

# RST

Refugee  
Survival  
Trust



**Annual Report 2017-18**

The Refugee Survival Trust (RST) Directors, who are also the Board Members and Trustees of the Charity, are pleased to present their annual report for the year ended 31 March 2018.

The Refugee Survival Trust is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and is a registered Scottish charity. The company is governed by the terms of its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

<b>Charity Number:</b>	SC 024328	<b>Company Number:</b>	SC 274440
<b>Registered Address:</b>	Suite B Stanhope House 12 Stanhope Place Edinburgh EH12 5HH	<b>Trading Address</b>	Robertson House 152 Bath Street Glasgow G2 4TB 0141 353 5602

**Board members (company directors and trustees of the charity):**

The appointment of the Board members is approved each year at the Annual General Meeting, in accordance with the procedure outlined in the charity's Memorandum and Articles. One third of the Board retire from office each year, and are eligible for reappointment for a further term of three years. All members of the Board are members of the charitable company and no member has any contract with the charity.

<b>Chair</b>	Rasha Tindal (co-opted April 2017 )	Kate Alexander
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jacqueline Farmer	Agatha Kai Kai
<b>Secretary</b>	Elizabeth Quinn	Adnan Ibrahim
		Joan McHutchison (elected October 2017)
		Mick Patrick
		Mona Vaghefian (elected October 2017)

# Message from the Chair



2017-18 was another busy year for the Refugee Survival Trust. In particular, there was record-breaking demand for our destitution grants—we gave out 1,427 grants to a total value of £122,834, supporting over 2,000 people. Of particular concern to us was the number of children facing destitution, and we continue to raise awareness about this issue and campaign to ensure that this doesn't happen to other children.

The DASS project continued its invaluable work with asylum seekers experiencing long-term destitution and increased the number of people it worked with by 34% compared to the previous year.

Focus on integration also continued; in particular we were delighted to launch our new Glasgow Welcome befriending programme in December 2017. The participants have been meeting both in pairs and as a group and exploring some of the wonderful attractions in Glasgow together.

As ever, all of this could not have happened without the hard work and dedication of our volunteers, staff and Board. Thanks in particular to our previous Co-chair Ben, Treasurer Gabriel, and Board members Tanjeel, Nicola and Nhabeela, who all stepped down from the Board during this year, for all their contributions to RST.

**Rasha Tindal**

# Vision

The vision of RST is that all refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland receive just and respectful treatment and support appropriate to their needs.

# Mission

Our mission is to do everything within our available resources and powers to achieve that vision by enabling and supporting asylum seekers and refugees in need, particularly those who are facing destitution.



## RST aims to:

1. Contribute to prevention and alleviation of **destitution** among asylum seekers and refugees by meeting basic needs

2. Increase opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to be **active citizens**

3. Raise awareness of the issues facing asylum seekers and refugees, particularly **destitution**

4. Contribute to the development of **policy and good practice** with reference to refugees and asylum seekers facing destitution

# Destitute Asylum Seeker Service

The Destitute Asylum Seeker Service (DASS) supports people seeking asylum who are experiencing long-term destitution. Through casework, advocacy, legal advice, emergency shelter and temporary accommodation, the project assists people to improve their living conditions and work towards finding a solution to their situation.

DASS is a partnership project with seven current providers: Scottish Refugee Council, the British Red Cross, Glasgow Night Shelter, Strathclyde Law Clinic, Fasgadh, Rehoboth Nissi Ministries and the Refugee Survival Trust.

In 2017-18, the DASS project worked with 286 people, an increase of 34% on the previous year. We worked with 34 different nationalities with 14% of DASS clients from Iran and 9% from Iraq. This year, 82% of our service users were men and 18% women.

