



Samphire

*Working to create a society which is inclusive
and compassionate towards migrants*

Annual Report

2022 - 2023

Patron: Rt. Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin

Registered Charity No. 1106667

www.samphireproject.org.uk

 samphireproject  @samphire_

Director's Report 2022-2023

Recruitment and thanks

It was an absolute honour to be appointed as Director and join the Samphire team in October 2022. I've been involved with Samphire since 2017 and it is great to be supporting such an amazing team! Thank you to the Trustees for putting your faith in me and thank you to the staff for a brilliant nearly first year.

As we have been through some tumultuous times my focus has been on supporting the staff team, confirming roles where staff were still on probation and where staff had been acting up without confirmation or clarity of role, and recruiting to vacancies and gaps within the team.

Staffing update

This year has seen some comings and goings within the staff team and some changes in roles.

In December 2022, due to over funding and capacity, we were able to employ Yvonne Sherwood, a long time volunteer, as welfare advisor at the Napier Barracks Drop In CIC which we had been supporting. This has freed Indre up to cover more Immigration Advice work and to support the PDP staff through some changes.

In February 2023, I was delighted to be able to confirm Kay Marsh as our Media and Advocacy Lead, and give her a new Job Description for this, a role she had been doing for a long time without a JD.

In March 2023, our PDP Coordinator left on Maternity leave and we were delighted to hear that she has had a baby boy. We are staying in touch with Elisha and enjoying all the baby photos.

We have covered Elisha's role on a fixed term basis and recruited first Gabi Dunn (who left us to follow a career in Social Care, in which we wish her the best of luck) and then Harry Winstanley, who have taken to the role with enthusiasm and become valued members of the team.

In August we have had Vanessa Kent join us as PDP Caseworker for two days a week. Vanessa has a background in teaching ESOL students and mentoring.

In August, Aram Rawf joined our community engagement team as Inclusion Officer – Asylum Seekers and Refugees. We were becoming aware of increasing numbers of people moving to dispersal accommodation in the area or being accommodated via settlement schemes, often with little English or cultural support and, as he had interviewed with us for a different role, we decided that he would be a perfect fit for this one, with lived experience of all facets of the immigration system and multiple languages.

Events and Collaborations

Our events this year have been spectacularly successful, with coverage of our Winter Lights festival on ITV South East, the biggest and most vibrant Multi-cultural festival yet with collaborations with local authorities, Dover Arts Development, Counterpoint Arts, Future Foundry and others.

Still to come in 2023 are Samphire's first fundraising Fire-Walk, our winter ball and a repeat of the Winter Lights Festival in Deal (hopefully in collaboration with Deal Town council).

Fundraising efforts wins/losses

Thanks to all our Funders this year. National Lottery Communities Fund who continue to fund the entirety of the Post Detention Project plus extras, Trusthouse, AB Charitable, Justice Together, Allen & Overy, Colyer Fergusson, Dover District Council, Garfield Weston, Kent Community Foundation, Kent County Council, Lush, Souter, Cleary Foundation and London Churches Refugee Fund.

We are currently working on the Lottery continuation bid having been successful at the first round. I've been working hard on multiyear funding for the community engagement team, nothing successfully yet but that isn't deterring my efforts.

Partnership working – organisations to thank

We've been working closely with Dover District Council, Dover Arts Development, Counterpoint Arts, Future Foundry, Dover and Thanet CABs, Dover Big Local and others – a big thank you to all!

Volunteers to thank

Thank you to all our volunteers, especially Jonny and Tom who have stepped into the breach when needed and supported our events and projects.

Post-Detention Support Project

In the year of April 2022 – March 2023 the helpline for people who have experienced immigration detention in the UK remained open to enable us to support former detainees with their needs. The project helpline received 1,143 requests for support/assistance/advice in the past year, **the project assisted 77 individuals** who have experienced immigration detention in the UK.

One of the challenges the project encountered was staffing and staff sickness, which resulted in the helpline not being open 5 days/week for some weeks in Summer 2022 and Spring 2023.

