

## **AMAL WELCOME/GO WELL SPEECH, 29 OCTOBER 2021**

Amal, welcome to Sheffield, UK's first City of Sanctuary – a grassroots movement and network of residents of Sheffield who have shown their commitment to build cultures of welcome and hospitality for those who find themselves among us fleeing war, violence and terror.

Refugees are welcome in Sheffield.

Amal has walked from Syria.

Amal is a puppet representing a refugee child – girls and boys – who have lost their homes as a result of war, violence, terror, climate change and extreme weather.

Many refugee children like Amal have lost their homes and have become separated from mum, dad and family, and are hoping to find sanctuary, safety, welcome and hospitality.

When people have lost their homes and their families, they are grateful for a smile, a greeting and a welcome.

Thank you Sheffield for your welcome.

Amal – this tall puppet elevates child refugees, each one with their own story, name, and face, and family, and history, making them more visible, highlighting the dangers and the journeys of their lives.

Amal calls us to compassion, love, welcome and sanctuary.

Amal is provoking conversation around important issues facing us all.

Amal says to us all – turn away from hostility and build cultures of welcome and hospitality.

We are all different, but we depend on each other – members of one human race who can rise above borders, politics, religion and language and build a new shared future.

Amal means “hope”.

We are surrounded by hope.

We have hopes for all humanity and the environment.

We want the best for ourselves.

We can work together and seek the best for each other, for everyone.

Like Amal – we all have a part to play.

Thank you Amal for all you bring to us.

Join the movement to build hope and hospitality.

As you go from here Amal, we wish you and all refugee children well.

Go well, and God bless you.

Bless you and thank you.

**Inderjit Bhogal**

**29 October 2021, Sheffield Peace Gardens**