## DASS Services and Referrals 2017-18



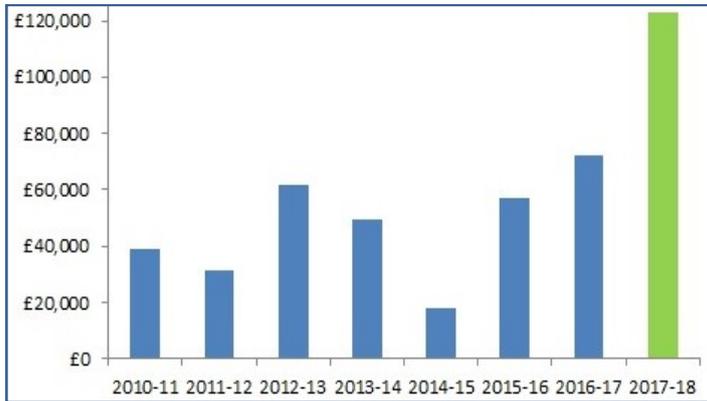
DASS provided **2,920** nights of accommodation in our project flats and increased our temporary accommodation places to 10 through the donation of a two bedroomed flat to the project.





**“My self esteem is slowly on the rise. I am more positive about my life than a year ago and this is all thanks to the DASS project.”**

# Destitution Grants



Recipients came from 64 different countries. 294 applicants (around one in five) came from Iran. There were also high numbers of applicants from Iraq, Eritrea, Sudan, Pakistan and Nigeria.

472 (or 22.8%) of the 2,070 total beneficiaries were children. There are still hundreds of asylum seeker children in Scotland who are finding themselves in a situation where they do not have a roof over their heads or know where their next meal is coming from.

Our Destitution Grants programme provides small lifeline payments to asylum seekers and refugees who do not receive support from the government or other sources. Destitution grant rates are £36 per week for adults.

In 2017-18 we provided 1,427 grants to a total value of £122,834. These figures far exceed any other year in the history of RST and represent a 70% increase on grant distribution in 2016-17.



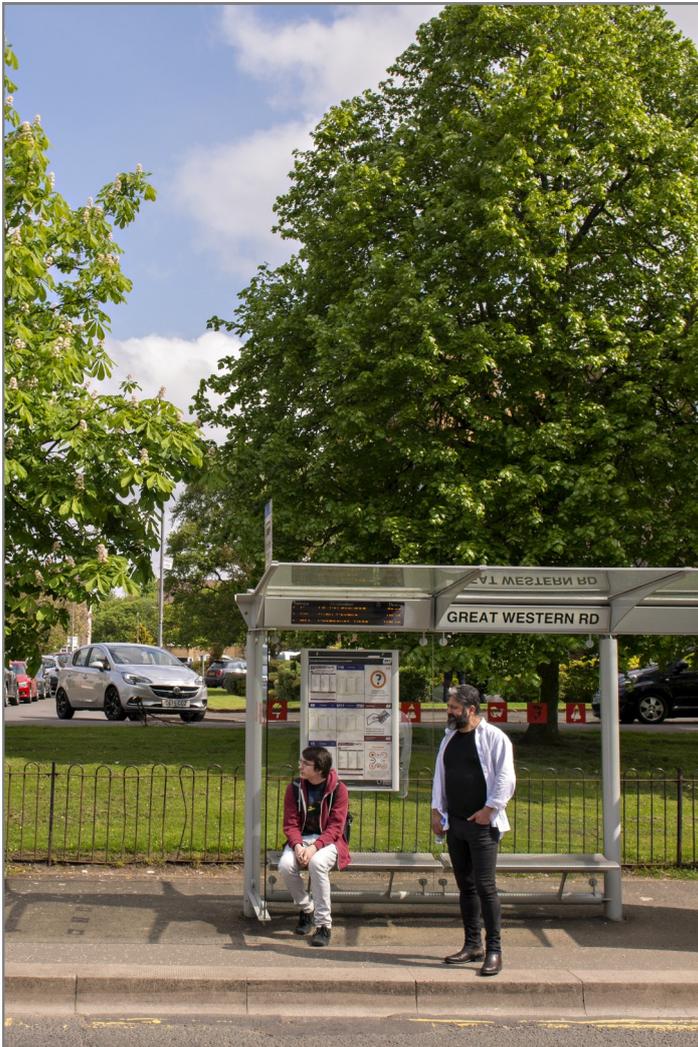
# Bus passes

Mobility is crucial to asylum seekers during the asylum application process and to aid their integration in Scotland.

