

Refugee Week Norwich 2025 EVALUATION

By
New Routes



Overview

Refugee
RWeek
Norwich

Refugee Week is the world's largest Arts & Culture festival. In Norwich we celebrate refugees and migrants':

contributions - experiences, stories and thoughts

creativity - skills, cultures and arts practises

resilience - desire to recover, and contribute to our society

By sharing information, experiences, stories, and culture, through the arts we aim to highlight and strengthen connections between different parts of our local community



RWN24's Our City: Our Home, was our biggest ever city-wide celebration!

NEW for 2025:

- Translation of program into Arabic and Kurdish Sorani.
- **Corporate Accessibility Sponsor:** Beryl Bikes (NIP staff/volunteer/participant codes for free bike/scooter usage)
- **Paid digital and print design support** (Alina Sandu), plus wider volunteer support and UEA interns (enabling us to feature on the national data base of events this year)
- **Presence in The Forum** for World Refugee Day, and Make Music Day
- **Migration Matters Fair**, Millenium Plain
- **Group Art Show**, Anteros Gallery (with 6month lead-in art workshops)
- **Bishop's Open Gardens**
- **Inclusion of Norwich Peace Fair/ Peace Cycle**
- **Double the number of walking tours**
- **Live, free, outdoor/public performances** by participants
- **City Council display/ Sanctuary Ambassadors bespoke training session**
- **Production / launch of children's storybook** as a fundraiser
- **Greater diversity of catering** (following feedback). FREE food at GHCG
- **Housewarming event for New Routes** new offices/ activity space

عربي
Arabic

کوردی سورانی
Kurdish Sorani

RWN24

The Stats

2024

Dates:
Refugee 3 Weeks
10 - 30th June

Aims:
Awareness
Participation/ access
Taking Actions
Fundraising

Events:
55+ public
3 closed/ sanctuary seeker only

Attendees:
35,000+

Delivery Partners:
60

Fundraised:
£6,100
£2,000 from online Crowdfunder towards Welcome Wheels.
£2,000 from NIP's Bishop's Garden shared between NIP organisations.
£1,600 from St Barnabus Counselling Centre's open garden, towards free services to sanctuary seekers.

2023

Dates:
19 - 25th June

Aims:
Raise awareness
Improve participation

Events:
25 public

Attendees:
1,101 people

Delivery Partners:
44

Fundraised:
£2,265.27 benefiting the Welcome Wheels project

Thank You

Funders



Accessibility Partner

Key Organisations

Support/Event Hosts

Refugee Week (Counterpoint Arts), Lottery Community Fund, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council (People from Abroad Team), Norwich City of Sanctuary – Arts, Schools, University, Faith, and Health Streams, Bicycle Links CIC / Welcome Wheels, Norwich International Youth Project, The Bridge Plus+, English Plus, Red Cross (Norwich), Beryl Bikes, University of East Anglia (UEA), Norfolk Libraries Services (especially The Millennium Library), The Forum Trust, Anteros Arts Foundation, Norwich Cathedral, The Bishop of Norwich, Grapes Hill Community Garden, The Friends of Waterloo Park, Theatre Norwich, Norfolk Library and Information Service, Norfolk Record Office, Norfolk Museums Service, Cinema City, Norwich Arts Centre, Norfolk & Norwich Festival, Art at Work, Rose Feather and Zannie Fraser, Vicki Moffatt, Anglia Ruskin University, Amnesty International Norwich, St Catherine's, St Peter Mancroft, St Matthews, St Stephens, and Chapelfield Road Methodist Churches, Paul Dickson's Walking Tours, The Workers' Education Association, Norwich Peace Camp Committee, The Zainab Project, The Common Lot, The Garage, Waterstones, Jarrolds, Whitlingham Broad, NHS Wellbeing Service, Norfolk and Waveney MIND, St Barnabus Counselling Centre, Norfolk Community Advice Network, Refugees at Home, Norfolk Constabulary

Full feedback in Appendix

Feed Back

Participants

Our strengths will be renewed in a million fold.

Now I believe I am going to sleep because I have shared my thoughts with someone.



Performing at the Garage was emotionally charged, seeing everyone so moved with tears in their eyes was overwhelming. Initially I thought I wouldn't be able to perform again, but the courage and support from the audiences and all of you gave me strength to carry on. We delivered a powerful message, though we have so much more to say...

Attendees

It was fab and I admire you for this work.

