

Welcome to  
Warwickshire

# Refugee Week 2024



Lived stories of refugees finding  
sanctuary in Warwickshire 2024



Refugee  
Week



Warwickshire  
County Council



## Aliya

*This is my home in Warwickshire. It's very different my home in Afghanistan. Here is my kitchen. It is my favourite room. I am here cooking for my family.*



## When I think of Nuba Mountain

*I see forests, animals and beautiful mountains.*

*I hear people singing and dancing around a fire.*

*I smell the grass after the rain.*

*I feel loved.*



## Now I am in Stratford -Upon-Avon

*I see town with beautiful buildings: the RSC and Shakespeare's house.*

*I hear cars and buses.*

*I smell flowers on the trees and grass in the park.*

*I feel safe.*

## Entisar

## When I think of Kabul

*I see the beautiful mosque*

*I hear lesson of the Koran*

*I smell the flowers*

*I feel happy*

## Now I am in Nuneaton

*I see nice people*

*I hear the English lesson*

*I smell coffee*

*I feel quiet and safe*

## Parween

*I live in Kineton village, England. This is a small and nice village. The people are very kind and friendly and also this village is quiet and safe. I live with my family, my husband and children.*

## Farzana





### **When I think of Afghanistan**

*I see my family  
I hear happy sounds  
I smell mantu in the kitchen  
I feel happy*

### **Now I am in Nuneaton**

*I see shops and the job centre  
I hear the television at the GP  
I smell flowers  
I feel safe with my family*

**Bibi**



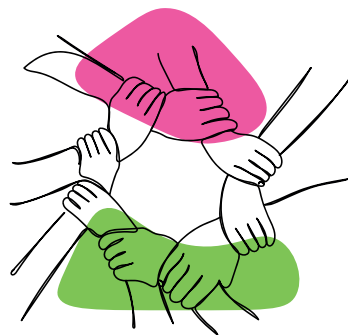
*My home is near Stratford-upon-Avon. I like Stratford-upon-Avon town because this town has an ancient history and also Shakespeare lived here. This area has very good places to visit. When I saw this town, I learned about English history. This area is very interesting for me.*

### **Farzana**

**This photo is the theatre in Stratford, The photographer is Eric Kingdom via Unsplash.**

*My name is Fatima. I come from Afghanistan. Now I live in Rugby with my husband and my two daughters and three boys. We live in a semi detached house with a nice kitchen, three bedrooms, bathroom and a big living room. My bedroom is my favourite room it is beautiful. In front of my house is a park and a garden at the back.  
I love my home!*

**Fatima**





### **When I think of Afghanistan**

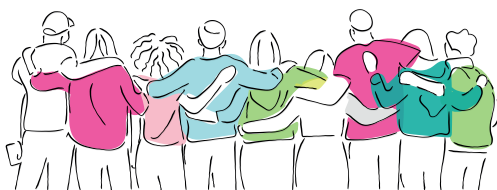
*I see my relatives  
I hear every time the voice of the birds  
I smell my mother delicious cooking  
I feel very happy with family*

### **Now I am in England**

*I see every time raining  
I hear bell of church  
I smell cooking in my kitchen  
I feel very lonely*

### **Marzia**

**This photo is near my  
friend's home in Bradford.  
I like the rainbow.**



My name is Nahida. I am from Afghanistan. I am married and have four children, one daughter and three boys. I live in Rugby in a semi detached house. There is a kitchen, two bathrooms and three bedrooms. My favourite room the kitchen. I like cook for my family. My house easy for school, GP, bus stop and the park. I am very happy in Rugby.

