



GOVAN
COMMUNITY
PROJECT
Building Hope

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2021

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Govan Community Project's Strategic Plan for 2018 - 2021. This plan sets out our community's vision for the coming years: what we want to achieve, our reasons and how we are going to do it together. This is the first time that Govan Community Project has had a strategic plan and it is coming at a time of significant change. We hope that setting out our collective vision will allow us to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our community members. This plan was co-produced with community members. This plan was co-produced with community members, staff, volunteers and our board of directors. We held an event with over 50 community members to identify key priorities and challenges for the organisation. Thereafter we met weekly over a period of 15 sessions to refine and add to the feedback we had already received.

We would like to thank all of our community members, a special thanks to: Kehinde-Meine James, Sara Al-Rubaya, Ruth Lamb, Abdulkadir Awel, Giscard Kuimi, Sukai Secka, Mohammed Saleh, Toyosi Ogunbowale, Mengistu Rago Gurm, Snaa Al-shemlwi and family and Gladys Emofonmwan.



BACKGROUND

Govan Community Project (GCP) used to be called Govan and Craigton Integration Network, which was originally a response of community and church members to the needs of newly arrived asylum seekers in Glasgow. Since then, GCP has developed into a registered Scottish Charity running a variety of different activities and VoiceOver, our own social enterprise that provides an interpreting and translation service.

In 2016 we established that our purpose is to achieve social justice in Govan and Craigton by building a strong community based on equality, mutual respect, support and integration. We are an organisation based in Govan that supports diverse communities in this area and also supports asylum seekers and refugees throughout Glasgow. We contribute towards policy and best practice in Scotland to improve social justice.

We work towards achieving our purpose in a number of ways. Our community flat is used as a valuable resource for that is free for community groups and hosts our ESOL classes, our women's group, our men's group and our homework club. We also run advice and advocacy sessions, distribute food and undertake participatory action research with community members. VoiceOver provides affordable, value for money interpreting and translation services to ensure quality interpreting is accessible.

Given the current political climate and attitudes towards asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants more generally, and with the highest rate of global displacements on record¹, this is one of the most challenging times for our community members in modern history.

That said we are fortunate to be working within Scotland, which has a national policy of welcoming migrants, including refugees. This is evidenced in the recently revised 'New Scots' Integration strategy, an important framework which our community members contributed towards, that aims to welcome and unlock the assets that refugees bring with them to their homes across Scotland³.

We are grateful to all of our funders who enable our vital work to continue and we truly value our relationships with a wide range of organisations that make our joint efforts impactful.

In the coming years we will continue working closely with our community members, funders and partner organisations to achieve our goals.

¹ The most recent publication of global trends by the UNHCR, the United Refugee Agency, recorded an unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world who had been forced from home. Among them were nearly 22.5 million refugees, over half of whom are under the age of 18. For more information, <http://www.unhcr.org.uk/figures-at-a-glance.html>

² <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/02/5490/2>

³ <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2018/01/7281>

CORE VALUES

Our core values describe how we behave and treat each other. The purpose of GCP is to achieve social justice in the areas of Govan and Craigton by building a strong community based on equality, mutual respect, support and integration. We are an organisation which values the experience and contributions of everyone: our community members are some of the most resilient people on Earth and deserve to be treated with respect. Our community members describe GCP's core values to be.

- Being enthusiastic
- Being respectful
- Always striving to be helpful
- Treating people with compassion
- Welcoming everyone
- Being honest and trustworthy

WHO WE ARE

Community members: we use these words to describe the wide range of people in our community who oversee, organise and take part in our activities and services. Community members include: staff, volunteers, board members and individuals who use our services.

VISION

Our vision describes our wishes for the future and our deepest hopes. Even though we might not achieve our vision in our lifetime, it drives our efforts for future generations.

Our vision is for everyone to be safe, where people are valued and not judged and where people's voices are heard in Govan and Scotland. We want a fairer immigration system, one which allows asylum seekers to have paid work. We want to live in a world where there is no racism, where people have a sense of belonging and human rights are respected.

MISSION

Our mission describes our ambitions and aims for the next three years. Our mission guides us in the direction of our vision.

GCP's mission builds on our strengths: empowerment of community members, services, advice and policy.

Enabling and empowering:

- Work with our community members to build their skills, and, as much as possible, solve their own problems
- Community members to know their rights, and be able to advocate for each other
- Community members to have access to meaningful and decent employment
- Community members seeking asylum to fully understand and engage with the process
- Provide more opportunities for people to forge friendships and be mentored by their peers

Our services

- To be as accessible and as visible as possible
- To engage and support our most vulnerable community members
- To make sure that our community members have access to good advice
- To provide more opportunities for our community members to get to know this country and relax as a way to promote their health and wellbeing
- To make sure that staff and volunteers are well trained and supported

ADVOCACY AND POLICY

- Community members to know their rights and be able to advocate for each other
- Community members seeking asylum to fully understand their rights in the immigration system, its challenges and to engage with the process
- Works towards full and easy access to education for people in the asylum process and refugees
- Challenge prejudice towards asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, fostering positive encounters
- Make sure that our community members have access to good quality housing
- Works towards ending food poverty and insecurity in Govan

GOALS

Our goals describe what we can realistically achieve for our mission

Enabling and empowering

- Run information sessions, training courses and workshops for our community members to build their skills and be informed about relevant key topics (1)
- Ensure that our community members are better represented on our board of directors (2)
- Link our community members with relevant employment opportunities (3)
- Start a befriending service and mentoring programme for our community members (4)

