



# Lead Refugee Support Worker

Role brief  
October 2021

# A message from our Head of Client Services

Thank you so much for your interest in our new Lead Refugee Support Worker role. I hope that this pack will give you all the information that you need to help you decide whether this role might be for you.

The Boaz Trust is a Manchester based charity founded in 2004 by Dave Smith as an outworking of his Christian faith, reflecting his desire to see some of the most marginalised people in our communities access safety, justice, hospitality and kindness. We've grown significantly since 2004 as we now manage over 20 properties and we are able to provide accommodation for around 80 people at one time. As we look to the future, we want to make sure we are sustainable and ready to meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. These are challenging but exciting times!

As Lead Refugee Support Worker, you will be the main contact for refugee support work at Boaz and will be managing external relationships and partnerships to improve our services, as well as continuing to develop our package of refugee support work. In this role, you would also be expected to work with men and women aged over 18 with refugee status, who are accommodated by the Boaz Trust in our shared housing scheme. You will have a strong working knowledge of navigating the welfare benefits system, and enjoy working holistically with those you support.

This is a great opportunity for you if you are confident and experienced in supporting people from diverse backgrounds as they work towards finding stable housing, financial stability, education, and employment.

I hope this recruitment pack provides all the information you need as you consider applying for this exciting role with the Boaz Trust.

With kind regards,

Katie Lifford  
Head of Client Services



## Our work

The Boaz Trust provides accommodation and support for people who have become destitute and homeless after receiving a decision (positive or negative) on their asylum claim.

Over the last 16 years our organisation has grown from a small informal hosting scheme into an organisation that during 2019-20 accommodated 143 individuals across 21 shared houses, local hosts, and our Winter Night Shelter. Pre-Covid we were grateful for over 300 people who volunteered with us each year, mainly through our night shelter.

Within our portfolio of housing, most of the properties are owned by individual supporters, others by Green Pastures and two are owned by a local housing association, Arawak Walton, who we work in close partnership with. 11 of the houses are for people who have had their asylum claims refused and 10 are for people who have been granted refugee status. Our refugee clients are entitled to work and claim benefits and pay rent. The income we generate from this housing contributes towards our housing for people who have no recourse to public funds and our wider work in general.

Alongside safe and stable accommodation, we offer our clients one to one support that is flexible and holistic. Our support is tailored to the needs and situation of each individual, and for clients with refugee status covers practical help including registering with GPs, wellbeing support, as well as supporting people in to alternative accommodation. We usually offer 12 months of accommodation and support, which provides some stability and space to support recovery from destitution and their journey here to the UK. We also give space and time to work towards a longer term solution to the specific situation that led to them becoming homeless.



We listen to and work closely with our clients to offer a service that effectively supports people before they reach crisis point or shortly after, reducing the potential impact of falling into long term destitution. Many people we work with who have had asylum applications refused will go on to submit fresh claims which means they are entitled to asylum support and accommodation while they wait for a decision. For clients who have already been granted refugee status, we support them to access training, education or employment. We provide training and support to ensure that, as refugee clients come to the end of their time with us, they are equipped and confident to move on positively into their own tenancies.

We work in close partnership with many local and national organisations and are continuing to build new relationships with voluntary and statutory organisations so that we can see an even bigger impact for people seeking sanctuary. We are founder members of the NACCOM Network and we are also proud to be part of the new Step Change consortium in Greater Manchester which has a vision to see Greater Manchester becoming even more welcoming to refugees and those seeking asylum.

Of course, our work has been significantly affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. We have had to change the way we work, providing support online, over the phone and in safe, socially distant ways where possible. We sadly had to pause our night shelter and hosting scheme, but in late 2020 we were able to pilot a new floating support offer for people who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and who had accessed temporary accommodation through A Bed Every Night or Everyone In accommodation. In total, over the past year we have supported over 120 people, including 98 who have stayed in one of our shared houses. We are proud of what we have achieved and the number of people we have been able to support despite the challenging circumstances we have all faced.

Things never stand still at Boaz. We look ahead to a year that will see continued debate on the Government's New Plan for Immigration. We are investing in our advocacy and communications work so that we can speak out with and for people seeking sanctuary and support others to do the same. We see so many new opportunities with partnerships and conversations opening up locally, regionally and nationally around homelessness and immigration.