Something as simple as access to public transport can allow individuals to attend important meetings with lawyers and go to hospital appointments, but also to meet friends and attend community events.

During 2017-18 we once again had a very successful online fundraising campaign - our supporters donated more than £1,300 including Gift Aid in the run up to Christmas, in order to buy free bus passes for destitute asylum seekers.

In total, we distributed more than £1,900 worth of bus passes in 2017-18, and were able to make a difference in the daily lives of hundreds of asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland.



# Befriending



We were very excited to launch our new befriending programme Glasgow Welcome in December 2017.

Nineteen volunteers took part in the first cohort of Glasgow Welcome, which pairs up newcomers to the city with people who know Glasgow well. The pairs meet regularly over a six-month period to explore some of the free cultural sites the city has to offer and get to know each other along the way.

There are also regular opportunities for participants to join group trips and activities – over their six months the first group visited the Christmas lights at George Square, headed to Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum for a session run by our friends at Glasgow

Museums introducing all the museums and galleries in Glasgow, took a trip to the BBC Scotland studios and visited the National Library of Scotland's Moving Image Archive at the Kelvin Hall. These group meet-ups give participants the chance to get to know the other people in the group, make new friends and learn about different cultures alongside having a fun day out.

As part of the project we're also delighted to be working with Media Co-op to document the first ever RST Glasgow Welcome group. Video Director and Editor Vilte Vaitkute is sharing her filmmaking knowledge with the pairs, using smartphones to film and edit a series of short films which will showcase experiences of befriending as well as taking a broader look at the integration work done by RST.

# Internship programme

We welcomed a new intern to the RST office in November. Over the course of his eight-week placement he helped us with a wide range of projects and tasks in the office, including compiling his own guide to some of the sights of Glasgow. We were really pleased when he signed up to take part in our new befriending project - Glasgow Welcome.

We took feedback from all of our interns in 2016-18 and used this to develop proposals for a new expanded project, for which we have applied for funding in 2018-19.





# Access to Education and Employment grants

Refugees and asylum seekers who want to study or work can apply to RST for an Access to Education and Employment grant of up to £150 to overcome any barriers to starting a course or a job. Such costs might include: translation of qualifications, course materials, exam fees or travel to college or interviews.

In 2017-18 we awarded 92 grants to a total of £10,797.90 to 47 women and 45 men from 28 different countries. The range of courses and jobs accessed was very wide, including Accounting, Business, Cake Decorating, Childcare, Criminal Justice, Dentistry, Electrical Engineering, English as a Second Language, Health and Safety, Law, Mechanical Engineering, Medicine, Security, Sewing and Travel and Tourism.

*“I’ve been in Glasgow since 2014 and studying at the college since 2015. Now I’m in an intermediate class.*

*I was an engineer in my country and I would like to return to this work in future.”*

**Magid, Iran**

## 9 years of A to EE grant expenditure



# Events

In June we were delighted to participate in 2017's Refugee Festival Scotland, celebrating musical traditions from around the world in an International Folk Concert in Edinburgh. Talented musicians Cameron Hamo, The Syn Eastern Music Group and Sarah Phizacklea & Majk Stokes treated us to sounds from around the world, including Greek, Turkish, Kurdish, Persian, Scottish and English traditions. The audience had a chance to find out about the music, instruments and dances of cultures from around the world, share delicious foods, and celebrate connections between different communities.