A really amazing event. I loved to see the sincerity and how research was taken seriously. Really powerful. Thank you for your time/dedication putting this together.

The personal and unexpected narrative and the very human issues of family, safety and home stood out for me - the resilience of the individuals.

The performance was truly exceptional - the words, the music, the gestures. Unbelievable. It was done with lots of love and care. We can learn so much and be enriched massively by these wonderful people with rich energy.

Our mingling was natural, authentic and real - this is what matters.

Thanks to all those who took part - we appreciate it. They were so brave, I will never understand what they have gone through and that's why it's so important and thought provoking that they could share some of their experiences with us.

Event Hosts

100% said that they would like to be involved in RWN again next year.

It was great working with other organisations.

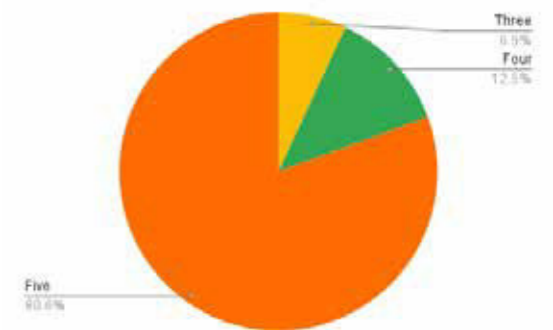
"Song, joy, friendship, many languages, and the smell of sweets and cakes from distant lands filled @bishopsgardens this afternoon. It was a glorious time and so illustrative of what this fine city of Norwich has been and continues to be - A place of welcome to strangers."

The Bishop of Norwich, on X

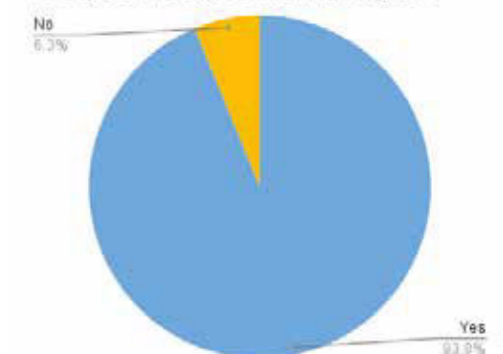
100% of event audiences said:

- I found the event I attended thought-provoking?
- I found the event helped me reflect on the reality of refugees experiences?

I feel prouder to be part of a diverse community? (scale where five = the most proud)



I feel more inclined / able to take action to support refugees and their rights?



Events COMMUNITY

Housewarming at New Routes New Routes Integration

Housewarming of St.Martin, New Routes' new activity, teaching and office space. Food by Ramses Egyptian Street Food. Cakes by Sharmin.

Attendance: 60



Schools Day of Welcome

Day of solidarity and learning, building cultures of welcome. Free live events, resources, and activities for teachers, and pupils of all ages. schools.cityofsanctuary.org/resources/a-day-of-welcome

**27k pupils online
(522 schools)**



Morning Worship St Peter Mancroft Church

Service of worship exploring the theme of Exile and Home, with guest speaker Rabbi Roderick Young.

Attendance: 225

Sanctuary Ambassadors Launch

Norwich City of Sanctuary/ UEA/ Health Stream of Sanctuary/ Zainab Project/ Simon & Charlie (Common Lot)/ The Garage

The Sanctuary Ambassadors project pilot embeds sanctuary seekers' voices within teaching, research, and policy relating to health. Included the first performance of I Will Heal, highlighting poetic material from sanctuary seekers' health research. Food by The Zainab Project CIC.

Attendance: 46



Launch of Our City: Our Home, encompassing Refugee Week

New Routes Integration
Norwich Cathedral

Launch, with taster presentations, showcasing the wealth of events making up this year's extended Refugee Week Norwich program. A chance for key Norwich integration organisations to network. Food by The African Kitchen.

Attendance: 130



Migration Matters Fair

New Routes, with the Norwich Integration Partnership

Meet, learn about, and connect with key organisations working to welcome, equip, and integrate new communities into Norwich life. Including: the Norwich Integration Partnership (New Routes, Bridge Plus+, and English+), with Norfolk County Council's People from Abroad Team, City of Sanctuary (plus UEA - University of Sanctuary), The Red Cross, Norwich International Youth Project, GHCG etc.

Pop-up I Will Heal performances, led by Simon and Charlie of The Common Lot with The Sanctuary Ambassadors.

