CWIN
Central & West Integration Network

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Guidebook for new asylum seekers in the hotel

New life in Glasgow

A guide to start

By the community for the community

COMMUNITY FUND
PEOPLE'S POSTCODE TRUST
Glasgow Wellbeing Fund
Women's Fund for Scotland Inspiring Women
MEARS
Glasgow CITY COUNCIL
BANK OF SCOTLAND Foundation
WHEELS IN MOTION GLASGOW
CORRA FOUNDATION voice • power • change
Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland
Supporting people and communities to power social change and secure justice

Introduction

We're a group of asylum seekers, who experienced life in the hotel and/or underwent the challenges faced by refuge seekers here. We're here to help you ease out these struggles.

We all know that living in a new country is never easy, especially when you're a new asylum seeker. Starting from scratch, everyone has to learn little by little until they can finally navigate through life and adapt into a new home with confidence.

This small handbook is developed by our dedicated community members, who belive that sharing knowledge and kindness is a powerful way to help each other. We condensed our lived experiences into this guidebook, so you can learn from us, and hopefully reduce your confusion when you're newly here!

We all assume that uncertainty and unfamiliarity are two of the biggest challenges faced by most asylum seekers. That's why this handbook is a "survival" strategy in which we aim to provide you with a holistic approach to help you not only integrate into a new society but also grab any chances for personal development and finding joy in life. To make it easier to understand, we use the body parts to demonstrate the journey of integration and self-discovery:

Brain: Mindset and knowledge you should have

Heart: Ways to handle your emotions

Hands: Useful skills and activities

Feet: Places and organizations offer support or free services

To overcome confusion, you need a clear thinking process. After each section, there are questions to guide your thinking. Grab a pen and jot down your answers - it might help you figure out your next step!

A. Brain

When you're new to a place, a realistic mindset strengthens your resilience, helping you face challenges and adjust more smoothly.

"Everyone comes to the UK with a dream. But you should know that life here may not be like what you imagine. If you choose this path, be ready for many challenges."

"Your journey is unique. Just because someone you know had a certain experience doesn't mean you will have the same. You need the right mindset, knowledge, and skills to start your new life."

"Take control of your life. Try to solve problems actively."

"Learn to live on your own. Take care of your mental and physical health."

These are organizations and centres that support you with essential services like SIM cards, information, and the first steps toward rebuilding your life. **You should identify your need, and actively seek support from such organizations.**

A. Brain 

🧠 Guiding questions:

What expectations do I have about life in the UK, and are they the same in reality?	Answer here:
What strengths, skills, or mindset will help me face the challenges ahead?	Answer here:

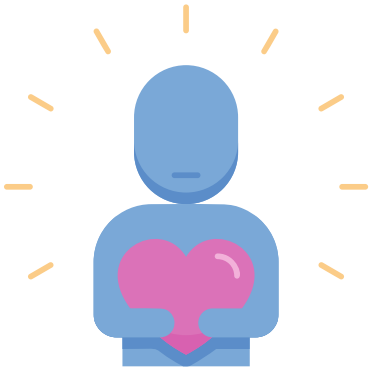
B. Heart

It’s indeed an overwhelming and uncertain journey. Don’t ignore your emotions!

It’s normal to feel many emotions—both good and bad. You might feel hopeful and angry, lonely but strong, worried but motivated. Respect your emotions. Let yourself feel them, and express them in healthy ways.

Understand that this journey can be hard. Bad things will affect your feelings, but try to stay positive because that will help you move forward.

