



The Welcoming

Find Yourself in Edinburgh!

thewelcoming.org



WELCOMING NEW SCOTS
BUILDING COMMUNITY
AND LEARNING TOGETHER

Strategic Plan 2020-2023

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FOREWORD



Nick Croft
Chair

The Welcoming Association supports New Scots to feel at home in their new communities. The Edinburgh based charity supports New Scots to learn English, find jobs and access local services, offering opportunities for friendship, sustainable living, creativity, health and wellbeing. The Welcoming builds community by connecting locals and New Scots through social and cultural exchange and collaborating with others to share knowledge and influence positive change.

In the launch of the Scottish Government's Migration- Helping Scotland Prosper strategy, the First Minister stated, "Scotland is a welcoming and inclusive nation, and we value everyone, no matter where they were born, who has chosen to make Scotland their home; to live, work, study, raise their families and build their lives here."

Beyond valuing the rich diversity of experience, perspective and gifts that migrants bring, migration to Scotland is critical to support economic growth and the delivery of public services. It helps address the serious issue of long-term demographic change, enhancing and sustaining our communities. All of our future population growth is projected to come from migration and any reduction in migration – whether that's from the rest of the UK, the EU or internationally – will impact on the size of our working age population. Scotland has a history of offering a warm welcome to refugees and migrants, supporting them to build positive lives in a new community.

The Welcoming is proud to play a role in helping nurture a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable society where all feel empowered to achieve their full potential. We believe our Strategic Plan outlines our priorities and readiness to support the Scottish Government's New Scots: refugee integration strategy 2018-2022 through the provision of our services to New Scots and proactively engaging with policy designers and decision makers at all levels, and to engage with the next phase of the strategy in light of the rapidly changing world around us.

We are proud to build on our 20-year legacy of supporting new arrivals to Scotland to thrive, and to expand and grow our impact for the future. Along with the rest of the board members, I am excited about the new leadership we have in place to take us forward, with the ongoing dedicated work of our amazing staff, network of more than 200 dedicated volunteers, and most critically the people we serve who inspire the work of The Welcoming.

TERMINOLOGY

We are aware that many organisations are established to work with a specific group of people. However, although the Welcoming is funded to work primarily with asylum seekers and refugees, our services have been accessible to all the people who come through the door. With this in mind, we will be using the term New Scots in this document we try to define under points 1-10 in the glossary.

GLOSSARY

1. ASYLUM SEEKERS

An 'asylum seeker' (or 'asylum applicant') is a person who has applied for recognition as a refugee under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. 1. ASYLUM SEEKERS

2. BAME

People who describe themselves as Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic i.e collectively BAME community.

3. BENEFICIARIES

People who receive benefit in the form of service or material from The Welcoming Association.

4. CLIENTS

People who access services by dealing directly with government or other service providers.

5. ECONOMIC MIGRANT

An individual who has moved from their country of origin to another country to seek employment.

6. NEWCOMERS

A person who has recently arrived in a place; a beginner/novice/learner in a new place or situation

7. NEW SCOTS

People of any background who have immigrated to Scotland since 1945 as modern immigrants. The term was primarily used to describe new immigrants (primarily of South Asian descent) who arrived in Scotland from the 1960s onward. However, the Scottish Government is using the term New Scots to include asylum seekers and refugees.

8. PARTICIPANTS

People who attend The Welcoming's activities.

9. REFUGEE

Article 1 of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention defines a refugee as someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.

10. SERVICE USERS

The term 'service users' is commonly used to describe people who access social care services. At the Welcoming we use this term to describe the people who access all our services.

11. SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

A sustainable society is one that has learned to live within the boundaries established by ecological limits. It can be maintained as a collective and ongoing entity because practices that imposed excessive burdens upon the environment have been reformed or abolished.

BACKGROUND TO THE WELCOMING ASSOCIATION

The work of the Welcoming Association started in 1999, supported by the City of Edinburgh Council's Community Learning and Development workers who delivered a cultural integration programme to the most marginalised and isolated New Scots to Edinburgh. The New Scots were asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and the black and minority ethnic communities who made Edinburgh and Scotland their adopted home.

