

H.E.L.P

Helping Empower Lives in Peterborough



April
2023-24

2nd

ANNUAL REPORT

Helping Empower Lives in Peterborough



www.helpcharity.org.uk

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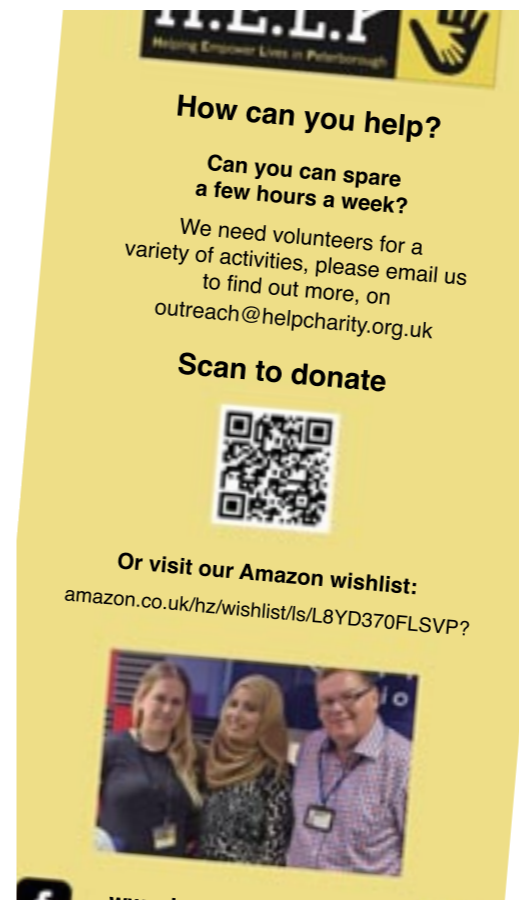
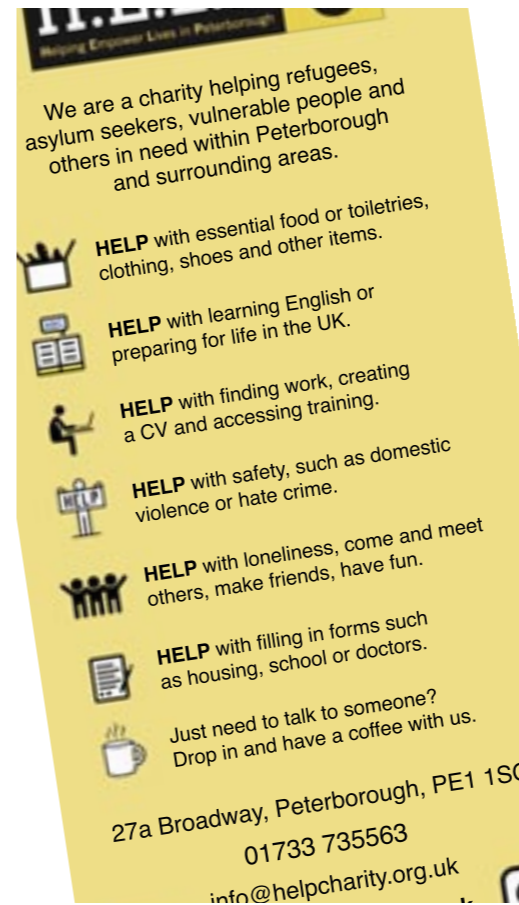
A message from the Chairperson - Rose Booker-Macedo

This year has been a challenging one to do what we do, supporting people who are going through upheaval, poverty and homelessness, unsure who to turn to or who to trust. However HELP is there for people in Peterborough and the surrounding areas and able to respond to the realities of these situations, providing practical advice and things like bicycles and toiletries, employment support and help with GP registrations. Just as important have been the wellbeing sessions, trips and fun events that give people something to look forward to, a chance to make friends and smile.

This year HELP has grown a lot but also seen many changes that come with success in getting our name out there, and increased numbers of people reaching out. HELP aims to continue building our capacity for advice, mental health support and support with integration, as well as building our organisational resilience so that we can continue to respond to the need in our community.

We are immensely grateful to the staff, volunteers including the trustees, all our members and to our funders and people who donate essentials for allowing us to do this amazing work.

Although I have now stepped down as Chair of Trustees, I am proud to have been a part of this team and look forward to seeing what they will achieve next.



Charity Information

H.E.L.P (Helping Empower Lives in Peterborough)

Charity Registration Number: 1199149
Registered in England and Wales
VAT Registration Number: 433 8863 69

Office Address:
27a Broadway, Peterborough PE1 1SQ
Tel: 01733 735563
Website: www.helpcharity.org.uk
Email: info@helpcharity.org.uk
Find us on Facebook : Helpcharityteam

Board of Trustees:
Rose Booker-Macedo - Chair
Kamila Mohammadi
Dr. Zohra Almahmudi
Mohammed Dhanji
Lynne Booker
Mahmoud Eldogdog
Bilal Aslam
Titiani Kamphandira

Independent Examiner:
Price Bailey LLP
36 Tyndall Court, Commerce Road,
Lynchwood, Peterborough,
Cambridgeshire PE2 6LR

Senior Management Team:
Mark Murray - Office Manager
Rebecca MacLellan - Outreach Manager
Engy Morsy - Project Manager
Rania Ali - Senior Manager

The team



Beckie MacLellan
Co-Founder and
Outreach Manager



Mark Murray
Co-Founder and
Office Manager



Engy Morsy
Co-Founder and
Projects Manager



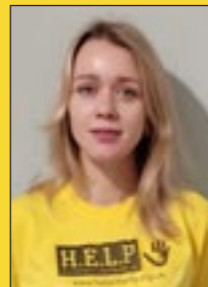
Rania Ali
Co-Founder and
Senior Manager



Ola Elsabbagh
Activities Manager



**Oksana
Suprunenko**
Caseworker



Ksenia Tytyuk
Caseworker



Tom Wright
Employment
Advisor



Inna Gorobets
ESOL Tutor

Volunteers and other supporters

We would also like to thank our volunteers and other people who have continued to work extremely hard behind the scenes during the past two years, we are very grateful for your assistance and appreciate your hard work.