The main issues faced by people calling the project remained lack of access to services and support – people are not allowed to work or claim benefits until their immigration situations are resolved. People stuck in limbo suffer from isolation, loneliness and a lack of sense of ownership over their lives. We also see more and more European nationals falling within the measures of hostile environment and having to rely on support from the project.

The project's **Make Christmas Count Appeal** raised £946.82 this past Christmas through public donations. The funds donated assisted 33 individuals with additional expenses for festive travel and presents for their loved ones.

The project's **annual telephone survey** was carried out in February 2023 by volunteers of the project. The results indicated that 36 percent of those surveyed found support received from the project very helpful and 44% - somewhat helpful. A further 80% respondents said they tended to contact the PDP instead of other organisations (45%) or alongside other organisations (35%).

In July 2022 the **Post Detention Support Conference** was once again took place after a 3 year break. It was a wonderful event attended by both people with lived experience and professionals working in the sector. The conference was organised following advice of our lived experience Steering Group who had significant input in the concept of the event, speakers, workshops and the running order of events. Some of the steering group members shared their stories on stage.



Moments from the Conference, July 2022

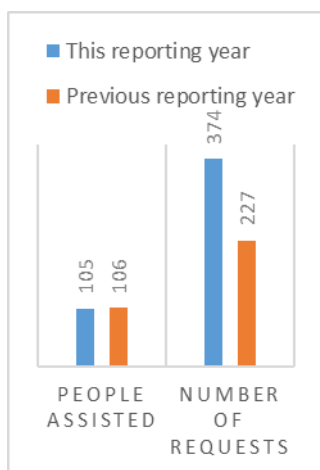
During the year of April 2022 – March 2023 the **Steering group** consisted of 7 members. Monthly video meetings took place online and face to face meetings took place in September 2022 and February 2023. Steering group members delivered moving speeches at Samphire’s AGM 2022. During the February meeting, our Media and Advocacy Lead provided the group with social media and advocacy training. Some mental coping techniques training was arranged for April 2023. Steering group terms of reference were formalised to clarify the group’s aims and direction.

The project staff **remained part of national forums and groups** that focus on issues related to asylum support, asylum, detention and migration – such as Detention Forum, Asylum Support Advice Network, EUSS Alliance. The staff attended 12 forums and networking events. In total 6 contacts with new organisations were established – such as Migrant Voice, English Pen and others.

Immigration Legal Project

April 2022 – March 2023

During this reporting period we have fully returned to face to face work. Fortnightly immigration surgeries continue in Dover and Thanet Citizens Advice Bureaus. Samphire's Immigration adviser has also been seeing clients at Samphire offices as well. Our referrals come from various regions in SE Kent and people find us through word of mouth, Samphire's inclusion work and our network of stakeholders.

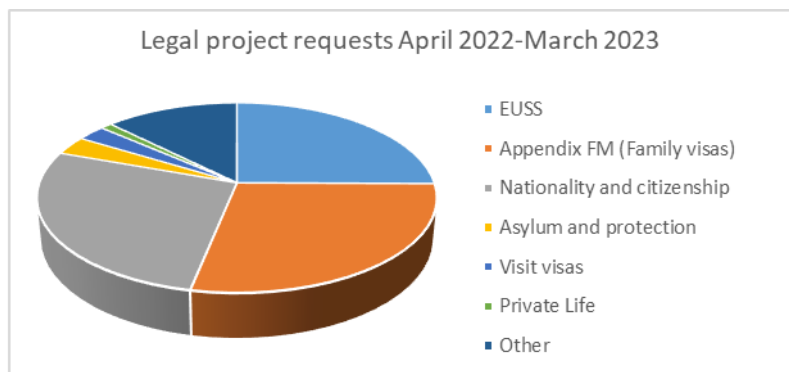


In the Year of April 2022 – March 2023 Immigration Legal Project assisted 105 individuals and dealt with 374 requests for assistance. This is almost exactly the same amount of people as last year, but the number of requests has increased significantly. This shows that people have more complex cases and reflects that Samphire is now providing OISC level 2 advice which involves more complicated casework.

