



NEWSLETTER April 2022



Thank you for your generosity

To all who responded so generously to our recent appeal for funds, we hope you will accept this joint acknowledgement that comes with our heartfelt thanks to all.

You contributed **\$10,500** over 16 days. This enables us to meet planned costs ... and do more in coming weeks.

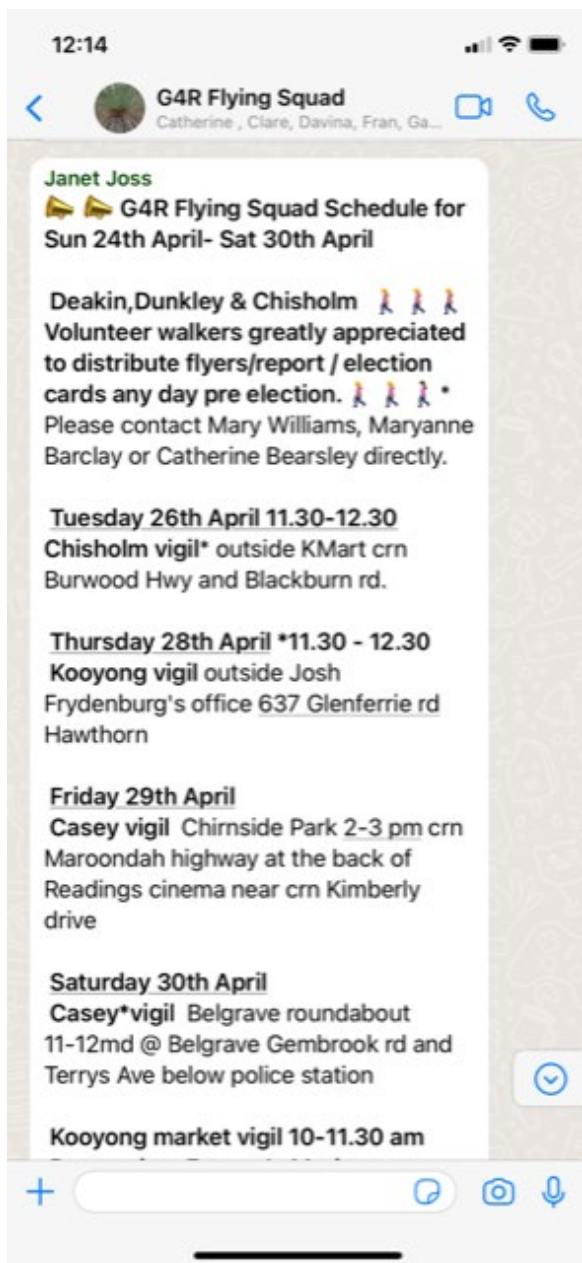
Thank you, from the G4R Executive

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Vote for Better. Vote for Change - Election 2022



The **G4R Flying Squad** is boosting our movement's capacity to campaign in key marginal and targeted Victorian seats.

This element of our campaign strategy is focused on mobilising Grandmothers who willingly travel to those seats calling for more visible support in their street vigils and for letter boxing.

The Flying Squad uses the WhatsApp mobile phone platform to message electorate co-ordinators who have joined the Chat Group. They then contact their members to rally supporters and arrange travel.



Janet Joss from Cooper electorate has undertaken the task of creating a weekly schedule of events calling for Flying Squad support.

The Chat site is also used to post pics of supported events with thank you messages and comments.

The G4R key marginal and targeted seats are Chisholm, Deakin, Dunkley, Flinders, Casey, Kooyong, and Goldstein.

If you are interested in joining a Flying Squad event in one of these electorates, please contact your local G4R co-ordinator.



Neither rain nor reputation deter Grandmothers for Refugees from keeping up their vigil commitments in Chisholm, Casey and Kooyong.



Counting the toots for refugees and honks for humanity are part of gathering feedback at street vigils.