Thank you!

A few words...



Beckie - Co-Founder and Outreach Manager

I oversee our outreach activities, constantly bringing fresh ideas to the table and seeking out new funding opportunities. My goal is to expand our reach and impact through innovative programs and initiative.

Mark - Co-Founder and Office Manager

As the Office Manager, I ensure our operations run smoothly. My role involves managing day-to-day office tasks and providing a solid foundation for our team's efforts.

Engy - Co-Founder and Senior Project Manager

I lead the Ukrainian project and collaborate closely with my team to bridge the gap between guests and hosts. From the first day, we ensure everyone receives the support they need, providing a crucial connection throughout their journey.

Rania - Co-Founder and Senior Manager

My role is multifaceted, involving HR support, and helping with bids. I collaborate with Mark, Beckie, and Engy to ensure our charity runs effectively and efficiently.

What we do and who we help...

We are a charity helping refugees, asylum seekers, vulnerable people and others in need within Peterborough and the surrounding areas.

Various areas including...

-  HELP with essential food or toiletries, clothing, shoes and other items
-  HELP with learning English or preparing for life in the UK.
-  HELP with finding work, creating a CV and accessing training.
-  HELP with safety, such as domestic violence or hate crime.
-  HELP with loneliness, come and meet others, make friends, have fun.
-  HELP with filling in forms, such as housing, schools or doctors.
-  Bike Scheme helping people get to work and wellbeing.
-  Mental Health and wellbeing support.
-  Just need to talk to someone? Drop in and have a coffee with us.

Aims & Objectives

To assist people to build links and integrate with the people living in and around Peterborough, by providing various activities and services, as well as providing advice and support across a range of areas, including advocacy, interpreting and translation, CV help and employment support, DWP assistance and training courses. We aim to make life easier for people who have little or no support.

Vision

Ethnic minorities, Refugees and asylum seekers and all other disadvantaged citizens are given the assistance and guidance that they require to build strong links and skills within the community and promoting integration amongst citizens.

Homes for Ukraine



Ukrainian refugee support

As the project manager for the HFU's initiative aiding Ukrainian refugee families, my role is like that of a conductor, orchestrating a symphony of support to ensure these families find stability and hope in their new lives.

I act as the go-to person, along with my team, linking up with various groups like local councils, hospitals, legal experts, and community organizations. Together, we create a safety net of support, addressing everything from housing and healthcare to education and job opportunities.

Beyond just making plans, I make sure those plans come to life. It's like being the captain of a ship, steering us through challenges and keeping us on course, all while making sure every effort is top-notch.

But it's not just about logistics. I'm also there as a friend, offering a shoulder to lean on and a voice to advocate for their needs. Whether it's

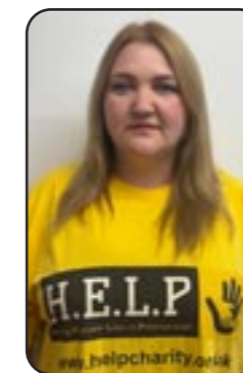
helping them navigate social services or standing up for their rights, I'm there every step of the way.

And it doesn't stop there. I keep everyone in the loop, from professional agencies to the local community leaders, sharing our successes, struggles, and lessons learned. It's all about transparency and making sure we're always getting better at what we do.

In the end, my job isn't just about managing tasks. It's about being a beacon of hope in the darkest of times, ensuring that every family we touch finds the support they need to flourish in their new home.

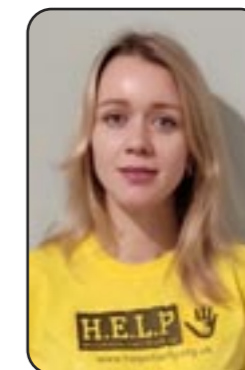


Engy



Oksana

I enjoy assisting our Ukrainian and other service users across a wide range of areas. I like to be part of the team here.



Ksenia

For me to work for H.E.L.P Charity means to be surrounded by amazing friendly team which is working hard to reduce stress for people in need and increase their happiness. My job makes me feel proud of what we do!

Funders and Supporters

We are very grateful to Peterborough City Council, EELGA, PCVS/ICS, Stagecoach and Microbyte along with other valuable partners who have given us funding this year. Also the Big Lottery who are funding our move to bigger premises in the coming months.



We would also like to acknowledge the large number of individuals who have supported us in many different ways, financial or otherwise, during the year, your support has been hugely important to us.

Thank you!

Working together...

We continue to work in collaboration with many other organisations to offer a better network of support for our service users, this includes referring to Care Zone, Foodbanks, National Databank, as well as working closely with the Red Cross, CRRC, local councils, DWP, the public library, NHS and many others.



Statistics

HOW WE HAVE HELPED, SO FAR...

We continue to work in collaboration with many other organisations to offer a better network of support for our service users, this includes referring to Care Zone, Foodbanks, National Databank, as well as working closely with the Red Cross, CRRC, local councils, DWP, the public library, NHS and many others.

Items given to people in need...



Laptop Loans

We continue to loan out refurbished laptops to people who study, this has allowed some of our service users to attend courses that they wouldn't have otherwise been able to access.

This has a big impact on the confidence and abilities of the individual with many going on to find employment or improving their current situation.

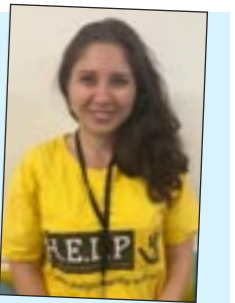
Thank you to the kind generosity of the funder for helping to support us with this project.



ESOL

Our ESOL tutor Inna is passionate about teaching

Since teaching at H.E.L.P Inna has made a big difference in the lives of many students, having the ability to speak and understand English makes a huge difference when it comes to the quality of life for people who have moved to the U.K. Lessons are developed to keep learners engaged and to be of maximise use in everyday life.



