

Arts, Humanities & Society

Silent Histories – Refugees in Scotland: past, present and future



In December 2015, the Arts, Humanities & Society Working Group was awarded funding to deliver a project tackling one of the key global issues, not just of our time, but of all history – **the movement of peoples fleeing war, persecution, famine and other dangers.**

Inspired by the recent arrival of a small group of Syrian refugees in Scotland, the group developed a video exploring the ‘Silent History’ of refugees in Scotland, with an accompanying pack of school resources, aimed at 8-11+ year olds.

We were delighted to feature in our video Amal Azzudin, a Scottish refugee and mental health campaigner, who is originally from Somalia. In 2005 her friend and fellow Drumchapel High School pupil, Agnesa Murselaj, was removed from her home in a dawn raid by immigration authorities: 15-year-old Amal got together with six classmates to lobby for her release. The Glasgow Girls, as they came to be known, went on to lead a successful high-profile campaign against the Home Office and for an end to dawn raids.

Looking Forward and reflecting...

We learnt from the Silent Histories project that we spent a long time discussing the purpose of the project – something that has been part of a wider debate within YAS membership, our unique role in society.

A key issue looking ahead is making sure the materials we created are utilised by their target audience and so have a legacy and again this could apply to all work streams in YAS. It is an issue universities struggle with too, of course.