Tips to handle emotions



Be kind to yourself

If you have a religion,
keep your faith and pray every day

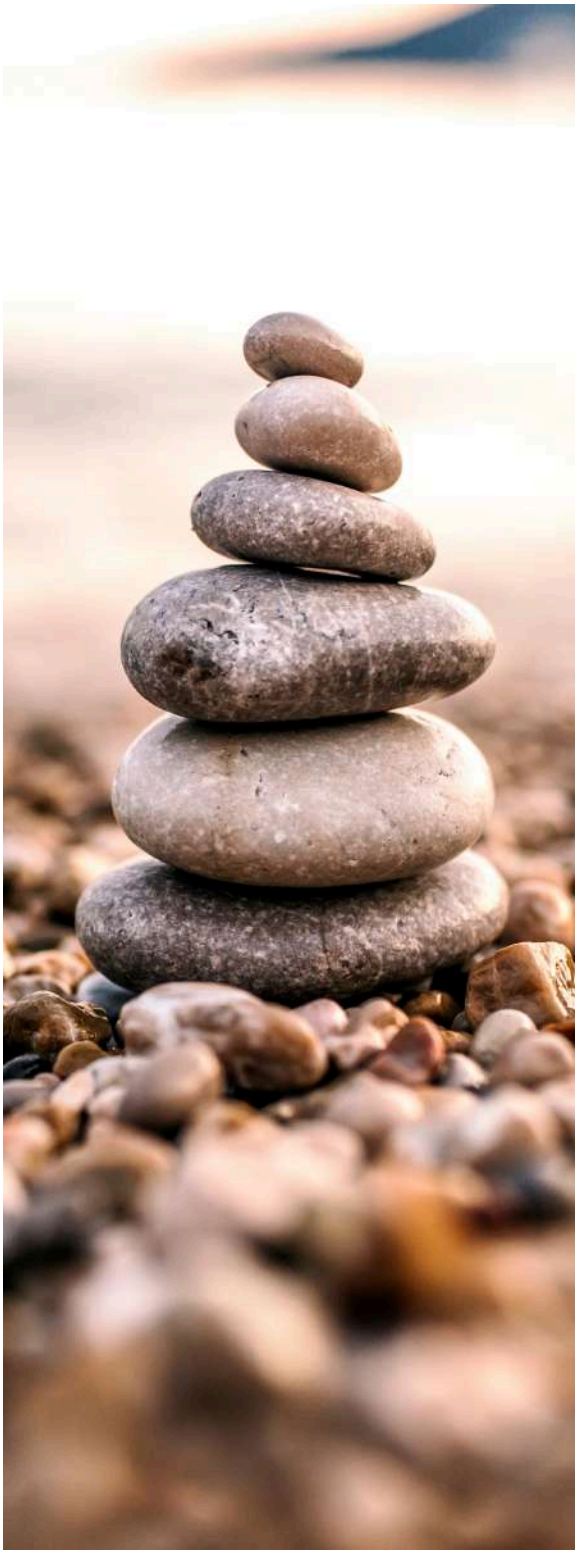
Find a friendly and welcoming community
that matches your interests and needs

Do activities to reduce stress and feel better
(see more in “Hands” section)

B. Heart

What communities/activities I can attend to help with my moods?

- **WOMEN GROUPS (Govan community project):** Safe spaces for refugee women to share, support, and grow together.
  - Postcode: G51 3PR
- **ART CLASSES for Refugees (Govan community project)**: Express yourself and explore your creativity
  - Postcode: G51 3PR
- **MACHINE CLASS & MUSIC CLASS (MASLOW'S community)**: Learn a skill or an instrument—no experience needed.
  - Postcode: G51 3BQ
- **HERBAL GROUP (CWIN)**: Discover the healing power of plants and nature in community.
  - Postcode: G3 6RE
- **ENGLISH CLASSES** at the Scottish Intercultural Association for Refugees: Learn English in a respectful and friendly setting.
  - Postcode: G2 1EQ
- **Maryhill Integration Network**: A welcoming space to ask questions, find guidance, and connect with classes and community activities
  - Postcode: G20 8TS
- **Milk Glasgow:** Support women from a migrant background, including refugees and asylum seekers.
  - Postcode: G42 7DF



B. Heart 

💓 Guiding questions:

What emotions am I feeling right now? Can I name them?	Answer here:
How do I usually deal with difficult feelings? Are those ways helpful or harmful?	Answer here:
What else can I do to feel better when I'm sad, angry, or stressed?	Answer here:

C. Hands 🙌

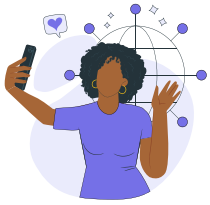
You hold the wheel - so steer your life toward happiness and self-confidence!