Attendance: 250



WALKS

Strangers History Walk

Simon Floyd (The Common Lot)/ Frank Meeres (local historian)

City centre walk, uncovering signs of our rich and proud history of migration. Led by passionate and knowledgeable guides.

Attendance: 30

Strangers and Huguenots, Guided Walking Tour

Paul Dickson Tours

Tour celebrating the impact on Norwich of 'The Strangers' (mid 16th century religious refugees from the Spanish Netherlands (modern day Belgium) and the Huguenots, 17th century French protestant refugees.

Attendance: 17

Welcoming Whitlingham

Wellbeing Walk

NHS Wellbeing Services
Whitlingham Broad

NHS run Wellbeing Walks joined with New Routes participants for a friendly, gentle guided walk around Whitlingham Broad. Ending at a woodland BBQ meal.

Attendance: 24



BIKES

Peace Camp, and Norwich Peace Cycle

Norwich Peace Camp Committee
The Octagon, St. Peter Mancroft

Gathering of local groups concerned with peace and the planet: displays, talks, activities, and conversation. Cyclists carried the message out across the city.

Attendance: 75



Welcome Wheels Workshop Open Day

Bicycle Links CIC
Bicycle Links shop, 135 - 137 King Street.

Open day and yard sale! Including the Welcome Wheels workshop, and meeting the volunteers who refurbish bikes.

Attendance: 25



Welcome Wheels

Welcome Wheels provides FREE refurbished bikes to refugees, and those seeking asylum, in Norwich. Overseen by Bicycle Links CIC. Referrals via New Routes, NIYP, and English+

Please liberate any of your unused bikes!

Crowdfunder Fundraised: £2k



BOOKS

The Millennium Library - The Forum

Children's Discover Sundays

Refugee Week themed story fun crafting activity on the topic of Home!



International Welcome Meeting - Family Special

Tea, coffee and conversation, plus children's crafts and books. This weekly meeting gives information and support to migrants, refugees and international people with lived experience of moving to Norfolk. (Family events extended across other Norfolk Libraries too).

Bounce and Rhyme - Refugee Week

Entertaining with fun stories from around the globe.



Norwich Library Events
Attendance: 135

Tawseef Khan's Book-Launch - Determination

Waterstones

Launch of Khan's debut novel, Determination - an exploration of the UK immigration system, and the story of one woman's attempt to find a life for herself amidst the pressures of her job. Tawseef is an immigration solicitor, and graduate of UEA's Creative Writing programme. Chaired by Julianne Pachico.



Attendance: 45

GARDENS

The Bishop Of Norwich's Open Garden

Norwich Integration Partnership (English+ lead), with City of Sanctuary

Spectacular garden, rarely open to the public. Tea and cakes for sale. I Will Heal Performances, circus skills, global music.

Attendance: 500+
Fundraised: £1.6k

The Bishop Of Norwich's Open Garden

St Barnabus Counselling Centre

Attendance: 250
Fundraised: £2.5k



Celebration of International Cultures 2024

Grapes Hill Community Garden Group

Fantastic celebration open to all - with music by Samia Malik, The African Choir of Norfolk and others, and a performance of I Will Heal. Plant stall, language taster, Nordic braiding, board games, tea/ coffee and cakes.

Delicious Indian food by Namaste. Ice-cream by Anita Raja at Royal Whippy.

Attendance: 150



MUSIC

Make Music in the Library!

Norfolk Library and Information Service
Millennium Library, the Forum

Enchanting global music with guitarist Andrew Marino, young musician Ronan Williams, and the rousing Common Lot Singers.

Attendance: 10+



Open-mic House Party

The Playhouse Theatre, Cafe Bar

An intimate open-mic evening to showcase performance skills.

Attendance: 15



FILM

Green Border Cinema City

Masterpiece, from an Oscar winning Director. Raw, immersive moral ambiguity, as lives and futures intertwine in a forest-based survival struggle on the EU border. "Essential, urgent, and moving".

Attendance: 43

Name Me Lawand — screening, and discussion Norwich Theatre / Stage Two

Void of any language, communication or true sense of self, Lawand struggles to piece together his surroundings in his new home in Derbyshire. Inspirational, beautiful and tender coming-of-age story. Q&A signed for the deaf community.