In early 2000 the Welcoming was born as an independent association. One of the primary objectives of the Welcoming services was to enable New Scots to build links with and forge friendships with local Scottish people living in their housing schemes as part of their settlement and integration into local Scottish communities. Moreover, The Welcoming recognised that the large and growing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities living in Edinburgh were also experiencing varying levels of marginalisation, racism, discrimination and inequality. As a result, the board decided to include these communities and offer them the services of the Welcoming Association. Currently the Welcoming provides varying activities for more than 1600 New Scots from 80 different countries and nationalities, and mobilises more than 200 volunteers from the local community.



VISION

Our vision is of a diverse and inclusive Scotland, where everyone feels welcome and can achieve their potential.

MISSION

We welcome New Scots to Edinburgh, build community and learn together.

VALUES

Welcoming, equality, respect, creativity and learning.

PRINCIPLES

Our organisation and our strategy are built on three core principles:

- New Scots are vital to the future well-being of our country.
- Extending a warm welcome to New Scots reflects Scottish national values and enriches host communities.
- Successful integration means respecting and celebrating diversity.

AIMS

Inward migration is crucial to Scotland's future prosperity. Scotland has demographic and geographical needs that are distinct from the rest of the UK, and it is essential that we are an attractive destination for migrants able to come here under prevailing UK immigration policy. In helping to achieve this, our strategic aims are.

- To encourage people from across the world to actively choose Scotland as their home.
- To enable New Scots to quickly settle, integrate and contribute to our country.
- To enable New Scots to engage in positive climate action.
- To engage established Scots of all ages in the process of welcoming new arrivals.
- To ensure effective partnership working with other organisations sharing these aims.
- To influence policy and practice to advance the integration and inclusion of our New Scots.

THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This Strategic Plan sets out how we will contribute to the Scottish Government and Local Authorities' (in our case City of Edinburgh Council) commitment to create a more successful country, with opportunities for New Scots and historically marginalised racially diverse communities to flourish through increasing tangible inclusive policies.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Our strategic plan and work contributes to six out of the eleven objectives of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework:

- We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination.
- We are open, connected and make a positive contribution internationally.
- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.
- We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society.
- We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment.
- We are healthy and active.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE NEW SCOTS REFUGEE INTEGRATION STRATEGY 2018-2022

We have been supporting the work of the Scottish Government New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy by contributing to the following objectives. This strategy aims to build on what we have achieved so far and extend its services to wider communities and geographical areas.

Scottish Government Objectives	What we will do
Policy, strategic planning and legislation in relation to asylum are informed by the needs and aspirations of asylum seekers and local communities.	Sharing the experiences and perspectives of our New Scots with policy designers and decision makers through annual reports, case studies/research and organising meetings/and other public engagement activities with members of the Scottish parliament.
Refugees can build their skills, secure employment and gain financial independence.	Continue providing New Scots with one-to-one capacity building and mentoring support. Continue collaborating with Job Centre Plus and employment agencies and facilitating workshops and one to one support to accessing employment in Scotland.

Scottish Government Objectives	What we will do
Refugees and asylum seekers have the opportunity to achieve the language and the language qualifications they need to progress to further learning or employment.	<p>Continue providing English classes to service users at beginner, elementary intermediate and advance levels.</p> <p>Continue providing Scottish cultural learning, including literature, Scots and poetry classes for New Scots in Edinburgh.</p> <p>Continue providing relaxed conversation groups to practice English.</p> <p>Continue the Befriending programme to enable social/inter-personal interaction between local communities and immigrants that is crucial for advancing practical language acquisition and cultural knowledge</p>
Refugees and asylum seekers are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing.	<p>Organise sporting and recreational outdoor activities including jogging, cycling and swimming classes to New Scots.</p> <p>Through our The Welcoming Greener Future project, we will raise awareness about Climate Change causes and effects and promote positive behavioural changes to reduce their carbon footprint.</p> <p>Offering Health and Wellbeing information and signposting.</p> <p>Organise cultural and environmental pursuits</p>
Refugees and asylum seekers, who use health and social care services, have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.	<p>Collaborate with NHS Lothian, local medical centres (GPs) and other health projects to ensure New Scots understand their rights and entitlements and have a positive experience of accessing health services.</p> <p>Continue to participate in health, well-being and social care interventions for New Scots.</p>
Communities are aware of the needs of refugee and asylum seeker communities and actively seek to involve them in community life.	<p>Collaborate with local community leaders, neighbourhood centres and establish projects that promote community cohesion and inclusion, participation, integration through positive relationships at local level.</p> <p>Continue to articulate the experiences and perspectives of New Scots with a view to inform service provision, inclusion and integration at the local community level</p>