# About the role

This is a part-time role (4 days) working collaboratively with another refugee support worker in this area of our work, which we have developed over the last few years.

As Lead Refugee Support Worker you'll become a vital member of our frontline team, helping us to meet our organisational objective to deliver a 'sustainable refugee support programme, enabling refugees to achieve economic wellbeing, safe, healthy and fulfilling lives while providing regular income (through rent) to Boaz.' We currently accommodate 34 refugees in our shared houses, but we hope to increase this number in the months ahead.

As the main contact for refugee support work at Boaz, you'll build and maintain excellent external partner relationships, seeking out opportunities to benefit people living in Boaz accommodation. Your role will be significant in developing Boaz's model of refugee support including tenancy training, support with benefits, and accessing move on accommodation options. You'll also be responsible for providing support to your own case load of people with refugee status who are accommodated by the Boaz Trust, as well as representing Boaz and our clients at external events.

You'll need to work collaboratively with the Boaz team and external agencies and services, to ensure understanding of best practice for the people living in Boaz accommodation. This will include developing, recommending and implementing changes to refugee support where needed and ensuring all internal guidance and support is up to date.

This role requires good organisation and use of time, as well as managing the tension between being 'the landlord' and a support worker. High emotional intelligence and understanding of the people you're working with will be needed. While the staff team are continuing to work mostly remotely, you will need to show creativity and initiative in the role as you work with people in Boaz accommodation.

You'll have great communication skills, and a good understanding of the asylum process in the UK, as well as an understanding of the range of backgrounds and experiences that people with refugee status will have come from. You will bring your skills and experience from similar roles (for example through your work in the housing or refugee sectors) to help us continue to develop the tools and resources we need to provide an excellent package of support to our clients.



# Working at Boaz

## Our purpose, vision & mission

Our **purpose** is to end destitution amongst asylum seekers and refugees

Our **vision** is life in all its fullness for people seeking sanctuary in the UK

Our **mission** is to:

- End destitution amongst people seeking sanctuary
- Empower people seeking sanctuary to lead fulfilling lives
- Equip churches to serve people seeking sanctuary in their communities and congregations

## Our organisational values

The values which define how we seek to work as an organisation are: :

**Christ-centred** (rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ, we seek to serve those who society sees as the least, the last and the lost)

**Excellence** (we strive for professional excellence with integrity in all our working practices)

**Empowering others** (we want to see the people we work with, including clients, volunteers, staff and supporters, equipped and released to discover meaning and purpose in their lives.)

**Restless for justice** (we shine a light on injustice, especially where people seeking sanctuary are treated unfairly and we will fight to see change happen)

**Servant-hearted** (we adopt an attitude of service within the organisation and beyond, putting the needs of others before our own)

**Generous** (we extend a welcome to all we meet, sharing hospitality, kindness and love, and treating everyone with dignity, regardless of their background)

## Our competencies

Our values underpin our competency framework as a whole, showing what we should see and experience when these values are lived out:

**Valuing people:** Seeing and affirming the dignity and worth of all those we encounter with generosity and genuine respect and compassion.

**Team orientated:** Valuing being part of a team, working sensitively and collaboratively in support of our individual and shared responsibilities.

**Working strategically:** Taking smart approaches to all aspects of our working life to increase the effectiveness, flexibility and sustainability of our individual work and the wider work of Boaz.

**Prizing thriving:** Learning how we can support our health in all senses to flourish in life and navigate the hard times more effectively, supporting others to do the same.

**Championing Boaz & the vision:** Acting as a representative of Boaz and our clients in our 'external world' to increase awareness and support, and to seek positive change.

**Focused on growth:** Recognising that development is an ongoing state by taking responsibility for our own individual growth and supporting the wider growth of the team.

**Seeking excellence:** Being motivated and enthusiastic to see all aspects of Boaz life improved, both in our individual work and also wherever we have influence and can support others and the organisation to be better.

## What you can expect

As Lead Refugee Support Worker, you will find yourself in a rewarding role with the opportunity to make a tangible difference for some of those facing severe hardship and exclusion in our local communities.

