within our internal Operating Plan is assigned measurable performance indicators. The Operating Plan is reviewed at six-month intervals and progress recorded. If necessary, objectives can be modified to take account of changing circumstances. In this way the Operating Plan is maintained as a live document which can effectively guide the work of the organisation.

Self-Assessment: The Board and individual projects conduct annual self-assessments which feed into the planning process for the following year.

Staff Appraisals. All staff have an annual staff appraisal. Operational issues which arise during appraisals are also, when appropriate, fed into the planning process.

9. Strategic Goals 2024-27

The Business Plan sets out RSD's strategic goals for the 3 years from 2024, and how we plan to monitor success.

It takes account of

- the ever-changing global situation
- the legal framework for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants set by the UK government
- the services provided by local and national statutory organisations

There are five overarching themes which we expect to see in our work over this period.

- Demand for our Drop-in services has steadily grown and this will continue to be our core offer to the refugee communities in Devon.
- Since 2022, we have played major role in supporting asylum seekers and refugees placed in initial accommodation hotels in Devon and we expect to continue to provide wellbeing support to these clients as long as this government programme continues.
- Since 2016 we have been a significant provider of support for refugees arriving in Devon under Home Office funded re-settlement schemes. We have every expectation that this work will continue in the coming 3 years.
- Due to a dearth of accessible immigration advice in Devon and the South West generally, the demand for this kind of support is growing and we aim to expand this service to

refugees and migrants who are vulnerable but without refugee status, offering advice at OISC Level 2.

- Similarly, we expect to evolve our Education and Employability programme, providing specialist language programmes which are unavailable free of charge through other local providers. These include IELTS (International English Language Testing Scheme) and OET (Occupational English Test) which are essential for clients engaged in our recently developed RAMP (Refugees As Medical Professionals) programme, enabling professionals from a variety of medical backgrounds to rebuild their careers in the UK.

10. Our Strategic Goals for the next 3 years.

Each of these 6 goals form the basis of the Charity's internal **Operating Plan** in which we have detailed strategic priorities, the results we expect to achieve and how we will measure success.

Strategic Goal 1: To invest in strategic analysis and planning
Strategic Goal 2: To monitor and improve our portfolio of services
Strategic Goal 3: To be financially robust
Strategic Goal 4: To strengthen the day-to-day management of the charity
Strategic Goal 5: To ensure our Board provides direction, support and guidance in the delivery of our strategic plans
Strategic Goal 6: To develop and maintain a communications strategy which supports and enhances RSD's work

Outcomes related to the **Operating Plan** will be reviewed twice yearly by staff and trustees and results will be considered in planning for the following year's operating aims and priorities.