### **Nahida**



### **When I think of Kabul**

*I see beautiful flowers.  
I hear Azan, the call to prayer.  
I smell, when my Mum cooks  
it smells nice.  
I feel happy.*

### **Now I'm in Nuneaton**

*I see nice people.  
I hear the ambulances and the  
fire engine.  
I smell coffee.  
I feel quiet and safe.*

### **Shazia**

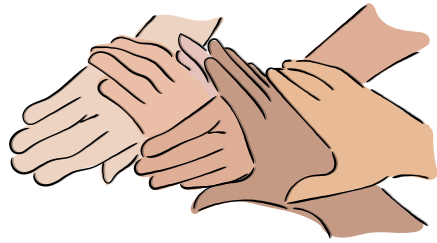






### **When I think of my home in Afghanistan**

*I see the lovely garden with flowers, trees,  
apples, grapes and peaches.  
I hear birds in the garden and the  
call to prayer at the mosque.  
I smell flowers.  
I feel happy.*



### **Now I am in Nuneaton**

*I see rain  
I hear busy cars  
I smell the grass in the park  
I feel happy*

### **Shakiba**

**This photo is Riversley Park,  
Nuneaton. It is near my home  
and my family walks here.**



### **When I think of Afghanistan**

*I see Kabul. Very nice city.  
I hear happy songs.  
I smell the good atmosphere  
of the homeland.  
I feel we were happy in  
our country.*

### **But now I am in Nuneaton**

*I see a big town and  
beautiful country.  
I hear English lessons.  
I smell cooking in my kitchen.  
I feel relaxed and safe.*

### **Sahra**





### **When I think of Kabul**

*I see my mother.  
I hear Azan, the call to prayer.  
I smell my mother cooking chicken.  
I feel happy.*

### **But now I am in Nuneaton**

*I see nice people.  
I hear ambulance and fire  
engine near my house.  
I smell coffee.  
I feel quiet and safe.*

**This photo is of the river near my home in Nuneaton. I walk there with my family.**

### **Zarghona**



### **Our Home: No Boundaries**

*Even though we live in a different area now, I am reminded that love knows no bounds and happiness can be found wherever we are under the same sky.*

**Debbie**

*We live in a small house in Atherstone with two bedrooms. One of them belongs to me and my wife, and the other to the children. There is a hall in which there is a TV and a sofa. The best place is the kitchen. We have a big kitchen. It has a fridge, stove, microwave and cupboards. We eat at a large dining table. Near our house there is a kindergarten, a supermarket, a school and a canal. I love my house very much. I feel very comfortable and relaxed in it.*

**Andrii**





## At the End of the Rainbow

Some people like watching and listening to the sea, but I love staring at the sky and the trees. Thus, I've taken lots of photos of the sky and different kind of trees. Its hard for me to choose only one to share, haha!

Finally I picked this one, because it is a magical moment for me : At the end of the rainbow, a little child is playing happily under the care of his mom. It's so sweet and warm. I do hope all refugees can find happiness in their new home.



## Bill



Hong Kong my home my hometown has given me a lot of memories, movies, Food and music.

Hong Kong has a lot of people living in the small area, but they work very hard and a lot of power. Everyone has made this city and improved it. When you look down from Victoria peak, you will find that this city is very beautiful.

This is the result of all the Hong Kong people. I love my home, Hong Kong.

**Chun**

## Our Home

Morning starts with kitchen clanging,  
Voices in the kitchen are chatting.  
Mum welcomes you to breakfast,  
Family is united again, the best.

Going to school, a family's daily quest,  
Neighbours greeting you, it's the best  
Back home, family greets again,  
In our place, love's always near.

A comfortable place can be,  
The banging comes from the kitchen, you see.  
Brothers and sisters helping each other,  
Mum shouts 'dinner!'; we gather, greeting each other.

The family chats, joys all around  
Everyone's happy, as night comes down.  
After going to bed, the process repeats,  
In our home's hug, joy meets.