Scottish Government Objectives	What we will do
Refugees and asylum seekers engage in cultural, heritage and sport activities and celebrate their own culture, talents and contributions.	Continue providing Scotland for New Scots weekly local sightseeing activity. Collaborate with Historic Scotland, Creative Scotland, and Edinburgh International Film Festival and create opportunities for New Scots to have access to these services and to contribute to cultural, arts and sports activities.
Local community groups, refugee, and asylum seeker-led organisations play an active role in supporting refugee integration.	Continue participating with CEC Communities and Families and Lifelong Learning representatives, CEMVO, Health All Round, Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Lothian, EVOC, NKS, Four Square Scotland, Home Start, St Bride's Community Centre, Big Hearts Community Trust, NHS Lothian, Health Promotion, Gorgie City Farm and Police Scotland amongst others.

Our strategy will build on the direction and ambition established by the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2018-2022, "Migration: helping Scotland prosper" 2020 document.

Our strategy also strives to contribute to the implementation of the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Equality Act 2010.

ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES

Within the framework of Scottish Government policy on migration, many organisations across the public, private and third sectors are involved in helping to deliver our vision. Our strategic priorities for the next three years focus our contribution on:

- Helping New Scots to feel confident in their new lives in Scotland.
- Helping New Scots to learn English, find jobs and access local services.
- Providing opportunities for New Scots to engage in social and recreational activities.
- Connecting established and New Scots through social and cultural exchange.
- Collaborating with others to share knowledge and influence positive change.
- Supporting New Scots to adopt eco-friendly behaviours, act against climate change and reduce their carbon footprint.
- Support New Scots with active citizenship to address global issues that affect their lives in Scotland.
- Supporting New Scots with active citizenship in climate challenge and other global issues that affect their lives in Scotland.
- Soliciting and articulating the experiences and perspectives of our New Scots to inform our work and those of other organisations and policy-makers.

We will strengthen our organisational capacity to do so by:

- Extending the geographic coverage of the services that we offer.
- Strengthening our Association so that we remain fit for purpose and the preferred agency by many.
- Promoting participation by New Scots and volunteers in influencing the direction and ongoing development of the Association.
- Incorporating the experiences and perspectives of our New Scots to inform our work.

OUTCOMES

This corporate strategy covers the three years 1-4-20 to 31-3-23. Specific actions and budgets are set out annually in our business plan along with relevant KPIs.

By March 2023, we expect to have achieved the following:

- 3500 New Scots will have made use of our services.
- 80 nationalities will have been represented among New Scots.
- As a consequence of using our services:
 - 95% will report that their English language skills have improved;
 - 95% will report that they better understand life in Scotland;
 - 95% will report that they have met new people and made new friends;
 - 75% will report that they have found jobs;
 - 600 established Scots will have participated in our services as volunteers;
 - 95% will report that they have broadened the social and cultural understanding.
- As a consequence of participating:
 - We will have established formal delivery partnerships with two other third sector organisations;
 - We will have established formal funding partnerships with two public bodies and five charitable organisations/foundations;
 - We will have extended our geographic coverage by establishing one satellite base in a community not previously well served by other providers;
 - We will have contributed to one policymaking consultation/process of the Scottish Parliament, the Local Authority and any other requisite organisations.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Welcoming Association places great importance in having accountable, transparent and responsible governance that ensures the activities of the Association are in line with its vision, mission and values. This is realised through the active role of the Board, which focuses its work on providing fiduciary oversight on financial accountability, risk management and organisational performance and impact. The Board also provides recommendations for the strategic and operational direction of the Association.

The Welcoming also strives to engage all stakeholders and encourage discussions around the issues that affect New Scots. Furthermore, through our collaborative work and social research, we will gather evidence on the issues that affect New Scots and share them with policy designers and decision-makers. As part of our ongoing monitoring, evaluating and learning process, we will continuously introspect our effectiveness and organisational behaviour. We will learn, unlearn and relearn from our experiences and share them with our communities and partners. We will support policy designers and decision-makers by making recommendations for change in legislation, policy and practice.