Volunteer - Case Study

Volunteering with H.E.L.P has been a rewarding and enriching experience for me. I've learned a lot from the dedicated co-founders, team and the diverse communities we work with, gaining a deeper understanding of different cultures and backgrounds. Interacting with people from all walks of life has broadened my worldview and made me more empathetic and open-minded. Moreover, volunteering has helped me develop new skills and strengthen existing ones, such as event planning, organization, communication, and teamwork. The most fulfilling part is seeing the positive impact we make in the community, which inspires me to continue making a difference.



Volunteer Support

We want to thank our volunteers who support us through the year in a wide range of areas, from office support, events, cooking sessions, sewing club, wrapping gifts, etc. The trustees and management value your contribution to all of the time and support that you provide to our service users.



Bikes donated to our service users...

Since starting, we have now given out over 250 bikes to people in need of help with affordable transport. Our bikes are donated to us by members of the public, then repaired by volunteers Tim and Andrew. When bikes are ready to go, they are rehomed to people on our bike waiting list. People receiving bikes are usually refugees or people struggling with very low incomes and unable to afford bus costs to get to work or college. We also give out a lock with the bikes where needed. **A big thank you to everyone who has donated bike to us.**



Beckie MacLellan
Co-Founder and
Outreach Manager



Football Team

This year we formed a men's football team, of refugees keen to play football to increase their wellbeing and make friends. We named our team 'HELP Hornets' and our kits were sponsored by local company called Microbyte. We played several matches against other local teams and hold weekly training sessions. The team has seen a bit of player turnover due to refugees being moved around in their temporary housing provision, but now we are moving forward with an alternative pitch and a more settled group of players. Get in touch to play or volunteer!



Employment Advisor - Tom Wright

HELP Charity in partnership with EELGA/SMP



The Overseas Nationals Employability Project has been buzzing with activity at HELP since November 2023, aiming to help people from other countries find education, training, and jobs.

Since then, I've welcomed 50 clients into the program, each starting on a journey toward better opportunities.

In our first meetings with all 50 clients, I made personalized action plans and spruced up their CVs, laying the groundwork for success. And it's paying off! Our clients have attended a total of 35 interviews, resulting in 15 job offers.

Showing our dedication to empowerment, we partnered with the British Red Cross to host our very own Employment and Training Event, offering useful resources and connections.

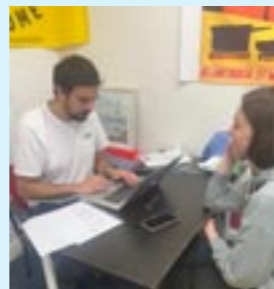
One of our biggest achievements is teaming up with UK ENIC. I've helped 8 clients get comparability certificates

for their educational documents. These certificates are super valuable, giving employers and schools a clear understanding of our clients' education backgrounds, opening doors to better opportunities.

One client from Ukraine was so thankful upon receiving their certificate, recognizing how crucial it was in their career journey.

I'm thrilled to share that 6 clients have joined MENTA's business start-up/self-employment program, supporting our mission to empower refugee entrepreneurs in Peterborough. With MENTA's excellent reputation, our clients are set for success, turning their aspirations into reality.

Looking forward, starting April 2014, we're expanding our services to include face-to-face and online classes tailored to



refugees and asylum seekers' needs. These classes, curated by our project manager, will focus on vital skills like ESOL learning, driving theory, and employability, boosting our clients' chances in the job market.

In another exciting collaboration, I've partnered with The Refugee Council and IKEA to launch an Employability Course and Work Placement Program. A total of 16 clients were referred, and 8 have

successfully completed the course and interviews for the work placement. Two clients from Afghanistan have already started their training and placements, marking the beginning of their journey to fulfilling careers.

As we celebrate our achievements and look ahead, I'm dedicated to empowering every client who comes through our doors, guiding them toward a brighter and more prosperous future.



Dear Tom,
 I want to express my sincere gratitude for your incredible assistance with verifying my diploma. Your help has been invaluable to me, and I am truly thankful for the time and effort you have put in. Thanks to your assistance, I am confident in the authenticity of my information and documents, which is incredibly important for my career. Your professionalism and attention to detail have made this process smooth and effective. Once again, thank you so much for your support and time. I greatly appreciate your help.

Best regards,
Sofia Bilous



Employment Advisor - Successes.
 Volunteer placements and various work opportunities
 Well done to everyone who has secured employment.

2024

International Women's Day

Over 80 people came along to our International Women's Day event and Awards at the Town Hall in Peterborough. They watched some great musical performances by 9 year old Ukrainian Mariia and 12 year old Ciara who sang amazingly. We had some empowering speeches by Dr Shabina (local Councillor), Dilraj Kaur (Peterborough Citizens), Donna Guest

(Occupational Therapist), Karen (Healthwatch) and Rania (HELP Co-founder). Kids enjoyed face painting, henna and all enjoyed hot food together and a chance to chat together. The mayoress presented our awards to women who have done great things in the community, which included a lovely bag of pampering gifts for each of them.