Keeping it local

Chisholm Grandmothers (left) opted to keep their messaging alive in the electorate rather than join the traditional Palm Sunday Rally in the city.

We were united in spirit!



Rallying for change, justice and freedom for refugees
Palm Sunday, Melbourne, 2022



UK to send its refugees offshore to Rwanda

In tragic mimicry of Australia's shameful offshore processing policy, the United Kingdom has done a five-year deal to send its refugees to Rwanda, without any guarantee they will ever be considered for safe settlement in the UK.

Echoing Australia's Operation Sovereign Borders rhetoric, the UK Government has framed its offshoring model as attacking the people smuggler business and protection for those presumably using risky modes of transport to seek asylum.

In a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the Rwandan Government, the UK states it is looking for "new ways of addressing the irregular migration challenge, including bridging gaps in human capital, in order to counter the business model of the human smugglers, protect the most vulnerable, manage flows of asylum seekers and refugees and promote durable solutions."

Under the terms of the MOU, those "Relocated Individuals" sent to Rwanda will be provided with "adequate" accommodation and support, with freedom to "come and go" in accordance with laws applying to Rwandan residents. Rwanda will process applications for refugee status and any appeals will be treated under Rwandan, not UK, laws.

In effect, this is an outsourcing of UK refugee processing and settlement obligations. There is no suggestion that the "durable solutions" cited in the MOU will involve resettlements of refugees in the UK. Only if the UK is "legally obliged to facilitate" the return of anyone sent to Rwanda under the terms of this deal must the Rwandans take all reasonable steps to make the individual available.



In a 2021 [periodic review of human rights in Rwanda](#), the UK's International Ambassador for Human Rights, Rita French, noted Rwanda's refusal "to conduct transparent, credible and independent investigations into allegations of human rights violations including deaths in custody and torture."

In the UK in 2015, former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott used a speech honouring Margaret Thatcher to promote his tough border controls and to urge Europeans to drop any thoughts of "love thy neighbour". He called on Europe to take on Australia's border security policies or risk "catastrophic error" and urged Europe to close its borders to migrants. "The Australian experience proves that the only way to dissuade people seeking to come from afar is not to let them in," he said.

There were 48,540 asylum applications in the UK in the year to December 2021, a 63% increase on the 2020 figure.

Read it in full:

[Memorandum of Understanding between the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the government of the Republic of Rwanda for the provision of an asylum partnership arrangement - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Signed in Kigali, 13 April 2022

Spreading the word

Seeking Asylum: Our Stories captures the stories of those who have lived the experience of seeking asylum. **Published in partnership with Black Inc.**, this beautifully illustrated hardback shares stories of the resilience, courage, love and hope of people seeking asylum—in their own words.

Contributors share how they came to be in Australia and explore diverse aspects of their lives: growing up in a refugee camp, studying for a PhD, changing attitudes through soccer, being Muslim in a small country town, campaigning against racism, surviving detention, holding onto culture, and dreaming of being reunited with family.

Accompanied by beautiful portrait photographs, these stories of seeking asylum show the depth and diversity of people's experience and trace the impact of Australia's immigration policies.

100% of the proceeds from *Seeking Asylum: Our Stories* will be reinvested by the ASRC to fund projects like the ASRC's Community Advocacy and Power Program (CAPP), which provides people with lived experience of seeking asylum with training to become storytellers, advocates and most importantly, leaders in the community.

[Seeking Asylum: Our stories - ASRC Book](#)

And FINALLY...

Thank you again, Grandmothers and Frogs, for making your commitments to refugees so real by turning up, giving your time and creativity, and donating to fund election materials promoting our shared vision for change.

Best wishes,

Jean, Margaret, Jane, Linda

Bendigo G4R electorate co-ordinator, **Di O'Neil**, presents a copy of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre book ***Seeking Asylum: Our Stories*** to the Bendigo Library.