We will deliver our priorities through the establishment of effective, accountable, and transparent internal systems and by identifying and developing our committed, diverse workforce and volunteers. Although the Board of Directors will be responsible for providing overall policy direction, the 14 members of our multicultural and diverse workforce, led by a Senior Management Team (SMT) of four and supported by a wide range of volunteers, will implement our three years plan.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Collaborative working is at the heart of the Welcoming. We aim to help New Scots connect with existing services and opportunities across the City of Edinburgh and will strengthen our partnerships with the following organisations:

- City of Edinburgh Council Refugee and Migration Team and Lothian Health as they will continue to refer New Scots to our association.
- North Edinburgh Arts Centre, Broomhouse Centre, St. Brides Community Centre, and Wester Hailes Arts for Leisure and Education will provide venues for our services and activities.
- Sports Scotland and Edinburgh Leisure support our women's swimming project and will provide signposting to The Welcoming services.
- NHS Inform provide regular sessions at the Welcoming on accessing NHS services in Scotland will help us with disseminating the project.
- Play International, an exciting European learning and development partnership for best-practice sharing between projects working with refugees will support us with our monitoring and evaluation.

We will also be developing new partnerships with refugee organisations and community groups in Scotland by identifying those who are keen to improve the education, health and well-being of New Scots.

We also expect to work with other key organisations such as Health in Mind, Refugee Survival Trust, Migrant UK and Scottish Refugee Council in order to ensure that our signposting is informed and up-to-date.

MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

MEAL is a core value of the Welcoming. We will ensure the continuous improvement the Welcoming services through a cycle of planning, delivery and review involving New Scots, staff, volunteers, and partner organisations.

Charities need to fulfil two essential tasks when running a service or programme of activities:

- To deliver the service in an efficient manner (the management of a programme).
- To assess whether a service has produced the desired effects and is meeting the identified needs of its service users.

We will employ different systems to capture feedback data that helps us to measure the effectiveness and impact of our services. We will draw on what we have learnt from previous delivery and evidence based practice more widely. We will schedule review 'check-points' to reflect and action improvements, drawing on information from on-going practices:

- Support and supervision.
- Team meetings, which encourage open reflection and collaborative thinking.
- Peer learning.
- Quarterly, six monthly and annual reviews with participants and external stakeholders.
- Collaborating with higher educational and research institutions and continue updating ourselves with new monitoring and evaluation methods and tools.

OUR LONG-TERM ASPIRATIONS

In this Strategic Plan, we recognise the need to be clear not only about our vision for New Scots, but also for the Association. We recognise the significance of getting the structure, ways of working and culture of the Association right, and the importance of public confidence in the Welcoming.

We are committed to continue building an Association that will serve those who made Scotland their adopted home and the Scottish people for many years to come, driving forward equality and inclusiveness so that New Scots' contribution to the country is recognised and celebrated.

We intend the Association to be a small scalable, agile organisation, which genuinely support New Scots. Our Board members, employees and volunteers are all expected to be rooted in the values of the Association - our core values are welcoming, equality, respect, creativity and learning - and behave accordingly.

We anticipate that most of our work will be financed through grant-in-aid from the Scottish Government, Local Authorities, Charitable Trusts, and the private Sector. We will seek efficient arrangements to support the operation of the Association through shared service functions where appropriate.

FUNDING

Our annual budget is estimated £500,000.00 and so far, we have secured £389,342.00 for the 2020/21 Financial Year. Therefore, in order for us to continue as a prudent organisation, support our services users and relevant Government policies, we need committed core funding from the Scottish Government and other Donors.

INCOME		£389,342.00
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries		£290,127.00
Property cost		£29,733.00
Programme cost		£38,716.00
Office consumables and Overheads		£7,808.00

Finally, we will continue developing a progressive and outward looking association that responds to community needs, supports government strategies, and policies. We place significant emphasis on building strong networks across all stakeholder interests, and we will do so in a way that is at the same time collaborative and mutually challenging. We know that we will need to be constantly tested if we are to remain effective and relevant. We also know that challenge is vital in reforming systems with deeply embedded assumptions and practices. We will be an open Association seeking to learn from national and international experience.

The Welcoming Association
August 2020