In August RST headed for the Fringe where we ran a series of arts workshops culminating in a performance as part of the Edinburgh Just Festival. This performance celebrated RST's 21 years of supporting destitute refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland, and explored some of the challenges we have faced over the years, alongside a snapshot of the changing policy landscape. We were delighted to have three talented artists supporting our workshops, beginning with Nihad al Turk's painting session to create painted scenery panels representing different countries. Emma Smith brought the skills she uses as a member of Musicians Without Borders to our music workshop, sharing techniques to get to know participants and practice English through song and movement. Finally Helen Boden led a creative writing workshop to develop poems based on the painted panels.

## Schools engagement

In March we ran the first two sessions of a short, hands-on training course developed collaboratively with WOSDEC Global Learning Centre and Refuweegee, exploring how teachers can explore migration, asylum and



refugee issues in the classroom. After two initial sessions the teachers went away to try out some of the techniques and activities learned in the classroom, reconvening several months down the line to share their experiences and discuss the issues in more depth. It was a real treat to work with a group of passionate and committed teachers to explore migration issues, and we look forward to continuing to work with WOSDEC in the future. RST offers a community engagement programme and can send a representative out to visit your school, community or faith group to run an interactive workshop on asylum and migration issues.

# Volunteers

Volunteers have played a huge part in RST's work this year - everything from organising events and writing grant applications to contributing guest pieces for the blog and representing the organisation at community events.

Behind the scenes a small, dedicated group of volunteers have been supporting our crucial destitution grants by updating and checking databases. We've also had amazing volunteers supporting our social media campaigns like the Winter Bus Pass Appeal and the Veg Pledge which brought in essential extra funds. Others have written guest blog pieces or helped analyse and communicate statistics about destitution to a broader audience. Our befriending volunteers have brought so much fun to the project, and have enthusiastically shared their culture with new friends. It's been a joy to work with so many fantastic volunteers this year - a huge thanks to:

**Mohamed Halim**

**Jamie Nicol**

**Marie McArdle**

**Mariam Sarr**

**Maggie Cacot**

**Walid Khaly**

**Gillian Byam Shaw**

**James Byam Shaw**

**Biko Sideq Mohamed**

**Andrew Lightfoot**

**Wafa Al Ali**

**Rabeline Hatcho Konda**

**Lindsay McCosh**

**Lovely Kaur**

**Viane Saeed**

**Rachel Jetter Kell**

**Rehyaneh Amiri**

**Sarah Mbarak**

**Jennifer Stewart**

**Duncan Peat**

**Megan McLean**

**Harriet Winn**

**Robert Wilson**

**Mania Moysidou**

**Tim Harneady**

**William Clelland**

**Diana Rix**

**Katie Tiley**

**Sarah Tolley**

**Katharine Weatherhead**

**Helen Cromar**

We'd also like to thank all the musicians and artists who volunteered their time for our Refugee Festival and Just Festival events, and everyone who took part in the performances, as well as everyone who has supported our work over the past year by attending events, sharing stories, or following us on social media.

# Media coverage

We believe that media coverage is one of the most effective ways of sharing information about our work, and the issues faced by our beneficiaries, with a wider audience. To that end we regularly produce press releases and statistics and share with a wide range of press and media contacts, as well as responding to ad hoc demands from contacts.

## BBC World Service:

In March of this year, two DASS service users staying in temporary accommodation agreed to be interviewed about their situation. Although talking about their experience of fleeing and living destitute in the UK was harrowing for them, both participants wanted to raise awareness of the challenges faced by people made destitute by the asylum system.

## In the News:

Our work, statistics and press releases also reached a wider audience by being featured in a number of national newspapers and online publications, including the articles from the Ferret and the National (pictured here).



A small charity described as “an absolute lifeline” has raised concerns about its ability to respond to a growing “invisible epidemic” of refugee destitution.

**Refugee Survival Trust** – which provides emergency grants to asylum seekers and refugees when their support has been stopped – is raising the alarm after distributing more than £100,000 of destitution payments in 2017.