Attendance: 88

Losing Us — with Producer/ Actors Q&A Cinema City Teele Dunkley and Lesley van Dijk

17-year-old Gezim, refugee and victim of human trafficking, does everything he can to keep his little sister safe after their mother goes missing. Director Teele Dunkley and Producer Lesley van Dijk, Norfolk-based filmmakers, with Writer Stephen Drury, and cast members discussed their instinctive, vulnerable film drama about survival and family love. Available at: <https://vimeo.com/984984752>

Bonus: Rediscovering Home Olga Sovenko/ Sanctuary Ambassadors/ University of Sanctuary/ Red7Productions

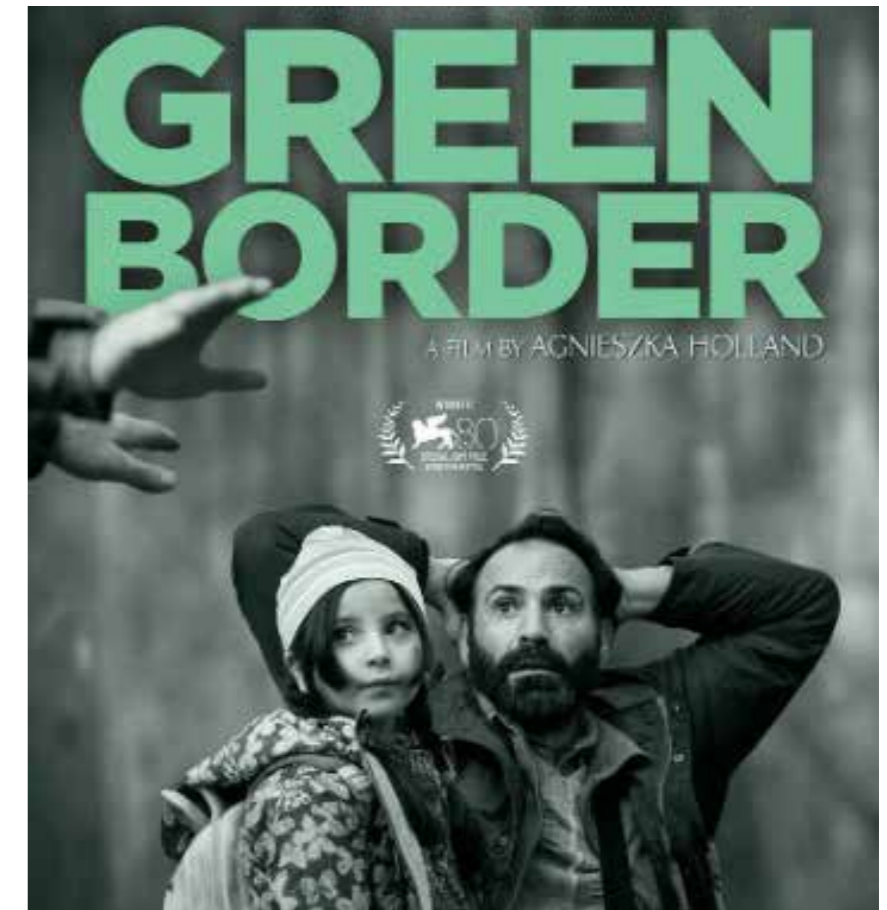
Locally made, Rediscovering Home showcases the perspectives of those seeking sanctuary on what Home means to them, and how different relationships and friendships form when you are forcibly displaced from your homeland. View at: youtube.com/watch?v=Fr0lcRjGlcY

Attendance: 82

Migration Norwich Theatre

A duck family leaves the safety of their New England pond for an adventurous trip. Plans go awry, forcing them to expand their horizons, and accomplish more than they ever dreamed.

Attendance: 120



CREATIVE

Writing Home: creative writing session Norfolk Record Office

'The Strangers', who came to Norwich from the Low Countries in the 16th Century, wrote letters home - summaries created by a 19th-century historian survive. This session used these to recreate the letters imagining what the writer may have written, and recorded these.



Reading from the Archives: writing home Norfolk Record Office, and online

Online and in-person reactions to 'The Strangers' letters, alongside letters from recent refugees.

Attendance: 35

Poetry Beyond Borders: food for thought Millennium Library, Global Library (UEA) and Heritage Centre,

Delicious poetry workshop, focusing on the flavours of food around the world! Tasty international poems, feeding into The Welcome Feast along with The Feast art workshops in libraries throughout Norfolk.



