

Case Studies

Noma

Noma is a 60 year old Muslim woman of Syrian origin with two sisters and two brothers. For the first seven years of her life she enjoyed a privileged childhood growing up in Syria as the daughter of a high ranking army officer. However when the then President was forcing her father to do something he did not think was right, her father took his wife and children initially to Lebanon, where Noma's mother was from, whilst he did an MSc in Law and on his graduation he settled in Saudi Arabia and then sent for his family. Noma was to live in Saudi for 17 years. As her family moved around a lot, her education was often disrupted and so her mother got a home tutor for her and she eventually studied Social Science at university.

Noma married in 1980 and at the time, her husband had got a place at Manchester University to study Chemical Engineering. So the couple settled in Ashton-under-Lyne whilst he studied, her husband obtaining an M.Sc in Chemical Engineering at UMIST and then doing his post graduate studies at Lancaster University. He then worked in Lancaster for a further 4 years. During this initial period in England, their family of one son and three daughters were born.

Noma's husband was then offered a research job in Saudi which led to him becoming an Associate Professor at both Oxford and London Universities because of his particular specialism but Noma wished to point out that in Saudi, only Saudi nationals are awarded honorary degrees. Therefore after 13 years living in the UK, Noma and her husband and their family returned to live in Saudi. Her husband's work took him all over the world and Noma would often accompany him on his business trips, as well as the family holidaying extensively on every continent.

Some time ago, in thinking where she and her husband might live out their retirement together, Noma realised that a return to her Mother country, Syria was impossible, as was remaining in Saudi Arabia. Seemingly, unless born in Saudi, you are always a foreigner and once you are no longer of any use to the Saudi's because you are too old or can no longer contribute to the economy, then you have to leave the country. Having lived 13 years in the UK, Noma therefore sought asylum in Britain 3 years ago and was sent to Oldham. She now has refugee status with leave to remain in the UK until 25.05.22 after which she hopes to be granted permanent leave to remain in the UK.



Holy Trinity Community Centre, Dean Street,
Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 7HD

T: 0161 339 0236 E: holytrinityccc@outlook.com
W: www.htccc.org



Case Studies

Noma has spent the last 3 years preparing a home for when her husband, hopefully, joins her in the UK. However, increasingly, she began to feel isolated, lonely and depressed – it is only this past Christmas that she has spoken to any of her neighbours for the first time. Her only daughter in the UK lives in Ashton and on a visit to see her last Summer, Noma shared with her how depressed she was feeling. Her daughter therefore suggested she visit the Health and Well-Being Clinic in Ashton where she met Nila, the Chair of Khush-Amdid, a luncheon club which meets in Holy Trinity each Monday. Nila felt that Noma might benefit from some of the activities on offer through the PPP Project and so it was that Noma started to attend the ESOL class each Tuesday. She then started to attend the Neo-Natal Knitters' Group and the Exercise class and as her mental well being improved, she became a volunteer in the ESOL class. As her Mother tongue is Arabic, Noma is an asset to the class. She is very eager to take advantage of anything on offer in the Centre and hopes to continue to improve her language skills and her written English. She is currently also a member of the Creative Writing class and has attended IT classes.

Noma recognises how very much her life has changed for the better since coming to the Centre where, she says, everyone is so very friendly.



Holy Trinity Community Centre, Dean Street,
Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 7HD

T: 0161 339 0236 E: holytrinityccc@outlook.com
W: www.htccc.org