## THE NATIONAL

THE NEWSPAPER THAT SUPPORTS AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND

NEWS POLITICS SPORT BUSINESS CULTURE WORLD COMMENT

1st March

Refugee Survival Trust says refugees are being 'left out in cold'

Kirsteen Paterson @kapaterson  
Journalist



# Social media

We used our social media platforms to share news about everything from fundraising successes to volunteer-run events, and engage our supporters on everything from lobbying their MPs to news developments.

RefugeeSurvivalTrust Retweeted

 **Alison Thewliss** @alisonthewliss · Feb 8

Inspiring visit to @RefugeeSurvival this morning. They work to prevent and alleviate destitution of asylum seekers and refugees. They have also got an amazing befriending project on the go. Find out more: [rst.org.uk](http://rst.org.uk) #refugeeswelcome



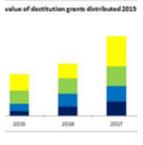
RefugeeSurvivalTrust, Stuart McDonald, Scottish Refugee Council and 5 others

4 11 24

RefugeeSurvivalTrust Retweeted

 **Govan Community Proj** @GovanCP · Jan 25

We are extremely grateful to have such an important resource available to our community members. Massive thanks to RST and their donors!

**RefugeeSurvivalTrust** @RefugeeSurvival

For the first time ever, RST distributed more than £100,000 of emergency grants to destitute refugees and asylum seekers in 2017 - 1167 grants. (Compared to 813 grants to a total value of £66,000 in 2016)

4 4

RefugeeSurvivalTrust Retweeted

 **RefugeeSurvivalTrust** @RefugeeSurvival · Mar 1

We hope all our followers are safe and warm today. Please spare a thought for the destitute refugees we support - 50% of those we supported in January were homeless. Now would be a great time to donate to our destitution grants fund:

**RST**  
Refugee  
Survival  
Trust

**Refugee Survival Trust on MyDonate**  
The Refugee Survival Trust (RST) exists to alleviate and prevent the destitution of refugees and people seeking asylum in Scotland. We are a...  
[mydonate.bt.com](http://mydonate.bt.com)

10 4



**RefugeeSurvivalTrust** @RefugeeSurvival · Feb 27

We took our chances with the weather and came through to Edinburgh for a meeting with @scotgov today, to discuss how our work relates to strategies like #NewScots and #HiddenLives.



1 7

RefugeeSurvivalTrust Retweeted



**Joanna Cherry QC MP** @joannaccherry · Mar 15

Yes I'll be there. I and others have been championing #Refugees Rights on behalf of @theSNP at Westminster for some time & we are delighted that @AngusMacNeilSNP bill will be going forward tomorrow

**RefugeeSurvivalTrust** @RefugeeSurvival

Tweet your MP now to ask if they are going to support the Refugee Family Reunion Bill tomorrow. @DeidreBrock @joannaccherry @cajardineMP @TommySheppard @DaniRowley @MartWhitfieldMP will you be representing your Edinburgh and Lothian constituents? twitter.com/AmnestyUK/stat...

1 25 44

RefugeeSurvivalTrust Retweeted



**Karin Goodwin** @Karin\_Goodwin · Feb 2

Concerns grow from @RefugeeSurvival and @PositiveActionH about the "invisible epidemic" of refugee destitution while @RedCrossScot says seeing those who feel suicidal as a result now "routine". @scotrefcouncil @FerretScot

**Scotland's 'invisible epidemic' of refugee destitution**

Charities in Scotland say they are paying out hundreds of thousands of pounds to help people left destitute by a 'failing' asylum system. theferret.scot

3 60 40

Scot Faiths Action and 2 others liked



**RefugeeSurvivalTrust** @RefugeeSurvival · Mar 15

That's all 7 Glasgow MPs who will be attending the Refugee Family Reunion Bill tomorrow! Thank you all for your support, we owe you all an @irnbru. #GauYersel #PeopleMakeGlasgow

@PaulJSweeney @GradySNP @DavidLinden @StewartMcDonald @CMonaghanSNP @ChrisStephens @alisonthewliss

**David Linden MP** @DavidLinden

Replying to @RefugeeSurvival @PaulJSweeney and 5 others  
I'll be there tomorrow.

