



## **Information for VOLUNTEERS 2009/2010**

### **Free English Lessons for Asylum Seekers, Refugees & Migrants**

**Mondays 1–3.30 p.m.**

at the Cowley Club  
12 London Road  
(opposite Somerfields)  
Brighton BN1 4JA

**Tel. 01273 696104** (Mondays between 12 and 4pm) or

**07758 862953**

(Please leave a message and we will get  
back to you during our opening hours)

**<http://mepbrighton.com/>**

### **WHO ARE MIGRANTS?**

Recent legal definitions identify asylum seekers and refugees as two separate groups. Accordingly an asylum seeker is a person who has applied for asylum in this country but still awaiting decision from the home office. A refugee is a person whose claim has been accepted and he/she is allowed to stay in this country for a temporary or indefinite period.

We prefer the term migrant because it includes the many types of people who cross borders without differentiating between those that the state judges as either legitimate or illegal. We believe that no one is illegal and that all people should be free to cross borders and make their homes wherever they wish.

We oppose the media-inflamed anti-immigration hysteria and the state's border controls, detention of migrants and deportation. We are committed to solidarity with all migrants.

## **What we do at the Migrant English Project**

- We provide free English lessons and conversational English.
- We try to help with legal, housing, benefit and health issues by advocacy, referral and signposting.
- We provide an informal space where people can meet others and feel a sense of belonging.
- We try to create a space where we can demonstrate our political solidarity with migrants.

## **What is the Migrant English Project about?**

The Migrant English Project is involved in helping people whose first language is not English and who may feel isolated.

The project helps people gain the necessary skills in written and spoken English and also the project is a meeting point for migrants.

The project is about supporting people in all areas of their lives... socially and legally.

Acknowledging the racism migrants face and the draconian and punitive asylum system, we try to create a space where migrants feel welcome and supported.

## **What you can do to help the Migrant English Project**

- Help to coordinate the project
- Teach English.
- Look after children while parents are learning.
- Help make teas, coffees, lunch for people.
- Help make effective teaching aids.
- Fundraising.
- Organise day trips.
- Help to welcome people and chat.
  
- Do you speak any other language? Come and help with translation/ conversation ... be an interpreter!
- Do you have the skills to offer welfare rights advice?
- There are always jobs to do! Please ask!

## **The benefits of volunteering**

- Gain confidence, new skills, training, work experience.
- Use your skills and share knowledge.
- It feels good – being part of a small, informal and independent project countering the hostility to migrants found in wider society.
- It can help to break down cultural barriers. Cultural barriers can be broken down; deep understanding and true friendship can be easily made.