Just like last year, the project continues to assist people with EU Settlement issues. EUSS issues continue to be more complex than during the transition period – it is now that we start seeing people who have fallen through the gaps. We have also started seeing a significant increase in various nationality application. This is, however, not only due to Brexit, but also due to the fact that resettled refugees, who started coming to the UK during the year of 2016 are not settled with indefinite leave to remain. This has implications not only for their citizenship, but also citizenship of their children, some of whom can become British citizens by entitlement, but only upon submitting complex fee waiver and registration applications.

There was a significant increase of family related visas advice – as an OISC Level 2 registered organization we are now able to provide advice on complex applications where prescribed criteria is not met but exceptional circumstances apply.

We remain members of Civil Society EUSS Alliance – a network of EUSS caseworkers across the UK meeting once a month, Kent Roma Interest Group, SE Strategic Partnership for Migration.



Thanks to our three year funding from Justice Together Initiatives, which in February 2023 entered its second year, we continue to have a consultancy agreement for most complex immigration advice issues with North and West Kent Citizens Advice. Their OISC level 3 advisor has become an invaluable asset to our Legal Project.

In autumn 2022 we approached Allen & Overy, whose grant initially kick started the Legal Project in 2019 for further funding. We were successful and in late 2022 our immigration advice project started functioning on 4 day/week basis. It also allowed us to have a small project with East Kent College Dover campus – three short educational videos have been developed on how to manage status under EUSS. They are now available on our YouTube channel.

We have also started sharing our Immigration law knowledge with other organisations working outside the sector as their beneficiaries have repeated issues with immigration status and authorities. We delivered talks and training to women's charity Beyond the Page, a group from the NHS Primary Care Network Focused Care Team, domestic violence charity OASIS.

Case Study: Hussein family (name has been changed)

Hussein family is from Syria. They are a family of 5 – Dad, mum and three children. Hussein family fled Syria in 2015 and ended up in Lebanon where they spent a year in a refugee camp. In 2016 they came to the UK under the Syrian resettlement scheme. Two older children were born in Syria, but they were both under 5 when they came to the UK and the youngest – in the UK.

In accordance to the UK citizenship laws, the child born in the UK is entitled to be registered as British if, while they are still a minor, at least one of their parents becomes settled in the UK. The children not born in the UK can be registered as

British if the Home Office exercised discretion and a good case is put forward that it is appropriate to do so. The application costs £1012 per child.

Dad Hussein used to work, but he lost his job during Covid. He has not been able to find a job since. Moreover, he has been looking after the children, as mum Hussein who fell very ill and had to undergo many surgeries. Although the family received settlement in January 2021, they were not able to afford the fees to secure their children's future in the UK.

After many years of campaigning, in summer 2022 a fee waiver has been introduced to children applications to register them as British citizens. Hussein family reached out to us for help applying for fee waivers and to secure their children's British citizenship.

We assisted with these applications and in January 2023 all three children were granted British Citizenship – the Home Office agreed that it is appropriate to register 2 older children as British as well. Three young people who, in practice, did not have a country of origin, are now legally citizens of the country they call home – the United Kingdom.

Other feedback:



Napier Barracks Support

In the last year, weekly Napier Drop-ins in Sandgate continued with short breaks over the school holidays due to staff/volunteer availability. The drop ins are attended by 15-70 people every week. Samphire continues to provide the beneficiaries support and advice on asylum and asylum support systems and various casework - for example to help them access healthcare, etc, as well as participate in stakeholders meeting with the Home Office.

Samphire's Community Engagement Officer continued to deliver Yoga classes on site until December 2022 and recruited 6 people from Napier to attend Samphire's Refugee Day Vigil and volunteer at the Multicultural Festival 2022. As part of our art tent at the festival, we also had some pieces that were created by residents at Napier Barracks

With a number of organisations having withdrawn from Napier drop ins due to limited funding and capacity, Samphire remained the only organisation supporting the drop ins and providing casework to the residents.