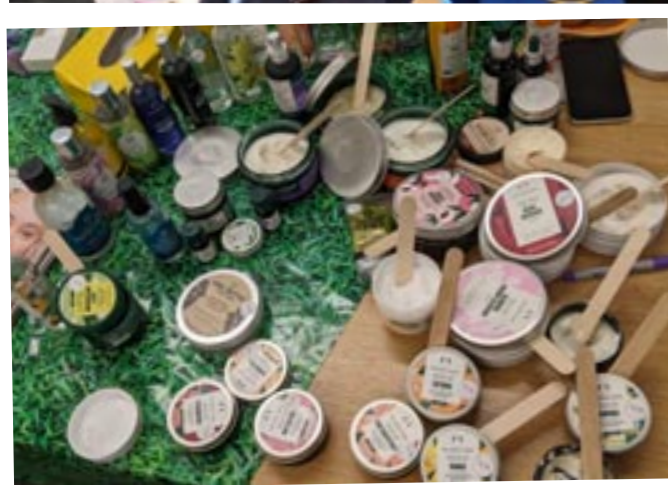
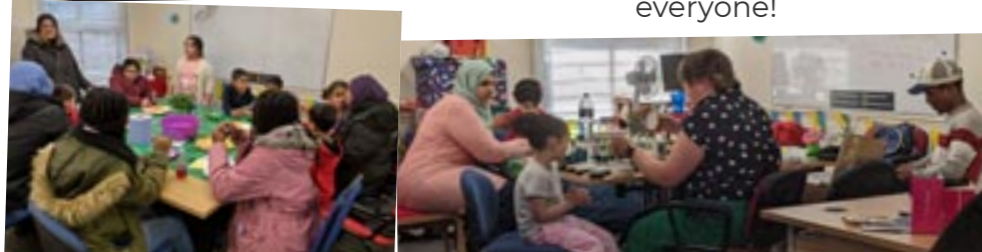
Wellbeing sessions



Ola Elsabbagh
Activities Manager



Our wellbeing sessions covered a lot of different activities, such as crafts, therapeutic, cooking, conversation classes, sewing and coffee sessions, there was something for everyone!



DWP Job Fair & wellbeing event



We continue to support DWP and various other agencies, this event was organised by the DWP at the town hall, looking at various ways to support job seekers to get back into employment.



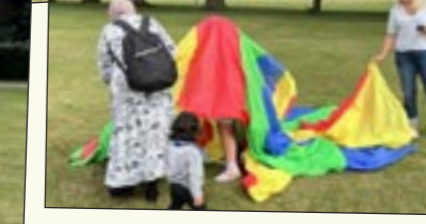
Eid in the Park

We attended both Eid Al Fitr and Eid Al Adha with 'Eid in the Park' at Central park in Peterborough. Both were fantastic community events, we spoke with lots of people about our work and enjoyed joining the community for this religious festival. The team enjoyed joining many people who stayed for a picnic afterwards. Thank you to everyone who supported us.



Sports in the Park

During the school holidays, we ran various sports activity sessions in the park and also in a large hall, the sessions were very much enjoyed by the children with the big parachute being very popular, it was great fun for all involved.



Mental Health and Occupational Therapy support

We continued to offer mental health support to refugees who have experienced trauma, thanks to our counsellors Shabs and Tessa. We receive a lot of referrals for mental health from local GP surgeries and other charities. We also offered one to one sessions with Donna our Occupational Therapist for both adults with trauma and young people with neurodivergence. We have also been running drop-in wellbeing sessions every Wednesday where people can come to relax, chat, try mindful art activities and get advice on reducing stress.



Project O

We are proud to support events and productions, like this play written by Aisha Zia, which looks at testimonies of first generation, economic and war migrants. Also we would like to thank Anna Nayyar from Metal for the support and partnership on various projects.



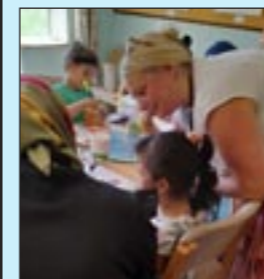
Leadership team and housing campaign

We have been involved in the leadership team for Peterborough Citizens again this year, assisting with decision making and planning as well as actively involved in campaigns. We have focused on getting involved in campaigning for improvements in Peterborough, particularly in availability of affordable housing and homelessness initiatives. We have been to the meetings with decision makers and events involved in the housing campaign.



Research projects

We have taken part in various academic research initiatives this year, Andrea from UCL has been with us studying longer-term settlement of women on family reunion visas. We also got involved in a 'Barriers to Medical Research for Refugees' study from ARU/Red Cross/EELGA/CRRC. We assisted with Occupational therapist, Donna's research into using Sensory Integration with refugees who have experienced trauma. This work featured at an International conference in Brazil.



Local Forums, MAF City of Sanctuary

We continue to take an active role in the Peterborough City of Sanctuary steering group and other forums for steering positive initiatives for refugees living in Peterborough, working with other local organisations and representatives from the city council.



Organised trips to London, Hunstanton and Laserforce

We held 3 trips this year, funded by PCVS/ICS Wellbeing fund. We took service users to London for the day, where we visited Big Ben, the London Eye, the Science Museum and Natural History Museum, breaking for a picnic lunch in Hyde park.