2 26 44

RefugeeSurvivalTrust Retweeted



**Sabir Zazai** @sabir\_zazai · Mar 15

Proud of #Glasgow and its 7 MPs who saying #AyeWelcomeRefugees and are attending the Refugee Family Reunion Bill. All #refugees need is strong and consistent political leadership. #FamiliesTogether #RefugeesWelcome

**RefugeeSurvivalTrust** @RefugeeSurvival

That's all 7 Glasgow MPs who will be attending the Refugee Family Reunion Bill tomorrow! Thank you all for your support, we owe you all an @irnbru. #GauYersel #PeopleMakeGlasgow

7 21

# Influencing policy/research

## Section 4 monitoring survey

From April 2017, the DASS researcher co-ordinated a 12-month monitoring exercise to examine the application process for 'Section 4', lifeline support provided by the Home Office to refused asylum seekers who meet specific criteria. Data was collected from three organisations; the Scottish Refugee Council, the British Red Cross and Govan Community Project. Interim findings from the survey indicate that the timescales for assessing applications is significantly longer than the five days maximum timeframe set by the Home Office and that this is leading to extended periods of destitution for applicants. Participants in the survey are now collating data to share with the Home Office and are calling for a comprehensive review of the Section 4 system.

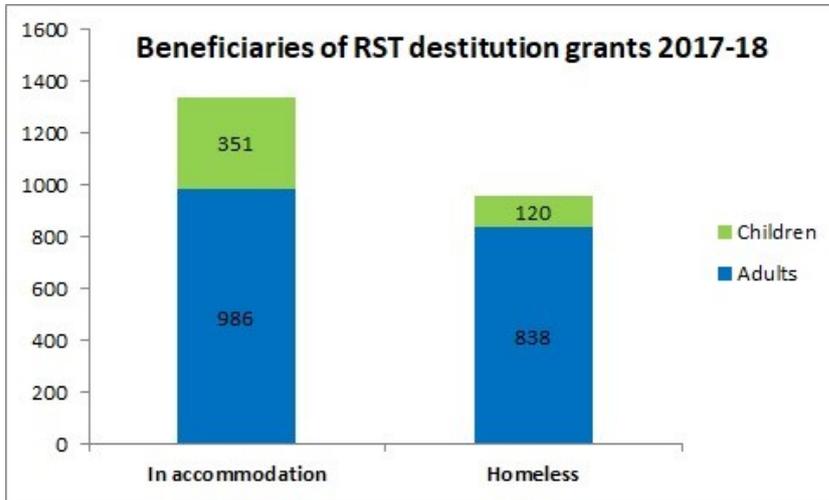
## 'From Pillar to Post'- DASS Research

During 2017/18, the DASS researcher along with two peer researchers, interviewed people seeking asylum with experience of destitution and service providers from the legal, health and educational sectors. Interim findings from December 2017, including interviews with legal practitioners, indicate that it is difficult for clients to actively engage with their legal case when they are struggling to meet their basic needs. Interviewees noted that destitute clients often had health problems, which could have a further effect upon their ability to engage with their case. Findings also indicate that destitution can exacerbate pre-existing health conditions, which often makes treatment more difficult. Due to restrictions, people who are deemed to have 'no recourse to public funds' do not have access to the range of statutory services available to the mainstream population. The research fieldwork is now complete and the final report findings and recommendations will be launched in Autumn 2018.

## Statistical analysis

We collect an incredible amount of data through our different programmes, which provide an invaluable insight into the extent and causes of destitution amongst refugees in Scotland.

We use this analysis to provide evidence for our research, updates for our partners, stories for our press releases and as feedback for our own work and how we can improve our current services.