**Cynthia and her son Clayton (aged 13)**

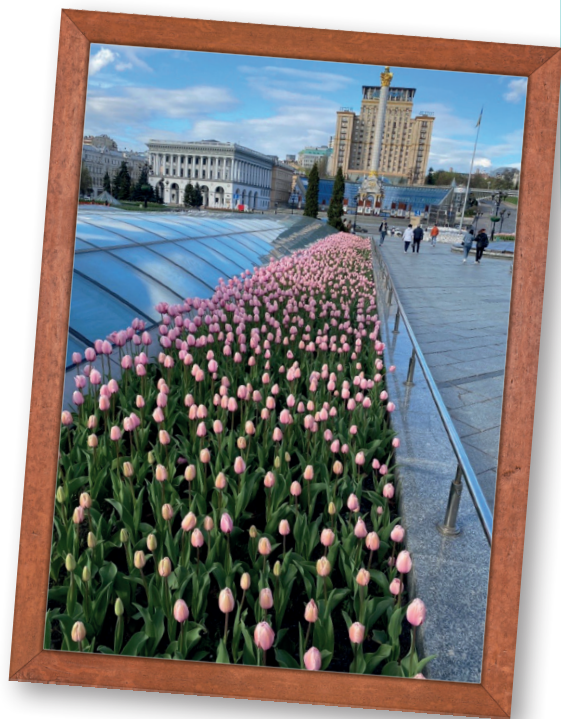






## Hello!

I would like to tell you about myself. My name is **Natalia**. I am from Ukraine, from the city of Kyiv. Two years ago, the war started in Ukraine and we moved to Britain with my son and daughter-in-law (to escape the war). We live in Coleshill now. My husband, parents, friends and relatives stayed in Ukraine. I miss them very much and my favourite city on earth. I would like to share these photos with you.



The main street of Kyiv is Maidan Nezalezhnosti. We used to love walking around it. It is especially beautiful in spring.

This is the village of Yatsiuki where my parents live, and before them my grandparents lived. The nature is very beautiful there. We used to pick mushrooms and berries together. There are fish in this lake: carp and white cupids. It is also very beautiful in winter. This pond is right next to our house. A view of the beautiful nature.



**I miss my home.**







*I am from Hong Kong and came to the UK for about three years. Now I live in Long Itchington . I live in a flat with my family. My flat has two rooms, a kitchen, a living room and two bathrooms. Long Itchington is a very beautiful place. Everyone is very friendly. It's just not convenient for food shopping!*

*The location of this photo is in front of the gate of my son's school. It is also the place where my son plays with his friends after school. Seeing my son having fun with his friends makes me feel so grateful.*



**Zhen**



*I live in Nuneaton. It's a peaceful and comfortable town. I really enjoy living here. Even though it is a small it it's also very convenient for shopping. There are shops selling daily necessities nearby. I like the road to my house. There are big trees on both sides. When the sun is shining, I often drive on this road and see the blue sky and white clouds. This makes me feel very happy and moved because it is so beautiful.*

**Sammy**





I come from Hong Kong and I live in Rugby now. I came to UK 10 months ago.

I moved to this place in Hong Kong when I got married. I lived there for 33 years ago. There is a small park and I walked in the park with my family after dinner. I have happy memories of my home before 2019.

**Sam**



Everyone wants a loving and comfortable home. I live in Nuneaton with my family. This place has a quiet environment and the people are friendly and polite. There are parks, schools, clinics, train station, shops and many supermarkets nearby. Shopping is convenient. I only take about one hour to drive to larger cities such as Birmingham and Leicester.



I like to watch cooking shows and learn to cook for my family. After dinner, we like to sit on the sofa and watch TV or watch the night view in the garden. This is my lovely home.

**May**

I live in Nuneaton. The atmosphere in this part of the town is friendly. It makes me feel like I am at home.

**Mandy**







Hello, I'm **Katerina**, I'm from Ukraine and this is my favourite city Chernomorsk in Ukraine where I lived, and here are some photos: this is the embankment of the Black Sea beach. I love my city with all my heart and miss you!



I love to see the rainbow, it makes me happy and it also represents the end of the bad weather and runs to good things. At home, I always can see it after it rains.