You will join a committed and friendly team to work within a supportive culture that values people. Our sense of Christian identity is certainly important to who we are as an organisation and underpins all that we do. The daily times of combined team meeting, sharing and prayer are key to helping the team function and thrive. That said, we seek to work inclusively, recognising and valuing the many ways in which diversity exists. We work with a diverse range of people prioritising respect and their dignity, and do not evangelise or seek to impose our beliefs.

Part of our ethos is that people can offer their best when the holistic nature of their lives is recognised, and as such have long offered flexibility to all staff. In response to the impact of Covid, and experience gained, we are exploring hybrid working; seeking an approach that best balances our responsibilities to our clients and excellent service with offering our team their preferred work patterns.

At Boaz we're committed to living out our values and we are keen to retain the positive elements of our culture as we grow. For example, one of our values is servant-heartedness, and this applies to how we treat each other as much as how we work with our clients. We all share in the things that keep the office ticking over and don't celebrate hierarchy.

Our culture is strongly pro-thriving (our internal name for all things wellbeing related). We are anti-presenteeism and long hours, constantly working to ensure that not only our clients, but all of us know 'life in all its fullness' and truly thrive.

We value staff engagement and feedback and offer some great benefits, including our sickness absence pay, holiday package and pension scheme. We also seek non-financial ways to reward and show we value staff, which includes an additional 3 days off over the Christmas period and generosity in offering paid time off in various contexts where we are not obliged to.

Along with being a great organisation to work in, we hope that you would find the sense of purpose and contributing to solutions and practices that make ours a better society for those seeking sanctuary in the UK, really compelling reasons to join us.

## Key benefits

- **Salary £19, 200.00 - 20, 800.00 (Full Time Equivalent £24 - 26, 000.00)**
- **Substantial holiday (20 days per year rising after completion of two years) and sickness absence schemes, including paid time off for Christmas closure (essential work receives time off in lieu)**
- **Generous Pension (currently 6% of gross annual salary)**
- **Flexibility & Time Off in Lieu (TOIL)**
- **Culture supportive of your wellbeing**
- **Employee Assistance (24/7 phone line and up to 3 paid sessions with a counsellor)**

## Note about working during Covid

As a response to Covid-19 we've been working from home since the end of March 2020, the safety of our clients, staff team and others we work with being the priority. Our team has adapted brilliantly and creatively to keep up an excellent service to clients, and to strive to maintain the team connection and relationships that we all enjoy.

We've continued to review the situation and guidance, and are now adopting an interim 'hybrid' way of working, with part of our time in the office and part still home working. We use tools like Zoom to have daily catch up times and work collaboratively, as well as having introduced new technologies with our client-facing work to enable us to still meet with clients online, and now meeting safely in person when appropriate.

You too will partly be based from home while we are in our interim phase of return to office working (limited portion of your working week in our office) but you can be assured of being supported to set up a healthy home work station and being welcomed and integrated into the team, despite physical distances between us. We think that being flexible is the best way to support the team to manage their work and personal lives, especially in such challenging times, so we seek to be flexible in work patterns (offering part-time roles, flexible patterns within our 'Boaz' hours of 8am to 6pm, hybrid working) and this will continue wherever possible, even as our office opens up again in the future.

## How to apply

Please send your CV with covering letter explaining why you are right for the job to [jobs@boaztrust.org.uk](mailto:jobs@boaztrust.org.uk), including details of your current salary, notice period and the name and contact details of two referees (if not included on your CV), one of which should be your current/most recent line manager.

### Recruitment timeline

**Deadline for applications**  
**Panel interview (in person or**  
**Zoom where needed)**

**9am Monday 8th November 2021**  
**Week beginning 15th November 2021**

We hope to make an offer week beginning 22nd November with a preferred start date the beginning of January, dependent on any notice period.

Note: you must have permission to work in the UK and we will ask about any criminal convictions (though disclosure will not automatically lead to the withdrawal of any job offer) and take up a basic DBS check on the successful applicant.

If you require this pack in another format please contact us. Likewise, if you require any reasonable adjustments during the recruitment process please make us aware of these as soon as possible.

We take our commitment to your privacy & dignity seriously and will handle your data in line with our Privacy Policy and Job Applicant Privacy Notice, both of which can be found on our website.