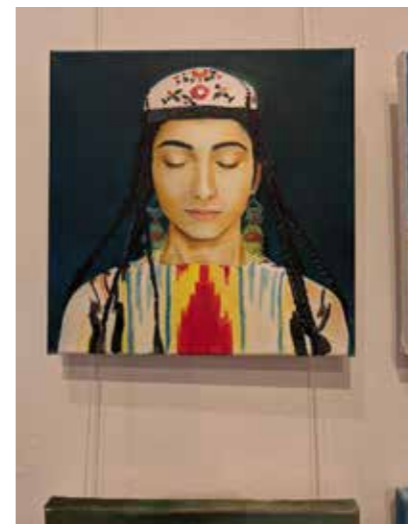
Attendance: 15

ART

Our City: Our Home, Group Exhibition Anteros Arts Foundation

Artist's Group Show of works on the theme of Home, by Norwich-based refugees, asylum seekers and migrants connected through sanctuary organisations - New Routes, Norwich International Youth Project, and UEA, who worked with artists to explore different mediums over the six months leading into the exhibition.

Attendance: 711



Playing with Stories

Rose Feather and Zannie Fraser/ Norfolk & Norwich Festival

Celebration of work made with/by young people and their families during creative sessions at New Routes. Public sharing of their imagined stories on the theme of Home - experiences, ideas and creativity.

Art Workshop: 3D, collaged, paper sculptures Art@Work CIC, Melanie Tilford

Taster of the New Routes Talk & Make sessions which ran at St Martin, asylum hotels, in English lessons, and the International Youth Project, led by Art@Work CIC, to produce the Anteros group show.

Art Workshop: recycled ceramic mosaics Vicki Moffatt

Creating unique, 3D hangings from Recycled ceramics. Mindful, wellbeing-centred activity for all.

DROP-IN, ART WORKSHOPS



Attendances: 31

FEASTING

Come Meet Your Neighbours St Matthew's Church

Opportunity to share stories, over refreshments. Those who have lived in Thorpe Hamlet all their lives shared their stories with those who have just arrived. Exploring new global cuisines!

Attendance: 45



A Taste of Home

People From Abroad Team (Norfolk County Council)

Exploration of dishes shared by people from all over the world who have made Norwich their home. Recipe cards, top-tips and special ingredients to taste!



A Welcome Feast 2024 — food stories from your home The Common Lot and friends.

Evening of international feasting and storytelling. Local international cooks prepared delicious dishes from a variety of countries.

Attendance: 170



PERFORMANCE

Being Migrant — Open Studio Norwich Theatre/ Stage Two

An opportunity to share in the on-going work of our Theatre of Sanctuary programme, and glimpse into how we address issues of migration creatively. An invitation to join in this open rehearsal workshop, and begin your creative journey with Norwich Theatre. Complimented by an archival display, showcasing previous Theatre of Sanctuary creative outcomes.

Attendance: 68



I Will Heal

The Sanctuary Ambassadors /
Simon Floyd + Charlie Caine (Common Lot)

Pop-up performances at events throughout the RWN program:

- The Garage.
- Migration Matters Fair.
- Bishop's Open Garden.
- Celebration of International Cultures at Grapes Hill Community Garden.



DISPLAYS

Combined Views
(estimated at 10% of usual venue visitors):
Aprox. 6k



City of Strangers... City of Stories

Norwich Cathedral/ English+

12 stories of those seeking a new beginning in our city, sharing their struggles and hopes, what they have left behind, and what they discovered in our city of stories.

I Will Heal — i-poem display

UEA/ The Zainab Project CIC/ Norwich Theatre/ City of Sanctuary Health Stream

Material from research into cultural health and wellbeing.



Millennium Library, Mile Cross, Sprowston, Costessey, West Earlham. (and around the county - Diss, Dereham, Attleborough, Loddon, King's Lynn, and Great Yarmouth)

Food From Home - art exhibition

Art representing favourite childhood recipes, 3D objects, and murals. Led by Melanie Tilford (Art@Work), and Shathy Bano.

Home Through the Lens

Photography showing the work of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers exploring the theme of Home. from a workshop series exploring techniques, captioning, and sharing stories.

City of Sanctuary Book Collection

Specially curated novels, non-fiction, biographies and travel, written by refugees, migrants, and people with lived experience.



TRAINING

Speak Up For Sanctuary! Norwich City of Sanctuary/ Norfolk Community Advice Network

Harnessing our individual power to inspire and gently push back against hostile ideas and myths around migration. Helped attendees navigate tricky conversations, and build connections, while speaking up.