In October 2022 Drop-ins coordinator Sally Hough – a local community activist and volunteer – registered the drop ins as CIC (Community Interest Company), so that the Drop in can manage its own budget and request donations and funding from various donors.

In January 2022 Napier Drop-ins caseworker role has been handed over to Yvonne Sherwood – Samphire's long term volunteer who is now a member of staff. In terms of casework, more and more people at Napier have been receiving notices about their substantive interviews. Although this may sound reassuring, the issue is that the Legal Aid system is crumbling and is not able to provide representation to people in their asylum cases – there are simply not enough Legal Aid Immigration solicitors available. We struggled to find people representation, although we mainly focused to those who would have already been given asylum interview dates to manage expectations.

Due to a lack of volunteers, storage and the capacity to ensure that we are able to collect enough donations to everyone coming to the drop ins, the drop in decided not to do clothes and any other items of value distributions at the Drop-ins. Instead, the donation we collect go to Care 4 Calais, who have a huge pool of volunteers, systems, storage and capacity to do large distributions, ensuring that all coming to

their distributions leave with something.

The drop in hosted a big Christmas celebration funded by Samphire. A Syrian Refugee chef from local community volunteered to cook Middle Eastern food for the drop in attendees. It was a beautiful day and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the foods that reminded them of home. Around 50 people attended.



Drop ins demographics changed over the year: we have seen increasing numbers of people from Iran and Russia, while in the beginning of the previous year we saw many Latin Americans going through the system.

New activities have been introduced at the drop in: English for driving, drumming, story telling. A legal workshop was delivered by the JRS on asylum system in the UK at the end of March which was attended by nearly 70 people. Further legal workshops have been arranged with Kent Law Clinic.

As a few hotels in Folkestone are starting to accommodate adult asylum seekers, the Drop-ins are now attended from people in the hotels as well.

Schools and Youth Report

Samphire's project working with schools and young people restarted in earnest with the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year. After a hiatus during the pandemic, we found that schools in the Dover area were eager to engage with our work. This year we have worked with seven schools, engaging roughly 750 children in our workshops, all themed around the topics of sanctuary, seeking refuge and migration. We offer workshops themed around specific days or events, such as Refugee Week, International Roma Day and World Book Day, general workshops on the facts about migration and asylum, and support for schools that are keen to receive the 'Schools of Sanctuary' award. Pleasingly, two of our schools are actively working towards receipt of this nationally recognised award. The feedback from teachers has proved overwhelmingly positive, with some examples shown below.

Hi Alex,

Thank you so much for coming in today - the children are really enjoying the workshops!

To supplement their work on the @OnjaliRauf book "Boy at the back of the class", our Year 5 and 6 classes enjoyed a workshop about refugees from Alex @SchsofSanctuary @samphire_

All the children gave thoughtful responses - well done!

In addition to our regular workshop offerings, we offered workshops themed around 'Winter Celebrations around the World' in preparation for the light parade in Deal. Two schools in Deal requested these workshops, in which children learned about how people from cultures around the world celebrate winter. The parade itself featured on ITV local news, shown below, and we are hoping to repeat the event this year.

Vigil held in Deal for those who died in migrant Channel crossing

MERIDIAN | DEAL | KENT | MIGRANTS | Thursday 15 December 2022 at 6:25pm



Migrant welfare group, Samphire, hosted the meeting at Walmer Green Bandstand.
Credit: ITV Meridian

As well as school groups, we have made contacts within East Kent Girlguiding, and to date conducted three sessions with Brownies and Guides groups in the Dover area, speaking with roughly 75 young people. These sessions have successfully engaged the Brownies and Guides in discussing migration and sanctuary and we have received positive feedback, which has helped word spread about our workshop offerings. I also conducted a session with the Early Years students at Dover Technical College, on the topic of how to include children from all backgrounds and the importance of doing so. I shared some of my picture books, age-appropriate for Early Years, to give examples of books about refuge, sanctuary and diversity. The college has praised the workshop and requested that we return next year.