**Kenneth**

I am from Hong Kong. I have lived in Kenilworth for eight months. It is a quiet place. It is very close to my daughter's school. She can get to school in ten minutes on foot. My house is near the Sport Centre. I play badminton twice a week there with my family. When I go to buy some groceries, I can go to Kenilworth main street in twenty five minutes on foot or drive for five minutes. There are many stores in my neighborhood. There is a hair salon, a post office, a library and a bank. Best of all, my neighborhood has a park and castle. My friends and I often have a walk in it. I really like my neighborhood and my new home.

**Joe**





*I come from Hong Kong, my previous home had many high buildings, its beautiful.*



*The difference from my previous home is that I have many garden work and I can see the very big lovely sky.*



**Finally, what is my home meaning?  
My answer is in the picture as below**



**Ken**

*Our home, a sanctuary of love and laughter. Each room holds warm embraces, each corner echoes stories. In its warmth, we find solace, in its walls, we build dreams. Home, where our hearts reside.*

**Gary**



*This is my Father house it is big house it has a lot of grapes, pear, plum, and it has different kinds of flowers. The photo is Kabul.*

**Weda**







*I live in Warwick. I live in a beautiful house, it has two floors.*



*This is a good place to relax.*



*The house has three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom.*



*The garden has beautiful flowers, plants and trees.*



*There is a small beautiful garden behind the house.*



*Sometimes we drink tea in the garden.*

**Natalia**





## HOME



My name is **Zoe**. I come from Hong Kong.  
I have been in the UK for two years.  
I remember when I was living in Hong Kong.....

There are many people in a small place.

There are many tall buildings: commercial, residential apartments and hotels



I was living in a flat on 22nd floor of an apartment building.  
This is the window view from my previous home in Hong Kong.







*This is also a view near my previous home in Hong Kong.*



*I moved my home to the UK two years ago.*

*Now, I am living in a house with my family in Nuneaton.*



*This is the small park near my previous home which built on the top-roof of a shopping mall.*



*There is a park in front of my house. I relax when I look outside of the window.*



*There are beautiful flowers everywhere near my home.*





There is a big country park  
near to where I live.



I feel the sky of my new  
home in the UK is bigger  
and wider than Hong Kong.



There are fun  
playing facilities  
which my children  
really love.



This is my local  
Baptist Church  
near my home.  
I go there to  
play the piano  
every Sunday.



**I look forward to a  
brighter life in future.**



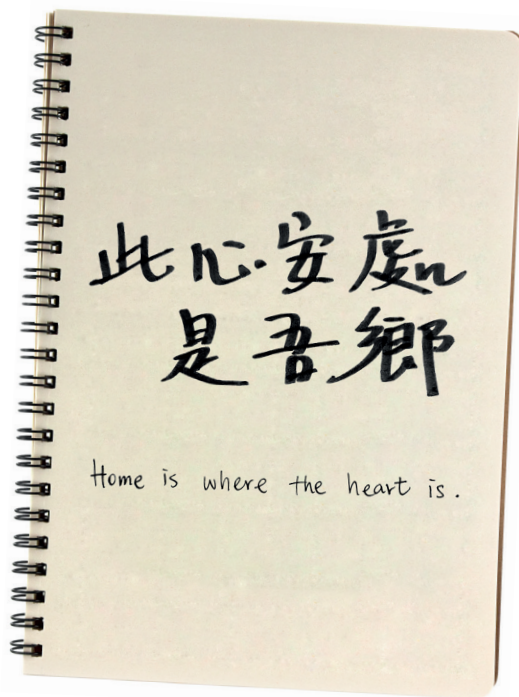




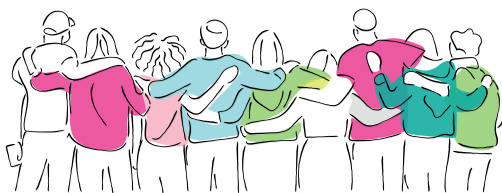
Wherever can make my soul  
peaceful, that is my hometown.

For this moment, I would say  
British is my home town.