Attendance: 18

City Council Training The Sanctuary Ambassadors

A briefing, conversation, film screening and Q&A with City Council members, led by the amazing Sanctuary Ambassadors team.

Attendance: 40



TALKS

Social and Identity Changes in Ukrainian Families, 2022–24 Norwich Amnesty

Olga Sovenko, honorary Humanities Faculty lecturer at UEA, and Sanctuary Ambassador, presents her research on changes in Ukrainian families since 2022. Screening of Rediscovering Home.

Attendance: 5



UEA, University of Sanctuary Public Lecture — Impact of Security Strategies on Rohingya Refugees: the gendered dimension

University of Sanctuary, UEA
Sabrina Ahmed, UEA PhD student (School of Politics, Language, and Communication)

Doctorial research presentation. Assessing the impact of security strategies on the Rohingya refugee community in the camps in Bangladesh. Chaired by Theresa Frey.

Attendance: 15



Issues experienced:

- 1) Two events were cancelled: MIND wellbeing workshop, and off-programme football tournament). One event moved venue (from Stage 2 to The Playhouse. Info was updated online.
- 2) A sponsored facebook post was overrun by far-right commenters and interactions. Blocks were put in place (a couple of comments/ replies were left as response to like-minded critics.
- 3) A fake-profiled ticket scammer offered tickets for sale to a (free) event. One supporter lost £10 trying to access a free event which was sold out.

Next Year

Considerations from Feedback



- Add fundraising as a core aim of RWN. Vote on fundraising recipient for RWN25
- Widen migrant ccess to contributing to RWN, and their self-promotion. Build a network for Refugee/ migrant artists. Small grants towards producing work, in the build-up to June 2025, for display in exhibition.
- Emphasis contacts for artists, caterers, performers etc., who can be contacted] for further opportunities outside of RWN.
- Improve connections with NNF / Pride (as the city-wide festivities occurring either side of RWN). Plus other organisations of solidarity such as Black History Month, Interfaith Link, Shoebox, Polonia CIC etc.
- Utilise On The Stall City, the 'pop-up stall' on the market?
- Bring the UEA (University of Sanctuary) Research Forum into the city centre
- Presence in Your Norfolk and Citizen magazines, plus local arts guides
- More volunteer support around promotions – displaying posters / banners on all main roads into the city
- Pop-up gazebo, for inclement/ super sunny weather
- Source support for evaluations
- Online feedback forms?
- Begin regional linking

Ongoing... INTO RWN25

Support for Refugees at Home, one of the campaigns during RWN24.



- RANN (Refugee Artists Network)

(Refugee Artists Network Norwich)
Artists of Norwich with a shared passion for the arts (multi-mediums), but different cultures, backgrounds (countries, languages, faiths etc), statuses, and experiences. All with a lived experience of seeking sanctuary.

RANN Aims:

1. Amplified united presence: bookable artists, sales of work, group show ready collections of work
2. Online portfolio: representing active artists in Norwich with lived experience of seeking sanctuary (refugees, asylum seekers, and isolated migrants)
3. Meet-ups: Networking, socials, support

Joining RANN will give access to an annual small grants scheme, facilitated by RWN.

- Podcast

Working with award-winning studio Soundyard on a podcast exploring people's comments and questions about migration and integration in Norwich. Aimed at sceptics. Expected launch June 2025.

- Platforma Festival

Eastern Regional arts festival coming up in October 2025. Led by Counterpoint Arts (national umbrella body for Refugee Week UK). Aiming to build capacity, showcase works, and learn together. counterpoints.org.uk/project/platforma

- Beryl Partnership

RWN24's Accessibility Partnership extends into full-time support for New Routes participants, staff and active volunteers to claim FREE rides using Beryl bikes across the city, all year round... THANK YOU Beryl!

