

Western Kurdistan Association

Palingswick House, 241 King Street, London W6 9LP

Tel. 020 8748 7874, Fax: 020 8741 6436,

e-mail: info@westernkurdistan.org.uk www.westernkurdistan.org.uk

Charity registration number: 1066236

WKA REPORT

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THE REPORT OF THE WESTERN KURDISTAN ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION, AIMS AND AREAS OF ASSISTANCE GIVEN

The Western Kurdistan Association was set up in October 1997 and has been registered charity since 26 November 1997. We started renting our offices at Palingswick House, 241 King Street, London W6 9LP on the 1st July 1997.

The main aim and purpose of the Western Kurdistan Association is to work with refugees from Kurdistan who have recently arrived in the UK, or have been settled here for a while. In this capacity we mainly provide interpreting and translation support, assistance in asylum and immigration issues, help them in gaining access to local services, including legal advice and information, education and health care. We also do a large amount of work in the area of housing, and help from the social services. Some of the main areas where assistance is given are as follows:

HOUSING

The provision of adequate housing for newly arrived refugees is a priority so that individuals can begin to relax and feel safe in their new environment. The consequences of their treatment, forced flight, the situation of death, destruction, rape and torture faced by them in their country of origin leaves them with feelings of fear, depression and helplessness that can only begin to be felt with once they feel themselves secure in their own home. The WKA team help refugees seek housing through the Council and through private landlords. Following on from this, we help them by interpreting letting agreements, Council Tax and housing benefit forms. This often leads to application being made for Income Support, Child Support and Family Credit while the refugees, many of whom have been deprived of their breadwinner, seek work and learn English. We are very conscious of the negative effect homelessness has on children and young people and try to deal with their cases as quickly as possible.

HEALTH

To arrange necessary with the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture through the individual's lawyer. In addition to physical health problems, many of the Kurds have psychological scars that we attempt to deal with both by counselling with us and by referring them to professionals. In particular we look carefully at women who are often embarrassed to talk of the stress they have suffered and need to be looked after very sympathetically and attentively.

IMMIGRATION

During last year we have helped about 2000 newly arrived Kurdish refugees apply for asylum. We not only provided them with advice and up to date information about the asylum procedure, but also gave them support documents on the background situation in their states of origin. The WKA provided them with help in filling in forms, in finding lawyers, and monitoring their handling of the cases and have supplied them with competent interpreters to help them through the process.

EDUCATION

The WKA puts people in touch with English language courses and for young people; we provide them with access to career counselling. We also circulate leaflets and newsletters in Kurdish, which contain not only information on the Kurdish situation throughout history, but Kurdish language lessons too. Many English people have found these very informative and interesting too. The WKA has held seminars on Kurdish history, language and culture, which have been very popular. We have held informal Kurdish and English language and computer courses, which we would like to establish on full time basis.

Programmes of Rojava Kurdistan's Radio

We are preparing our selves to have one hour daily broadcasting programme for each of following subjects to cover 300,000 Kurds in the UK:

- The Kurdish children and youths and their lives, because the youths are the future, and to take care of them today will save us a lot in the future.
- Research to provide real statistics about the Kurds in the UK.
- Genocide, discrimination and human rights.
- How to stop terrorism and to support democracy and civilisation.
- Prisoners of conscience and victims of torture.
- Family's problems; health, poverty, housing and immigration issues.
- Increase media professionals' and government understanding of the role of the media in a democratic society.
- Encourage the development of a legal framework for a free press,
- Peace, equal opportunities and justice for all people.
- How to find a job, training courses and develop skills, resources to become a useful member of society and away from crimes.
- English-Kurdish language lessons.
- How to find higher education world wide.
- Culture programme (history, music, song, drama and sport).
- Social events, which will be broadcast on air.

EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

- On 21st March, the WKA Music, Drama, Folklore groups performed at the Kurdish New Year celebrations.
- Establish Kurdish Studies Centre.
- Establish Kurdish Library, Archive and Heritage Centre.
- Establish a Kurdish radio, broadcasting in five languages.
- WKA hosted a cultural evening of Kurdish traditional songs and dancing which was attended and enjoyed by members of many different communities in London.
- The WKA with other Associations held a memorial seminar on the works and contribution made by Apo Osman Sabri (1905-1993), a noted Kurdish poet, intellectual and writer.
- In each year, the WKA held many seminars on the social and historical movements in the Kurdish society as conference for Kurdish Students and Youths.
- WKA delivered a petition to establish a programme in Kurdish language in the BBC World Service, and to prepare for Kurdish Radio.
- WKA participated with the activities of Refugees TV and Hammersmith Refugee Forum, Black Minority Ethnic Refugee, RAB, REAP, SKEIN and many others.
- In the year 2006 our Association established "Kurdistan Football Team" and won many times with other national football teams as tournaments.
- In each year our Association set up a course of "Computer and Internet" and English language for the Kurdish refugees of all ages.
- In each year our Association set up many courses and sessions for job and interview skills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank Renewal, KNC, KF and all members for their financial support. Also we would like to thank all refugees' organisations for their cooperation.

OFFICE AND DROP-IN ADVICE HOURS

The WKA office is open from 10am to 5pm Monday to Friday, The Drop-in Advice runs from 10.00 - 12.00am Monday, Wednesday and Friday, WKA staff can be contacted at any time outside these usual hours.

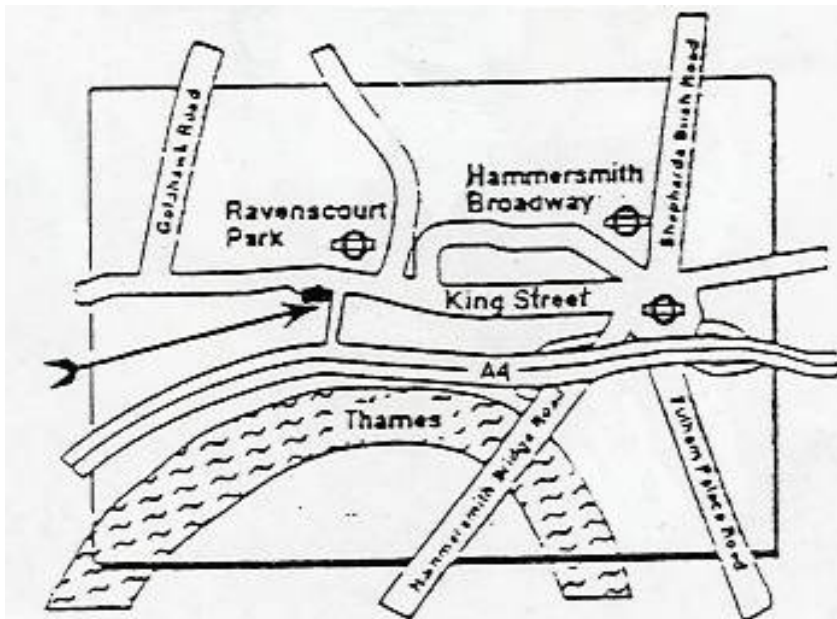
If you like further information and Assistance on the Association please contact the address below:

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PICTURES TAKEN AT DEFFERENT PROJECTS

Kurdistan Football Club one of the WKA successful projects for Kurdish youths in the United Kingdom, and Kurdish families run away from the zone of war, Kurdistan, in the way to the UK



English and computer course at Western Kurdistan Association



On the left the Kurdish community daily visiting the Kurdish Heritage Centre at WKA, on the right Mrs Della the Kurdish fashion designer presented a Kurdish lady dress to the Centre