## Partnership working

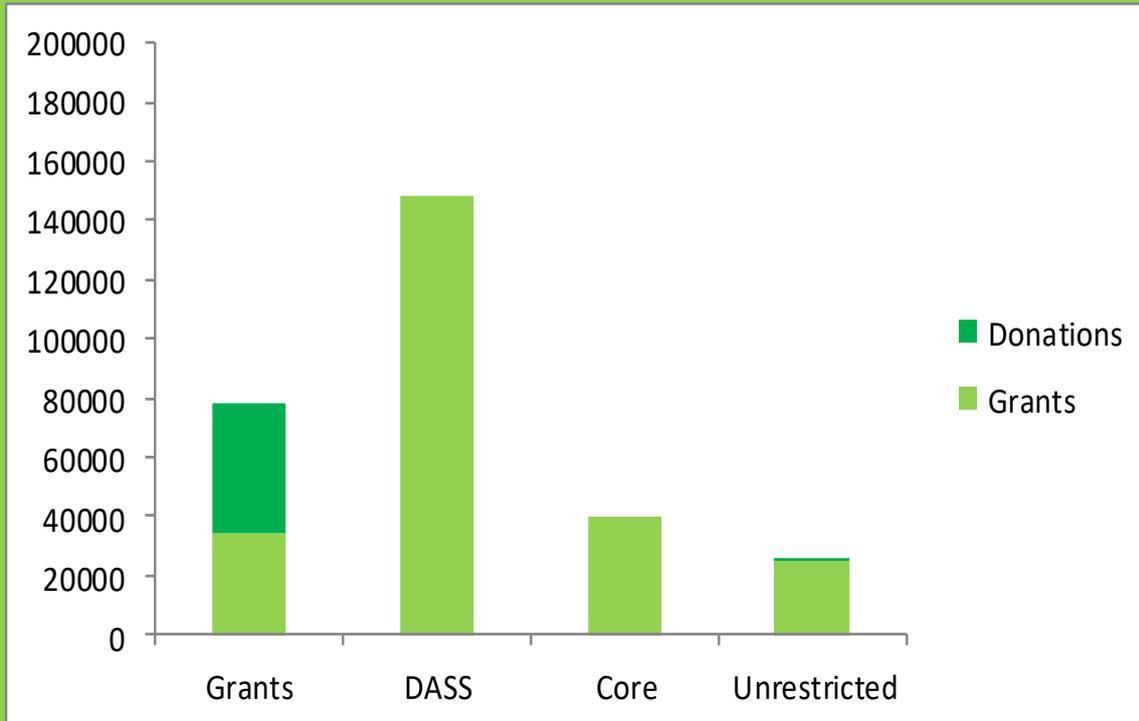
We believe in the power of working together, and all of our work is rooted in strong partnerships, including the DASS project, which is a partnership project, and our grants programmes, which are all delivered via partners.

We continue to be active members in a range of local, national and UK wide networks, including the Glasgow Asylum Action Network (GLADAN), the Scottish Asylum Stakeholder Forum Group (SASF) with the Home Office, the Third Sector Forum with asylum accommodation provider SERCO and the UK wide No Accommodation Network (NACCOM).

We continue to have strong relationships with Glasgow's Integration Networks.