### Best wishes Bowie



**This is a traditional Chinese quote**



### Our Home

This marked my second attendance at The Leamington Lantern Parade, and this time, I not only joined the walk but also crafted my own lantern. I'm incredibly grateful that the Council arranged the workshop ahead of the event, and I feel fortunate to have been able to participate. From starting with nothing to creating a Woodstock-inspired masterpiece, the journey was filled with joy and a profound sense of accomplishment. Despite the rain, it failed to dampen the spirits of the attendees. Experiencing the unwavering enthusiasm of the crowd was truly remarkable. It's moments like these that make me appreciate the strong sense of community that exists in my hometown.

### Sannie





## **Feelings of My Home**

Familiar sounds around  
you, yet you feel cold  
Long days under the sun, but  
no time to play with her  
Small in size, building dominates  
when you look up  
People love Nature, Yet you can  
only see the concrete forest  
Loved ones are near, but no  
time to stick together  
Where I grew up, slowly fading,  
leaving me breathless.  
Language Barriers, but warmth  
greets me in the street  
Short days under the sun, yet  
always time to chase after her  
vast in size, with countless stars  
adorning when you look up  
Peaceful walks in the deep forest,  
pretty flowers that greets my eyes  
Loved ones are distant, but  
we meet and greet often  
Where I feel strange, yet  
she beckons me to pause, to  
appreciate, to breathe.

**Kathy**



**Lion Rock @ Hong Kong**



**Lion Rock @ Cheddar Gorge**





## Our Home

HOME is the freedom of a crystal-blue sky and a golden wheat field.

When I open my front door, I see a field up to the horizon. When I cook in my kitchen, I enjoy the endless forest along the river. I feel this breathtaking landscape as an extension of my loving home.

HOME is a mind-blowing flavour of sunflower and buckwheat honey, a bitterness of guelder rose.

HOME is just cooked bread, red borsch and vareniki, cooked for the family to enjoy together.

Food that comes from childhood - the same recipes and dishes that come from my grandmother to my mother and to me, to feel family connection and roots.

HOME is birds' and grasshoppers' songs, periwinkle and marigold scent, under the stars or in the sunshine.

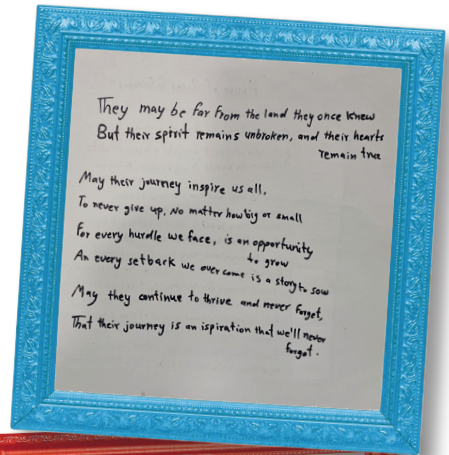
Wherever I live, I close my eyes and feel my home in my heart.

## Tatiana

When I think of Hong Kong  
I see lots of people  
I hear many complaints  
I smell car gas on the road  
I feel rush

But now I am in United Kingdom  
I see lots of grasses  
I hear many appreciations  
I smell fresh air at the park  
I feel calm

## Morna



## Younos & Fatima







## Home

Anybody home?

I can see children playing.

Home sweet home!

I can hear people laughing.

What's a home?

It can be a house.

It can be a flat.

A home is a warm shelter  
for the family.

Where's my home?

It can be in the East.

It can be in the West.

My home is a place where  
my heart feels safe.