We have also developed a relationship with Porchlight and we were requested to deliver sessions, similar to our work in schools, at their 'Porchlight Open Door' meetups in Dover, Folkestone and Canterbury. I was able to find common ground with the more hostile members of the groups and answer people's questions. I also faced challenges that I am yet to face when working with primary school children, as shown below.

The project has gone from strength to strength this year, and as we begin our second academic year since restarting, we are looking to solidify our existing relationships and forge new ones.

Hey Alex,

You did really well! Sorry about the drunk gentleman....I hope he didn't worry you too much, that would have thrown me completely! You handled it like a pro!

I think its so important to have these conversations as most people really have no idea of the truth behind what they read in the paper or on social media. We have had great feedback from your sessions with people saying they have learnt a lot, so well done 😊

Community, Media & Advocacy Report

Community, communications & events

We have had some wonderful events this year! In December we held our first Winter Lights Festival in Deal. Running workshops in the weeks leading up to the event, both in schools and with the residents at Napier Barracks, we created hundreds of painted lanterns to be used at the event. On the night we had carols sung by a local choir and many local people attended to celebrate togetherness, and to commemorate lives lost while crossing the channel to reach safety. Following the carol concert and lantern parade, we continued to The Lighthouse art and music venue for a night of international music. The event was also covered live on the ITV Evening News.



This year Samphire held our first quiz night which was a great success. The night was amazing fun and we raised £300 for our post detention support fund.

Dover Multicultural Festival 2023 really was bigger and better than ever before. Despite some rather nasty weather, attendance was great and the event went very well. We had a great variety of free workshops which were all very well attended, and our roaming performers were a massive hit. My personal highlights of the day were the moments of real unplanned, creative multicultural collaboration which really demonstrated the vision and mission behind the event.

Media & Advocacy

After building Samphire's media profile over the last 2 years, I officially took on the role of Media and Advocacy Lead at the beginning of 2023.

I have continued to represent Samphire and build strong connections in local, regional and national media. We are regularly contacted by outlets such as; BBC, ITV, GBNews, LBC, Sky, Channel 5, The Guardian, to give comment and reaction on developments in government and when situations around migration arise. Some media highlights this year:

- ITV Special – Immigration where are we now? Staff and friends of Samphire took part in filming for an ITV special on migration.
- Live Sky Debate – I took part in a live debate on Sky news on migration.
- The Big Issue 100 Change Makers of 2023 – Samphire were announced as one of The Big Issue's Change makers of the year and took part in a special piece highlighting the great work of our team.
- Channel 5 Piece with members of our lived experience steering group. Working with Channel 5 developing an opportunity and safe space for members of our lived experience steering group to speak about their experiences of immigration detention.

It is my privilege to represent Samphire and to have the opportunity to use my voice to further our message, promote the amazing work our team do and to make sure Samphire continues to be part of the national conversation on migration.





★ Exciting Announcement! ★

We are incredibly proud to announce [Samphire](#) have been officially named as one o... See more



bigissue.com

The Big Issue Changemakers of 2023: Refugees and asylum - The Big Issue

Inclusion Development – Roma Project Dover

Our Inclusion Project is mainly focusing on, but not limited to, Roma Communities. We try to ensure that our work, such as activities and events, is available for everyone. We are working in partnership with different organisations bringing the Dover Community together and making sure that everyone is welcome and included with our project

We are working with different services, building trust between the Roma and service providers and making sure that the Roma community are aware of the British law, especially when it comes to education. We work with primary and secondary schools and universities, providing support for families and also for the school staff.

Every Wednesday at 4pm, we run a Healthy Lifestyle group at Dover Big Local. We regularly have about 15 adults and 25 children attending the session.