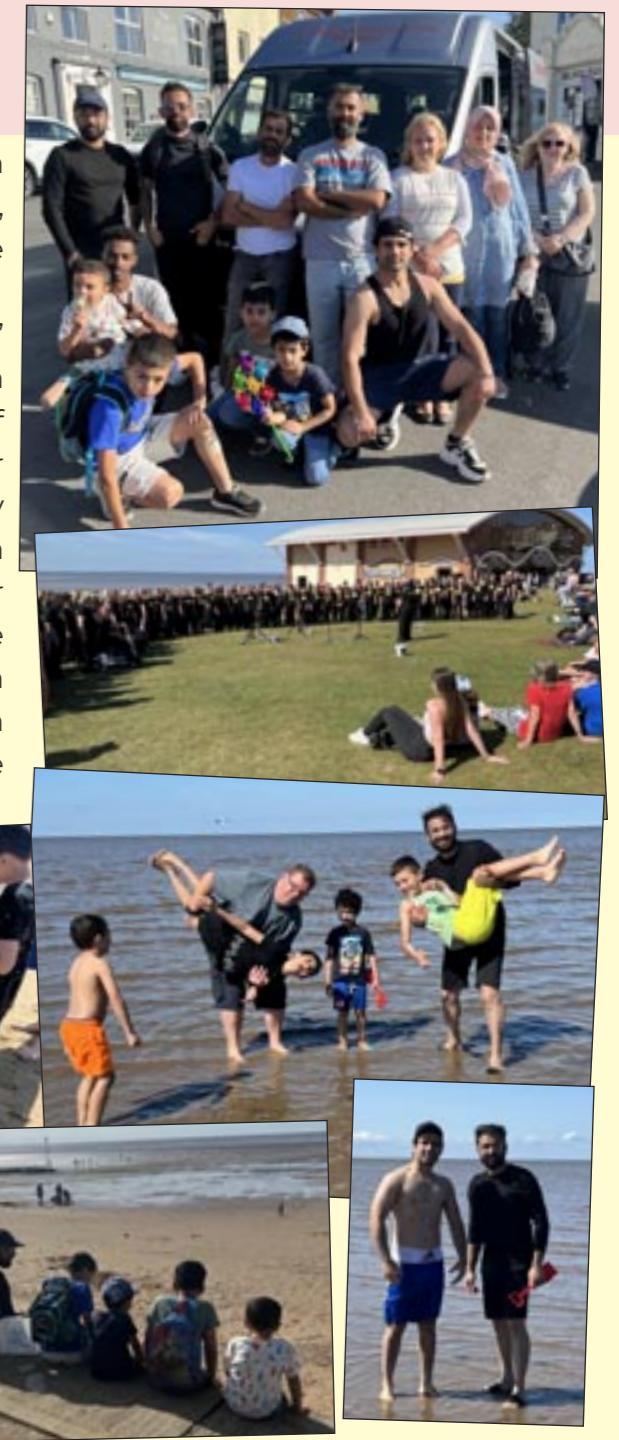


A local trip to play laser tag for children and families.



We hired a minibus and took a group to Hunstanton beach for the day. We built sandcastles, swam in the sea, ate ice creams and tried some dizzy rides at the fairground!

The attendees reported having 'the best day in England' after going on the trip to the seaside. They chatted with other refugees on the minibus, enjoyed a change of scenery and seeing a new town. It really boosted their wellbeing and they enjoyed sharing photos of the day and laughing together. Due to being unfamiliar with places in England and no money to travel to see other places, many of them have not yet been able to see anything other than the town/city they have been accommodated in. It also meant people who have been through really difficult times, can make a positive memory in their new lives in the UK.



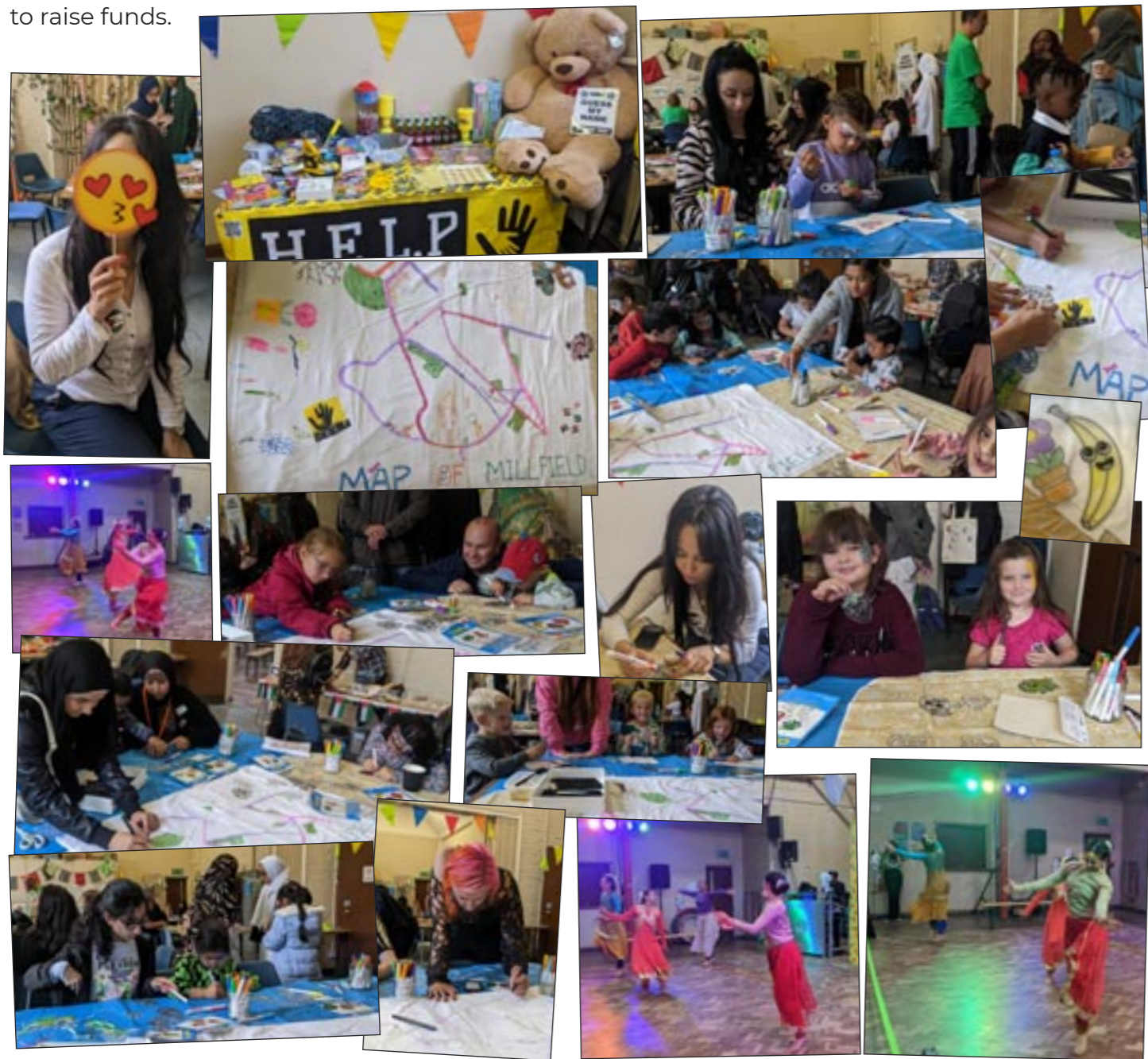
"It was really lovely and such an amazing time with you all. You made us feel really special by arranging this fun trip for me and my family." – B

"Thank you everybody, I consider that to been best today of all days in Britain" - M

"Thank you all for giving us joy and putting laughter on our faces. It is my happiest day in the United Kingdom." – A

Millfield Festival

Millfield Festival was held indoors this year due to the weather. We ran craft activities which were popular despite the weather outside. We had volunteers from Sodexo help us run the activities. Good conversations were had with members of the public about our work and we ran a small raffle to raise funds.