**Karen**

*After rains, there's always a rainbow.*

## What is YOUR HOME?

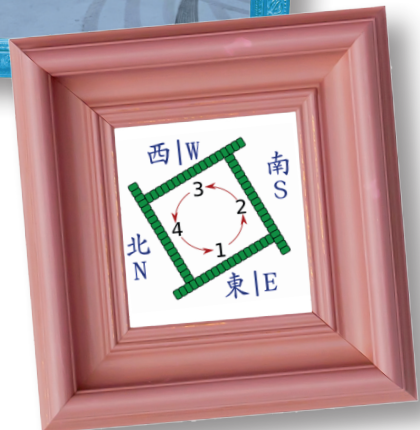
The living place of your family's members with you is home. Home is the place where you feel free, comfort and relaxing. Are those all? More than that should be added four 'P's. Those are privacy, protect, proactive and patience.

Privacy, your home is a private area and is not exposed to others.

Protect, you are safe at home.  
Your family and you are willing  
to protect each other.

Proactive, you are please to do  
anything to make your home better.

Patience, you are welcome to home.







## How to become YOUR HOME?

The environment is always changing. You will move to one place to other places due to study, work, politics, wars and disasters. If you can see, smell, eat and hear something related to your home, the new place will be become your home then.

When I go back to home, I am eager to see my family. It is proven that I am back to home, MY HOME. There is an expert suggested that you will be easily to adopt the new environment if you see something in your previous home. For example, games.

The scent is one of senses makes you feel comfort and go back to home. It can be scent of foods, flowers or perfume. But it should be specified in your original home.

Each culture has its own foods. You can cook and eat your traditional or your mother's cuisines. It is a taste of your home. My hometown has a motto 'All the back of living things are facing the sky then can eat.' It is shown that we love to eat. But we only eat seafood, beef, pork, lamb and poultry.

Listen your native language songs. You should migrate to the communities and use the local language. Most of us are glad to hear our native language. The feeling is kind and touching.

All those senses are already remembered in your mind. The place where you can do anything of the above mentioned then will be your home.

Now, I have been here and here is my home. No matter the weather is.

### Matthew



I took this picture in Batsford Garden Centre. This picture reminds me of my country where there is plenty of sunshine. I like it because I like trail under the sunshine.

### Ken





*In my opinion, home is not a place. Home is the sum of your feelings experienced in one place. Home is where the heart is happy and peaceful.*

### **Basira**



*This is Riversley Park in Nuneaton it has a museum.*

*It's near the Nuneaton town.*

*It has a lot of flowers.*

*It's a beautiful park.*

*This park has a nice Canal.*

*The flowers of this park are very beautiful and fragrant in spring.*

### **Fazel**



*In 2021, with all the trouble in Afghanistan, my family and I had to leave and go to the UK. Before that, we lived in Kabul, where I worked at the British embassy.*

*Life was good there with my parents, wife and two kids. Even though leaving was hard, we saw it as a chance to start a new life.*

*Now we live in Warwickshire, UK, with our family of five, including our two-year-old daughter. I work self-employed now and am learning English to improve my language skills. It hasn't been easy, but we're getting through it. I'm excited to share what I've learned and talk about how we've dealt with tough times and grown stronger because of them.*

*Last year, I lost my mother, and I couldn't attend her funeral. My father is still with us and now lives with my brother back home. I miss my dad dearly and keep my mother in prayers always.*

### **Qayum**





## **Welcome to Warwickshire!**

Warwickshire has a proud history of welcoming and providing ongoing support to those fleeing from conflicts around the globe, and will continue to do so. Alongside working with existing communities, WCC, local community groups, educators, healthcare providers and organisations collaborate to ensure people new to the region, including those who have experienced forced migration following experiences of displacement, war or persecution can connect and do well.

Over the past year, a substantial number of families and individuals have arrived via different migration schemes to live in the county.

The work in this book was collated by the ESOL staff on the Migration Team at WCC following work in classes on the theme of 'Our Home'. The contributions come from English learners ranging from beginners to advanced. Learners are from countries including Ukraine, Afghanistan, Sudan and Hong Kong.





For more information about WCC Migration services you can visit:  
**[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/migration-services](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/migration-services)**



For the Refugee week you can find more information by visiting:  
**[refugeeweek.org.uk/](http://refugeeweek.org.uk/)**



**Warwickshire**  
County Council