# Job description

<b>Job title:</b>	<b>Lead Refugee Support Worker</b>
<b>Location:</b>	Flexible: combination of home working (due to Covid but also our move to offer hybrid working) and our office base Boaz Trust, Kath Locke Centre, 123 Moss Lane East, M15 5DD
<b>Responsible to:</b>	Head of Client Services
<b>Salary:</b>	Salary £19, 200 - 20,800.00 (Full Time Equivalent £24 -26, 000.00)
<b>Contract length:</b>	Permanent (subject to funding)
<b>Hours of work:</b>	30 hours per week, either 4 full days or 5 partial days Occasional evening and weekend work may be required.
<b>Holidays:</b>	20 days per year, plus statutory / bank holidays and discretionary Christmas office closure
<b>Benefits:</b>	Our organisational culture is intentionally supportive of staff wellbeing Substantial holiday and sickness absence schemes, Generous pension scheme (currently Boaz contributes 6% of gross salary) Employee Assistance (24/7 phone line and up to 3 paid sessions with a counsellor)
<b>Probation period:</b>	3 months

## Main purpose of the role:

In accordance with the Christian ethos and values of the Boaz Trust this exciting new role will help to equip and empower the organisation to work more effectively in its vision to see life in all its fullness for people seeking sanctuary. This role:

- To be the lead contact for refugee support work at Boaz, and to continue to develop our package of refugee support work (for example, rolling out the Renting Ready tenancy training, building and maintaining excellent external partner relationships, seeking out positive opportunities to benefit people living in Boaz accommodation)
- To take a lead on complex support and housing issues faced by people living in Boaz accommodation, by offering support to the individuals and/or staff involved
- To provide practical and holistic support to refugee clients who are living in Boaz Trust accommodation, in order to support their integration and to work with them so that they are equipped to live independently
- To play a supportive and collaborative role working alongside the wider staff team in our mission, which is to end destitution amongst asylum seekers and refugees, empower people seeking sanctuary and equip churches and others to support people seeking sanctuary in their communities and congregations

### *Specific duties and responsibilities:*

#### **As Lead Refugee Support Worker**

- To be the 'go to' person for internal and external queries and opportunities relating to supporting refugee clients in Boaz accommodation.
- To manage the waiting list for people with refugee status. This will include speaking with referrers, and meeting with potential new clients and identifying needs, strengths and any potential risk factors.
- To develop Boaz's programme of wellbeing activities (called Boaz Life), by finding, promoting and organising opportunities for refugees living in Boaz accommodation.
- To lead our in-house tenancy training package 'Renting Ready' for people living in Boaz accommodation, ensuring training sessions are run regularly
- To respond to difficult situations calmly and assertively, supporting clients and other staff where needed and to review policies and best practice during these situations (alongside Head of Client Services and Housing Manager).
- To develop ways of effectively monitoring our work with refugee clients (for example through tools such as the Outcomes Star or similar).
- To develop and maintain up to date resources and guidance for staff & clients.
- To develop and maintain positive relationships with other organisations (local and national, statutory and voluntary) attending meetings and other opportunities to develop and promote our work.
- To help prepare information for funders who are supporting refugee support work.

#### **As a support worker with your own case load**

- To manage a case load of refugee clients who are accommodated by the Boaz Trust, and be experienced and confident in supporting across a range of areas: wellbeing, benefits, housing, education, training, budgeting, volunteering etc.
- To maintain and update appropriate records in a timely way ensuring confidentiality and accuracy.
- To manage the "move in" process for people in your case load, ensuring refugee clients have a full understanding of their tenancy, their rights and their responsibilities.
- To ensure that people feel safe and comfortable in their accommodation, make regular house visits, and be able to take prompt and appropriate action to address any housing or personal issues that arise.
- To identify the level of support needed by individual people and, as necessary and appropriate, to work with clients to develop and implement a personal independence and integration plan, which may include:
  - Ensuring people are able to access primary medical care as well as any additional or specialist health care services
  - Ensuring people are accessing local opportunities e.g. education and training
  - Ensuring people are able to manage their finances effectively (including access to bank accounts, accessing welfare benefits when eligible, budgeting and saving as appropriate)
  - Supporting people to pay rent to Boaz
  - Supporting people to secure suitable volunteering opportunities and / or paid employment
- To use initiative and be creative in finding ways to support clients while the Boaz office is not fully open.