Appendix 1

Programme of events:

OUR CITY: OUR HOME

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
9 RWN24 LAUNCH (closed)	10 Writing Home Poetry Beyond Borders	11 Anteros Exhibition New Routes House-warming	12 Speak Up! Training (closed)	13 Rohingya security lecture Anteros Private View	14 Schools Day of Welcome Meet Your Neighbours	15 Playing with Stories Peace Camp/Cycle WW Open Workshop
16 3D Houses Discover St Peter Mancroft	17 Food from Home Through the Lens Strangers Walk	18 International Welcome	19 History Walk Ukraine Changes Talk Green Border	20 Sanctuary Ambassadors Launch Welcome Home	21 History Walk Bounce & Rhyme Library Music Open-Mic	22 Migration Matters Fair Mosaics, pt 1 Being Migrant Lawand
23 Bishop's Open Garden	24 Wellbeing Walk	25 Strangers Walk Book Launch (Determination)	26 Reading the Archives Football Tournament (closed)	27 Sports in the Park (closed)	28 Beryl Bike Proficiency (closed)	29 Mosaics, pt 2 What's Home to You? Losing Us Q&A
30 Migration Grapes Hill Garden Welcome FEAST						



Full event details:
newroutes.org.uk/refugee-week-norwich/



Crowdfunder:
crowdfunder.co.uk/p/welcomewheels2024

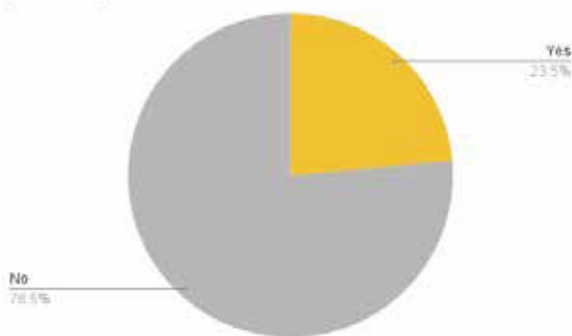


Follow:
facebook.com/NorwichRefugeeWeek/

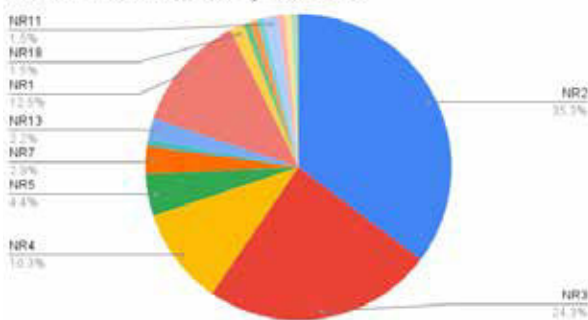
Appendix 2

Event statistics:

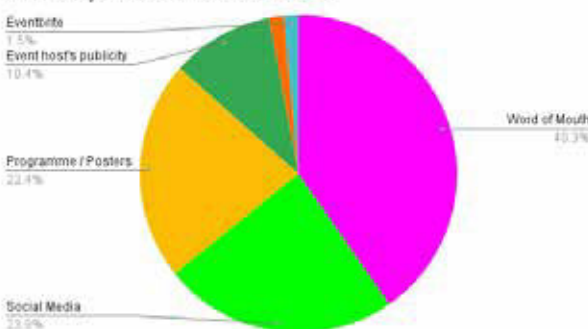
Have you been to Refugee Week Norwich events in previous years?



RWN24 Event Attendees by Post Code



How did you hear about this event?



From 200 Evaluation Feedback surveys:

- The Launch
- New Routes Housewarming
- Grapes Hill Community Garden
- Open-Mic Night
- Playing with Stories

A large majority of event attendees had not been to Refugee Week Norwich events in previous years (76.5%), and as such were experiencing this programme for the first time.

From 200 event attendees' post codes:

Not all events found it possible to collect post-code data, for our city council culture grants monitoring (although all were asked to). RWN24 events were well spread around the city-centre, largely across NR1, 2, and 3. Some events were more likely to attract attendees living in the wider city (eg. The Feast in St Catherine's church hall, and events in libraries including West Earlham, Mile Cross, Sprowston, and Costessey), those with parking, and those outside of Norwich (Diss, King's Lynn, Dereham, Attleborough, Loddon and Great Yarmouth). However, none of these collected data. NB: NR1-6 = City postcodes; NR7/8 = suburb towns/ greater Norwich, and NR 9-16 = 'rural towns within the post town of Norwich.'

From 200 event attendees' feedback:

As ever most events were advertised to our event attendee responders via word of mouth (40.3%), secondly via hard-copy RWN promotional materials such as the posters and banners around the city and major roads (22.4%), and a similar number via social media (23.9%). Social media channels mentioned were primarily facebook, then Instagram, with one person each for X and the EDP What's On listings. Event organiser's own news outlets were also significant promotional tools.

FULL feedback from participants, event attendees, and event holders available on RWN24 archives