Peterborough Celebrates

Peterborough Celebrates – We attended this great community event again this year. We held a fundraising stall and spoke to the public about what our charity does. The event was very busy, with some great performances and art installations. We spoke on PCR FM Community radio at the event.



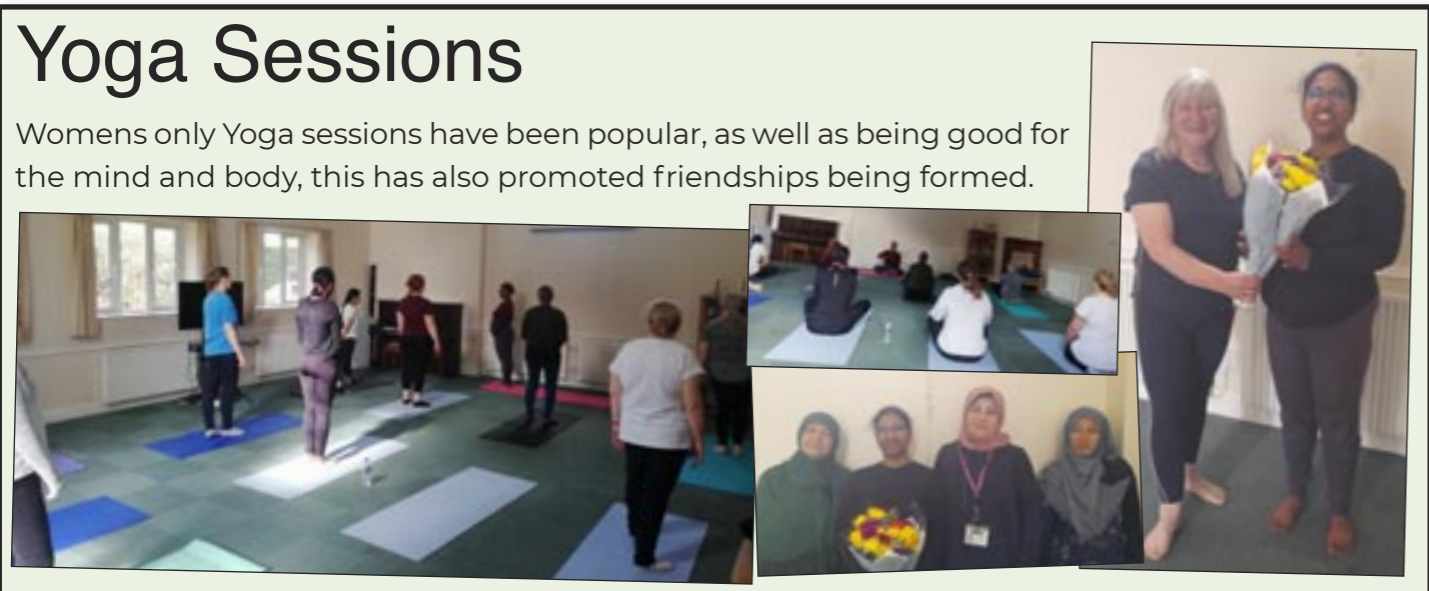
Sewing Group

Our sewing group has remained popular, running every week under the leadership of our volunteers Fatima and Shaima. The ladies come from various religious and ethnic backgrounds and speak different languages, but work together and socialise, while working on sewing projects such as making dresses, cushions and more. We provide the fabric and machines for them to create what they like, whether they are complete beginners or advancing their skills.



Yoga Sessions

Womens only Yoga sessions have been popular, as well as being good for the mind and body, this has also promoted friendships being formed.



February 2024

Ukrainian Vigil

We helped the Ukrainian community mark the 2nd Year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine. Alongside St. Olga's church, we brought along the 25m Ukrainian flag in a parade to the cathedral square, joining in with speeches in the cathedral square and then serving refreshments in the church after the service.



Halloween Party

We held a free kids Halloween party at the Town Hall, with pick & mix sweets, food, refreshments, dressing up costumes, face painting and lots of fun games. It was a very well attended event and we look forward to see you at the next event.



King's Coronation



We were proud to be asked by Peterborough City Council, to produce a large commemorative parade flag for the King's Coronation this year. Our talented sewing group had experience of having produced the 50m Ukrainian flag previously, so took on the challenge. They sewed the kings coronation emblem onto a 25 metre red banner and it was used in the city centre parade to mark the historical moment.



Cooking Sessions

We have held some great cooking session, held at the Quaker House kitchen. It was very good experience for the a wide range of people, including refugees and asylum seekers. We prepared lots of different recipes from different countries, such as Sudanese, Egyptian, Afghanistan and Pakistan ones.



Ukraine Host Event

Our HFU host event went very well and we were honoured to have various guests, including Rev. Fr. Bohdan Bilunyk who gave an inspiring speak, Antonia Oakes-Jones from Peterborough City Council to offer further support and answer any questions along with Engy on the HFU scheme, also various outstanding performances, including singing and violin as well as food and cakes. Thank you to all that attended and made this event a great success.