Take up a hobby:

- Hobbies help you relax, feel better, and meet new people.
- Try reading, writing, or joining art and craft classes like sewing, crocheting, or drawing. Even simple things like cleaning your room can help.

Practice English everyday:

- Language is the key to everything. Try to learn and practice English every day. Look for ESOL (English) classes or language exchange events near you.
- Being able to speak English will grow your confidence.



Prepare for a digital life:

- Life in the UK is very digital. You will use apps and websites for most things. Learn how to:
  - Use Google Maps (for directions)
  - Send emails and use Google tools
  - Be safe online and avoid scam

Upgrade your people skills:

- Life will be a bit easier if you are part of a community.
  - Try to make friends and build a network. Even small connections can help you grow.
  - Learn how to talk to people from different cultures and how to work with others peacefully.
- Volunteering is a great way to meet people, help others, and learn new things. It can also open new opportunities for the future. If you have time and want to help others, consider volunteering.
- Many local groups need volunteers. Choose a group you like, stay committed, and you'll grow a lot. Volunteering might not give you money, but it gives you skills, knowledge, and new friends.
- Staff might also support you more or write a good reference for you if you apply for programs later.

Get to know the transportation:

- Learn how to use public transport. Know how to buy tickets, the cheapest routes, and the working hours.
- Learn to use Google Maps so you don't get lost. (But sometimes getting lost is a fun way to explore!)
- If possible, learn to ride a bike—but remember, people drive on the **left** in the UK!

C. Hands 

🫶 Guidance questions:

What skills do I already have that can help me live better in the UK?	Answer here:
What is one new skill I want to learn to feel more confident or independent?	Answer here:
What activities or hobbies can I try to feel better, meet people, or learn something new?	Answer here:

D. Feet 

Go out one day, and come back with a basket full of new knowledge!

(Vietnamese proverb)

Go outside:

- Life in a hotel can feel boring or stressful. Try to go outside. Do some light exercise or play sports. Some groups (like Eskin) organize matches often.
- in the UK, many parks and museums are free. Use this chance to enjoy nature, reduce stress, and learn about your new home.

Join support groups:

- There are many community places in Glasgow. They offer food, clothes, activities, and support. But we know it can feel overwhelming at first. So just choose one group and try it.
- To make it easier, join events that give free food, pay for your travel, or offer things you need.
- Drop-in services:
  - These are places where you can go for help with daily problems. Try to find an organization that offers drop-in sessions.
  - It's better if you can speak to someone who understands your issue and has experience helping people.

D. Feet

These parks are beautiful spaces where you can relax, exercise, and feel connected to the land:

- Pollok Park – Forest paths, animals, and open fields.
- Kelvingrove Park – Near museums and full of city life and nature.
- Queen's Park – A quiet space to reflect and enjoy views of the city.
- Botanic Gardens – Discover plants from around the world and rest among greenhouses and riverside paths.

D. Feet 

🚶‍♀️ Guidance questions:

What do I need help with right now?	Answer here:
Where can I go to get this kind of help or support?	Answer here:
Set a small goal this week: maybe connect with a group or go somewhere new?	What's your little goal this week?

Acknowledgement

This handbook would not have been possible without the help of our dedicated community members. Their sincerity, kindness and resilience are reflected throughout the book.
Thank you Nahla, for your exceptional knowledge and geuine enthusiasm.
Thank you Alessia, for helping me curating the knowledge from our beloved community members.
A huge thank to CWIIN and all the staff for your generous support - both mentally and practically, which made it possible for me to bring this hand book to life.

To all the asylum seekers, I know this is indeed a daunting journey. Let's persevere and I hope you're all moving forward!

A Poem from Colombia – For the Children, For Us All

"Somos amigos"
Somos amigos del sol y del río,
jugamos juntos sin ningún lío.
En mi escuela todos cabemos,
si tú sonríes, todos lo hacemos.
Si uno cae, lo levantamos,
si hay tristeza, la abrazamos.
Unidos somos más que uno,
comunidad es todo en uno.

(Translation: We are friends of the sun and river, we play together without trouble. In my school we all belong—if you smile, we all do. If one falls, we lift them. If there's sadness, we embrace it. Together we are more than one—community is all in one.)

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