- To manage the 'release' process for refugee clients as they prepare to move on from Boaz. This includes working with people to access alternative sources of accommodation, advice and support, helping make practical arrangements to move out, and ensuring that written records are appropriately completed and archived.
- To work collaboratively with other frontline staff to ensure past, present and potential asylum seeking and refugee clients are dealt with professionally and appropriately.
- To be part of the emergency (out of hours) telephones rota.

## **Role and responsibilities within the daily life and working of the wider team:**

- To be committed to the Boaz Trust's values and purpose
- To participate in the life of the team, which may include team away days, daily prayer meetings and other times of team reflection, planning and development, where appropriate.
- To work collaboratively and communicate effectively with other Boaz staff and volunteers.
- To comply with Boaz Trust policies and procedures.

## **Competency target levels:**

<b>Valuing people:</b>	Highly Developed
<b>Team orientated:</b>	Developed
<b>Working strategically :</b>	Developed
<b>Prizing thriving:</b>	Developed
<b>Championing Boaz &amp; the vision:</b>	Developed
<b>Focused on growth:</b>	Highly Developed
<b>Seeking excellence:</b>	Highly Developed

## **Specific requirements:**

Whilst public transport is encouraged wherever possible, where the post-holder uses their own transport to carry out job duties, mileage will be refunded in line with current HMRC allowances.

## **Equality and diversity:**

We welcome and encourage applications from all suitably qualified persons and all appointments will be made on merit. We are seeking to ensure a diverse team and particularly welcome applicants who have lived experience as a refugee or of seeking asylum, are disabled or are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background, since these backgrounds are currently under-represented in our organisation.

Note: No job description can cover every issue which may arise within the post at various times and the job holder is expected to carry out other duties as required from time to time.



## Person specification

### Specification

### Essential

### Desirable

#### Education/ training

A levels or equivalent qualification

Relevant degree

#### Proven experience

Experience of similar frontline work providing services to homeless refugees (or demonstrably transferable experience gained working in the wider homeless / housing sector), including unpaid work

A strong working knowledge of navigating the welfare benefits system, experience providing this advice and support (including to refugees), and confidence in resolving issues that arise.

Assisting people to secure settled move-on accommodation, through a working knowledge of housing options

Effective team-working, maintaining supportive relationships and contributing positively to team formation and function

Independent working, using appropriate levels of judgement and initiative

Experience working in a small charity

Working with / facilitating groups of people

Knowledge of housing legislation

#### Skills and abilities

Confident, accurate and sensitive oral and written communication skills with a range of audiences: people from a wide range of cultures and backgrounds, partner agencies and stakeholders.

Empowering and participatory working style

Ability to expand own knowledge and to adapt in order to advocate for people in unfamiliar areas of support

Time management and ability to manage and prioritise own workload  
Proficient in the use of Microsoft Word, Excel, email, databases, Zoom, Whatsapp and the internet

Ability to speak another language from within the refugee community (i.e. Amharic, Arabic, Farsi, Tigrinya etc.)

Understanding of asylum issues in the UK

Understanding of the local refugee sector

## Person specification

### Specification

### Essential

### Desirable

### Attributes

Problem solving approach to work

Understanding of healthy working practices and ability and willingness to use available support systems (e.g. supervision, training)

Positive 'can-do' attitude

Practising Christian

Empathetic and patient approach when working with vulnerable people

High emotional intelligence, including awareness of power dynamics in role, and working in a culturally competent way

To take pride and have a professional approach in your work

Committed to own personal learning and growth and supporting the same in others

An open and accepting approach to all, regardless of religion, ethnicity, disability, age, gender or sexuality.

Committed to participating in our journey to becoming an anti-racist organisation and championing justice

Committed to the vision, values and mission of the Boaz Trust

Entirely empathetic to the Christian ethos of the Boaz Trust

### Additional requirements

Willingness to occasionally work outside office hours

Own car and clean UK driving license

Ability to work flexibly- showing a willingness to support team members in different areas of our work

Own transport (which could be car/moped/bicycle), or if not, be willing to use public transport



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