Our services

- Improve accessibility to our services and offices (5)
- Outreach to organisations specialising in supporting survivors to ensure that they are aware of our services (6)
- Ensure our advice and advocacy services are of good quality and meet demand (7)
- Organise trips for our community members to get to know the UK, to relax, and to promote their health and wellbeing (8)
- Run regular training sessions for our staff, volunteers and community members as part of their continued professional and personal development (9)
- Ensure that both staff and volunteers receive regular support and supervision sessions (10)
- We all have the right to food - we will campaign to make that a right a reality in our community. In the meantime we will continue to provide food in a dignified way (11)

Advocacy & Policy

We will work community members to have their rights respected

- We want better access to education and learning for asylum seekers and refugees (12) - we will work with everyone we can make this happen
- We will work with the media, schools, and other stakeholders to challenge prejudice towards asylum seekers and refugees and contribute towards more positive coverage (13)
- We will work with the Scottish Government, the Home Office, Housing Providers, Registered Social Landlords (Housing associations) and other stakeholders to try and ensure that asylum seekers and refugees have good quality housing (14)
- We will work with community members to have their voices heard in what matters to them for a fairer, more equal Scotland (15)

ACTION PLAN

GOAL	ACTION	INDICATORS	TIMESCALE
1	Ensure that community members in the asylum process and refugees understand their rights, their entitlements and challenges with the system	We will provide information sessions on the asylum process for community members in the asylum process and refugees	6 sessions by Feb 2020 18 sessions by Feb 2021
2	Recruit community members to our board of directors	Our board of directors will consist a least a third of community members	By Feb 2021
3	Engage with local and national employers, and employability agencies to facilitate employment opportunities	We will help at least 50 community members up-skill or access employment opportunities	By Feb 2021
4	Start a mentoring and befriending programme for our people in the asylum process and refugees	We will facilitate mentoring and befriending for up to 200 individuals	65 by Feb 2019 200 by Feb 2021
5	Improve accessibility to our services and offices	(i) Leaflets on our core services printed in 4 main languages (ii) Open days are run twice a year (iii) Fit an appropriate workaround solution for wheelchair users to access our Govan office (iv) Explore the feasibility of increasing the functionality of our website for community members	(i) By Feb 2019 (ii) 2 days by Feb 2019 6 days by Feb 2021 (iii) By Feb 2019 (iv) By Feb 2019
6	Engage more with survivor focused organisations to help them be aware of our services for their signposting purposes	Promote our services to 12 survivor focused organisations	4 SF01 by Feb 2019 12 SF05 by Feb 2021
7	Improve our advice services and make sure they are monitored and developed appropriately	We will bring in an external organisation to review our advice services. We will register with the office of the immigration services commissioner. This is the UK regulator for providing legal immigration advice	Reviewed twice by Feb 2021 Level 1 achieved by Feb 2019 Level 2 achieved by Feb 2021
8	Provide more opportunities for community members to relax and promote their health and wellbeing	We will run trips to places in the UK for our community members	6 trips by Feb 2019 18 trips by Feb 2021

GOAL	ACTION	INDICATORS	TIMESCALE
9	Provide training for our staff & volunteers for their continued professional and personal development	We will run training sessions accessible for all staff, and volunteers and community members	6 sessions by Feb 2019 18 sessions by Feb 2021
10	Run regular support and supervision sessions for staff and volunteers	Implement support and supervision for all staff. Recruit a volunteer coordinator to further support our volunteers. Implement support and supervision for volunteers.	By Feb 2021 By Feb 2019 By August 2020
11	Improve our food distribution and work towards sustainability for our community members	We will improve the quality of the food we distribute to meet demand and improve health and well being	By Feb 2019 By Feb 2020
12	Advocate on behalf of asylum seekers to help them access further education	Engage with all Glasgow universities to encourage them to develop a scholarship scheme. Engage with the Scottish Government to promote universal access to higher education for asylum seekers	By Feb 2019 By Feb 2020
13	Challenge false perceptions of asylum seekers and refugees	Secure further funding for our Participatory Action Research Project Engage with nine media outlets to promote asylum and refugee issues to achieve more positive and informed coverage	By Feb 2019 By Feb 2021
14	Promote social justice casues as directed by our community members	Attend regular meetings with housing providers and organisations with a housing remit to advocate on behalf of community members.. Work with stakeholders to develop a 'good practice' guide for asylum housing professionals	Ongoing By Feb 2021
15	Promote good quality housing for asylum seekers and refugees through advocacy	Both the strategy group and Participatory Action Research group identify key topics Recruit a policy worker to help further our community member's agenda	Ongoing By Feb 2019
16	Promote good quality housing for asylum seekers and refugees through advocacy	Attend regular meetings with stakeholders housing providers and organisations with a housing remit to advocate on behalf of community members.& hold them to account. Work with stakeholders to develop a 'good practice' guide for asylum housing practitioners professionals.	Ongoing By May 2021
17	Promote social justice causes as directed by community members	Both the strategy group and Participatory Action Research group identify key topics. Recruit a policy worker to help further our community member's agenda	Ongoing By May 2019

EVALUATION

We are committed to ensuring that this plan is implemented and that it forms the basis for work for the next three years

To do so we will use the following mechanisms

- Our strategy group will meet quarterly to discuss actions and general progress.
- There will be an item on each board meeting agenda to monitor progress and implementation of the plan.
- Our participatory action research project will help evaluate our progress
- We will ask an external organisation to evaluate our progress two and a half years into this strategic plan.
- We commit to applying learning where we can as we implement this plan.
- We will use the above evaluation findings and our learning to inform our next strategic plan.





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