Every Friday we run Family support sessions in which we support 6 to 8 people per week with different needs.

We recently completed the Art project *The Mother Tree* where we worked with Cultural space based in Margate. The Art project was done between Dover Roma families and Margate Afghanistan families. The project was also run by visual artist Joy C Martindale. The art work between those two different culture went very well; we had about 40 adults and 25 children and they all enjoyed expressing their feelings through painting. In Deal we also had a workshop run by professional Italian Roma dance Rosamaria Kostic Cisneros.

We have run events for Halloween, Christmas, Easter and International Roma Day for which we have seen high attendance from different cultures and received positive feedback.

We also support and organize a Roma Dance group and they are very popular. We continue to support them to ensure the ongoing visibility of the Roma Culture.



Roma dancers in traditional dress

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Bank Account Balances as at 31st March 2023

EDP Current	£ 405.92
Main Account	£16,398.97
Contingency/Rainy Day Fund	£54,132.53
EDP Savings	£8,810.62
Samphire Savings	£93,387.73
	<u>£173,135.77</u>

This year has been very positive for Samphire. We have been recognised and supported financially by new funders and even an anonymous celebrity donation!

Funding for phone cards and emergency support has been amazing and we currently have enough funds to support our clients for 18 months. I would like to thank the continuous small donations from individuals and our JustGiving page.

The accounts are in a tidy manner and are balanced on a monthly basis and are always reconciled to our statistics spread sheets. These are discussed on a regular basis.

Our funding applications have been very positive and it is a great relief to have sufficient funds to operate the charity.

We have an un-restricted fund of £10,000.00 which allows us to top up salaries whilst waiting for funds to credit our bank accounts.

We have a healthy reserve of £54k. Samphire has had sufficient funds to pay for heating and new office chairs. Baxtermead, our landlord, contributed 50% of the cost for the fuel pump.

I believe Samphire has a positive outlook and I look forward to being part of a very efficient and strong team.

Samphire

(Registration number: 1106667)

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	4,761	3,035
Current assets		
Debtors	3	3
Cash at bank and in hand	173,164	123,269
	173,167	123,272
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(4,453)	(3,253)
Net current assets	168,714	120,019
Net assets	173,475	123,054
Funds of the charity:		
Restricted income funds		
Restricted funds	94,171	113,292
Unrestricted income funds		
Unrestricted funds	79,304	9,762
Total funds	173,475	123,054



**Winter Fundraiser
Ball
Saturday 18th November
6pm**

**FREE
Welcome
Drink**

**Hog
Roast**

**Farthingloe Barn
CT15 7AA**

**Raffle &
Silent
Auction**

**Ceilidh
Dancing
& Disco**

**Tickets £35
£30 Concession ticket**

**For more info and to book please email:
Julie@samphireproject.org.uk**

Staff (2022-23):

Charlie Zosseder - Director

Julie Lawrence - Finance & Office Manager

Indre Lechtimiakyte - Legal and Migrant Support Manager

Kay Marsh – Media and Advocacy Lead

Iveta Janova - Inclusion Development Officer

Alex Dean - Schools and Youth Co-ordinator

Elisha Sutton - Post-Detention Coordinator

Gabi Dunn—Post Detention Coordinator
(maternity cover)

Yvonne Sherwood—Napier Drop In Caseworker

Trustees:

Dominic Howden - Chair

Jayne Strange - Treasurer

Liza Seed - Trustee

Duane Poppe - Trustee

Joy Poppe - Trustee

Rebecca Sawbridge - Trustee

Martin Burrell - Trustee

Miriam Wood - Trustee

Dilshad Sharif - Trustee

Floortje Hette - Trustee

Thanks to our funders:

National Lottery Community Fund

Trusthouse

Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust

Justice Together

AB Charitable

Lush

Souter

Allen & Overy

Dover District Council

Garfield Weston

Kent Community Foundation

Kent County Council

Cleary Foundation

London Churches Refugee Fund

and to all our individual funders

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