Xmas Party

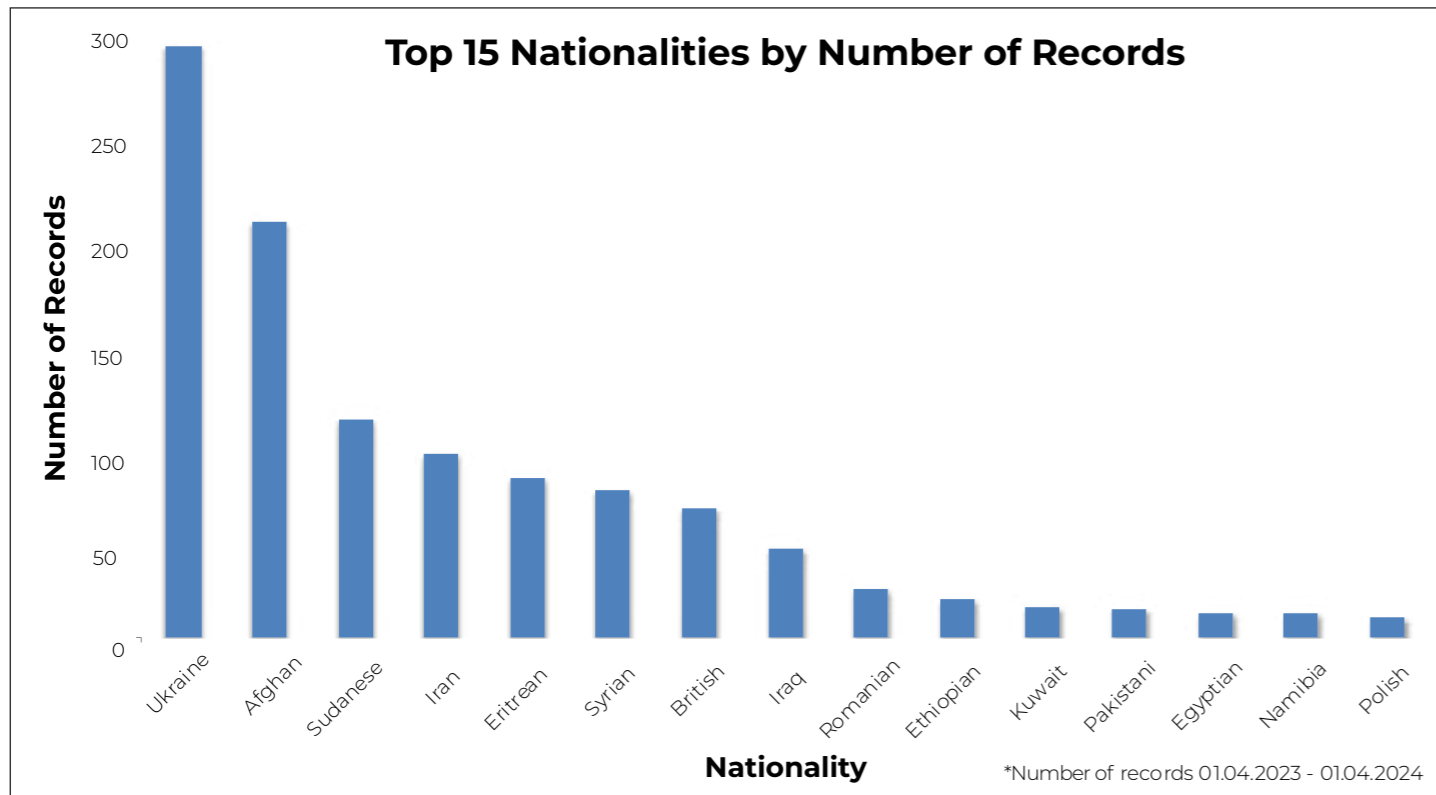
Over 100 children came along to our Christmas gift giving party in December. The families enjoyed meeting Santa and receiving a gift, a hot meal, music and a children's entertainer. The mayor came to join us in celebrating and kids enjoyed the face painting and crafts, including badge making with our volunteer Anna from the U.S forces. We also appeared on BBC Radio to talk about the event.



Service User Statistics, Case Studies and Feedback

We are a relatively small charity covering a wider area in Cambridgeshire as we can, but our reputation has spread nationally, and we receive messages and calls from all over the country including.... Derby, Nottingham, Manchester, Coventry, Birmingham, Blackpool, London, Lincolnshire and Sussex! A gentleman even came from Leeds on the train for one of our bikes!

We only have an office in Peterborough, but if people can get to us, we will always try to help. If they are too far away and cannot reach us physically, we offer advice about their nearest charity that can support them. Our number of nationalities that we support has also grown from last year we have received visitors from more than 50 countries.



- | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------|----------|-------------|--------------|-----------|
| Ukrainian | Ethiopian | Somalian | Italian | Uganda | French |
| Afghanistan | Kuwait | Kurdish | Hungarian | Scottish | Sri Lanka |
| Sudanese | Pakistani | Albania | Portuguese | Yemen | Thailand |
| Iran | Egyptian | Nigerian | Vietnam | Greek | Jordan |
| Eritrean | Namibia | Turkish | Bangladeshi | El Salvador | Brazilian |
| Syrian | Polish | Botswana | Indian | Netherlands | Algerian |
| British | Libyan | Latvian | Zimbabwe | Sierra Leone | Spanish |
| Iraq | Lithuanian | Chad | Cameroonian | Ghana | |
| Romanian | Morocco | Kenya | Hong Kong | Georgia | |

D - "They have helped me with a loan computer which has helped me study and learn English. Great charity and friendly staff." (From Iran)

We had lovely feedback from one of the attendees about the cooking. He said "Today's dish reminded me of my mum's cooking. You made my day happier! Thank you so much!"



Thank you Engy

A massive thank you to Engy, who has been with us from the beginning and played a pivotal role with the charity foundation - we will miss your kind heart and presence in the office.



The Power of Compassion: Reflecting on my Charity Work at HELP



I remember the first day I walked into HELP. The room was bustling with activity—children's laughter mingling with the murmur of grown-ups speaking in a mix of languages. HELP primarily supports Ukrainian refugees, but we welcomed anyone fleeing from war-torn countries. It's a place where people come with heavy hearts and hopeful eyes, looking for a fresh start.