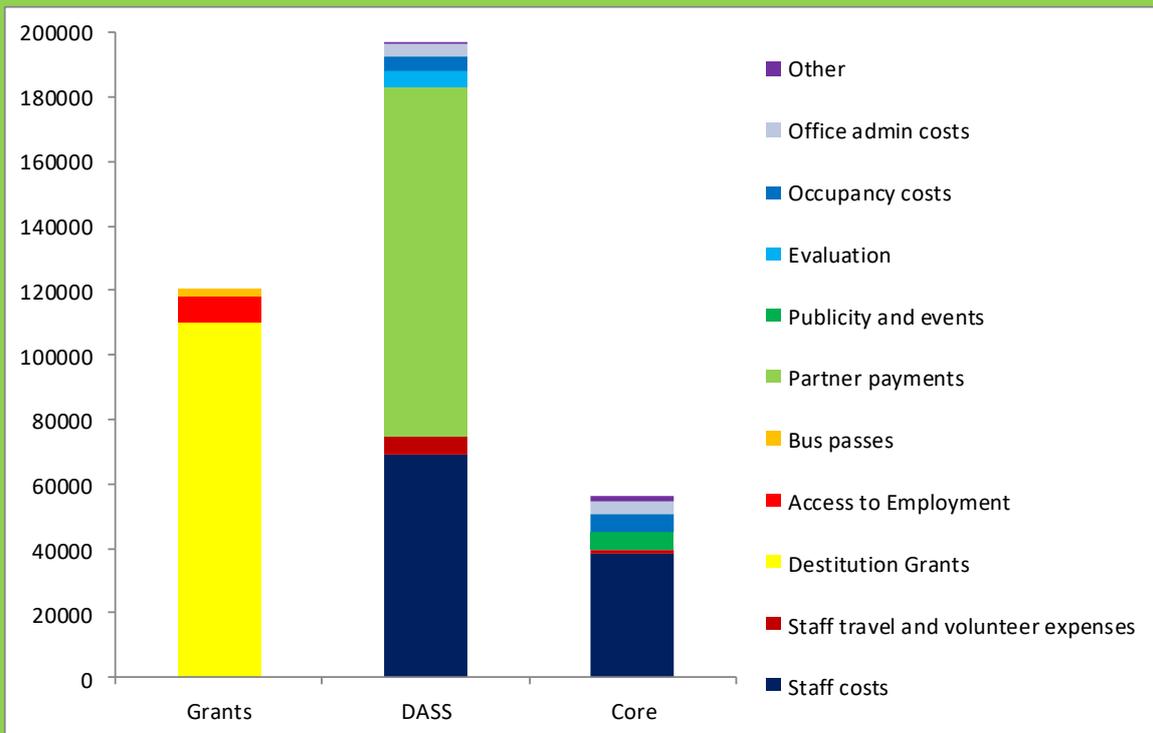
# Income 2017-18

Funds held as at 1 April 2017 were £233,049, of which £149,470 were restricted funds for the DASS project (which follows a different calendar year) and £29,790 were restricted for the grants fund. Total income in 2017-18 was £292,166.



# Expenditure 2017-18

Total expenditure in 2017-18 was £374,026, which can be broken down into £120,447 for grants (including Destitution Grants, Access to Education & Employment Grants and bus passes), £197,218 for the DASS project, of which £108,392 were monies held for partner payments from the Oak Foundation, and £56,361 for other core costs.



# Partners and supporters 2017 - 2018

In partnership with







**Former directors:**

Gabriel Kaifala (resigned October 2017)  
Tanjeel Maleque (resigned October 2017)  
Nhabeela Rahmatullah (resigned October 2017)  
Nicola Manison (resigned May 2017)  
Benjamin White (resigned October 2017)

**Accountants:**

Paul Clelland Accountancy  
Suite 1 First Floor West  
Clydeaway House  
813 South Street  
Glasgow G14 0BX

**Independent Examiner:**

Paul M Clelland, CA

**Legal Advisors:**

Turcan Connell  
Princes Exchange  
1 Earl Grey Street  
Edinburgh, EH3 9EE

**Bankers:**

Co-operative Bank Plc,  
PO Box 250,  
Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

I am very happy to tell you for what it is going now  
in my life since I have been living in this accommodati  
First of all, I am sleeping beauty. No one is coming  
to wake me up. I am free to cook, to have bath  
at anytime. I am eating healthier food when  
I ~~am~~ ~~want~~ I want to eat. I can sit at the  
living room watch TV and news. Nobody is disturbing  
me. Everything is OK in the house. I can  
wash my clothes. There is no limitation.  
I am very grateful to tell that I am very very  
happy. Thank you very much for giving  
peace.

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