

PRESS RELEASE

Tue 16 June 2009

Stonepillow takes part in National Refugee Week (15th – 21st June).

National Refugee Week celebrates the skills and diversity refugees bring to the UK, whilst seeking to change the perception of refugees and asylums seekers.

Stonepillow operates two hostels and multiple supported accommodations for Young Asylum Seekers - young people aged 16-18, who have come to the UK from some of the most harrowing situations imaginable in hope of shelter, support and the opportunity to live a normal life.

When they arrive in the UK they are scared, lonely and often in immediate danger from trafficking and child slavery. They can't speak the language have no money and don't know who to turn to. This is where Stonepillow steps in, providing protection, access to education, support and most importantly safe accommodation.

Although in most cases it will take a number of years to assess their claims for asylum the support Stonepillow provides offers the stability required to help the young people re-build their lives and start to cope with the horrific experiences that led to them coming to the UK.

"Refugee Week is a celebration of the diverse contribution of refugees to our society, and a week with an important role to play in fostering greater understanding between all of our communities. It is also a time when all those who continue to live in fear of persecution are at the forefront of our minds, and I know that Britain will continue

to offer a safe haven to people fleeing desperate situations in the years to come."

Prime Minister Gordon Brown

Dozens of events are being run by local organisations in support of National Refugee Week. Events being attended by Stonepillow young people include, a Theatre Workshop, the Bandbazi Circus, a Sports Day, a joint event with the local Youth Council and a film night at a local library.

Stonepillow Senior Project Worker, Lisa Dawkins said, "Refugee week is such an important event and does so much to change misconceptions and increase awareness of the issues asylum seekers face. We're delighted that our young people have again this year been able to take part in some of the activities and are already seeing the positive affect these activities are having on them and the other young people they meet".

ENDS.

Stonepillow (St. Richard of Chichester Christian Care Association) offers shelter, information and support to empower homeless and vulnerable individuals to make positive changes in their lives. The charity runs 7 projects in the Chichester & Bognor area.

- St. Joseph's Night Refuge
- The Old Glass Works Day Centre, Chichester
- St. Martins Day Centre, Bognor Regis
- Young Asylum Seekers Hostels
- Sands Rehabilitation Centre
- Supported Move-on Accommodation
- Restore Workshop

St. Richard of Chichester Christian Care Association

By Guarantee Registered in England No. 2504171 Registered Charity No. 1000830
Registered Office: St. Joseph's Night Refuge, Hunston Road, Chichester PO20 1NP

Patrons: The Bishop of Arundel and Brighton, The Bishop of Chichester, The Duchess of Richmond
The Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex, The Mayor of Chichester, The Mayor of Bognor

Founder: The Rev. Hilary Parsons



LOTTERY FUNDED



unsung heroes
The Queen's Award for
Voluntary Service 2005