

Activity Sheet 1.3

C The Refugee Council

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Background: The Refugee Council is the biggest independent organisation in the UK working with refugees. It provides support and advice for refugees in the UK and also supports other organisations in local areas that help refugees. It does this by providing training and coordination.

What does it do?: As well as providing these direct resources it aims to 'create an open mind' policy towards refugees in the UK through the following:

- Maintaining a website with accurate and up-to-date information about refugees
- Providing lesson plans and educational resources for all types of schools across the age range
- Holding regular meetings with schools and other interested groups

- Issuing bulletins to interested groups and individuals to keep them up to date on specific issues
- Campaigning for fair laws on asylum-seekers and refugees
- Working with other organisations, such as Amnesty International, on joint campaigns
- Funding advertising to try to inform public opinion and break down stereotypes
- Producing its own magazine 'In Exile'.

Who does it?: The Refugee Council has about 150 workers and 120 volunteers.

Why?: The work of the Refugee Council aims to help asylum seekers and refugees to claim their rights but it also campaigns for better legal rights for them. Above all it wants to create an environment in which refugees can be safe.



D Keep The Nazis Out Of Dover website

www.canterbury.u-net.com/Dover.html

Background: The arrival in the UK of asylum seekers and refugees has always caused negative reactions from some people. One of the biggest problems is caused by racists, many of whom call themselves nationalists; others call them fascists. In Dover, there has been lots of press coverage about the numbers of Roma refugees coming in from Eastern Europe during the last few years. Their arrival has been accompanied by marches and leaflet drops organised by groups such as the National Front (NF) and the British National Party (BNP). Anti-fascist organisations have organised counter-marches and actions against these groups to try to stop them spreading their anti-asylum-seeker message. Many of the anti-fascist campaigners have been arrested because the police claim they are using illegal methods to campaign.

What does it do?: The website is one part of the general anti-fascist activity against the BNP and NF which has taken place around Dover. The website provides the following:

- An introduction to the situation in Dover, with some relevant history to help improve understanding
- Lots of links to media coverage to help track what has been happening
- Links to other organisations which are involved in the campaigns
- Details about the people involved in the campaigns.

Who does it?: This website has been written by local people but obviously has links with other people and organisations who campaign against the far-right's racist message.

Why?: The website is openly political and in some cases, according to local police, it seems very biased. It aims to put the Dover problems into the wider picture of the general anti-fascist campaign.