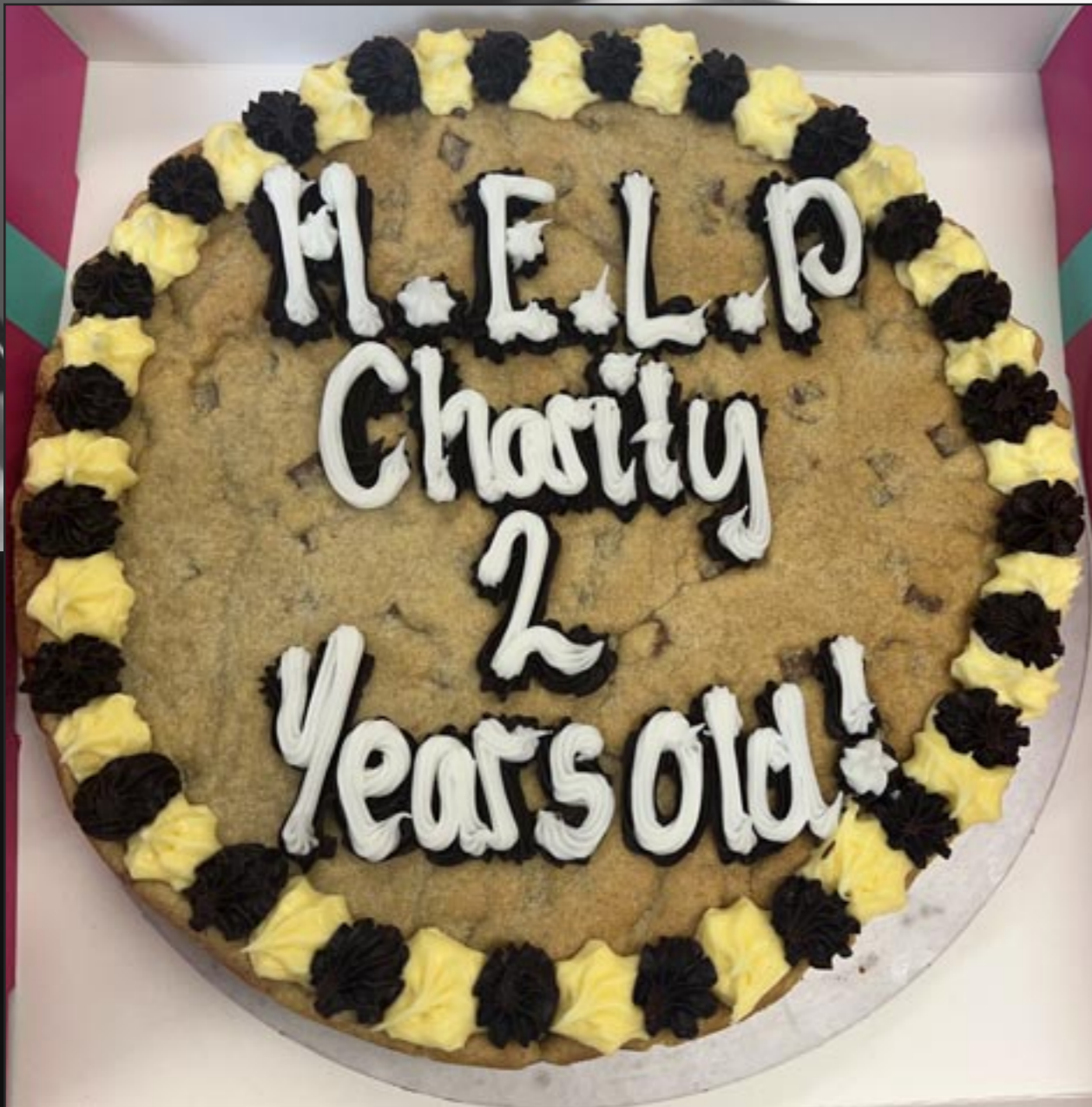
Working here has been like opening a storybook filled with tales of resilience and kindness. Every day, I met families who've travelled long and weary roads and came from all walks of life. There are young mothers clutching their little ones, elderly couples holding hands, and teenagers with expressions that range from wary to wide-eyed wonder. It's heart-wrenching to hear their stories of escape and loss, but also heartwarming to see them finding comfort in our little community.

The real heroes in this story are the sponsors—the people who open their homes and hearts to strangers. It's not always easy, and sometimes it's downright challenging, but the generosity and goodwill they show are incredible. I've seen sponsors go above and beyond, offering not just a roof over their heads, but also friendship, guidance, and a sense of belonging. They remind me of the kind neighbours in my favourite children's books, always ready to lend a hand or share a warm meal.

There's one story that sticks with me—a little girl named Alina "not her real name", who arrived with her mother from Ukraine. Alina was quiet at first, clutching a tattered teddy bear and sticking close to her mum. But over time, with the support of a lovely sponsor family, she began to open up. She started attending school, made friends, and even joined a local dance class. Watching her twirl around with a big smile on her face, you'd never guess the hardships she'd faced. It's moments like these that make all the effort worth it.

For me the work I did at HELP wasn't just about providing necessities; it was about building a new chapter for these families. It was in the small things—the warm cups of tea shared over conversations, the donated treats & the food we shared, and the gifts, bikes and toys that bring joy to little ones, and the community events where everyone came together, grappling with setting up roadshow stands to Ferry meadows, handing out leaflets, sharing thoughtful moments with colleagues from other charities, laughing with visitors, walk-ins, refugees and sharing heart warming stories. It's these everyday acts of kindness that help heal the wounds of the past and pave the way for a brighter future.

Being a part of HELP has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life. I've learned so much about resilience, kindness, and the incredible strength of the human spirit. It's a reminder that even in the darkest times, there's always a glimmer of hope. And sometimes, all it takes is a bit of love and a helping hand to make a world of difference.



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THANK YOU!

To our supporters

Contact us at:

27a Broadway, Peterborough PE1 1SQ

Tel: 01733 735563

Email: info@helpcharity.org.uk

Website: helpcharity.org.uk