

## Asylum seekers start taking care of Cardano

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A town can become more beautiful and more liveable also if everyone looks after the shared spaces. The idea comes from afar, with the project **CardanoCondivisa**, which began in 2015. The last part is the agreement between the **town council** and the cooperative **4Exodus**, for **maintenance in Piazza Carù and Piazza Morosi**.

The work will be done by **ten asylum seekers who arrived in town** a few weeks ago. “The idea of creating this shared activity,” **Vincenzo Proto**, the councillor for public works, explained, “arose a few months ago, when we learnt of the arrival of a group of refugees. We sat around a table with the cooperative and a number of associations, **to create a project that will be useful to both children and the community that hosts them.**”

The asylum seekers will be divided into groups of three, and will work **three mornings a week**, always under the supervision of **an Exodus tutor** (workers who are already part of the cooperative, one of whom was recruited especially for the project). They will have a number of tasks: taking care of the flower boxes, painting walls and pergolas, taking care of the benches and children’s playgrounds, and cleaning the green spaces and the water basin. The progress of the work will be constantly monitored by the town council and, if everything goes well, the project will continue for a year.

CardanoCondivisa was launched in 2015, with the aim of **encouraging and formalising the collaboration between the people and the town council**, to take care of public urban areas. So far, a number of projects have already been carried out, in collaboration with various local associations: the

maintenance of the green area in Piazza Falcone e Borsellino, the paving around the water dispenser in Via Verdi, the restoration and upkeep of First World War memorial, little repairs to schools as part of the initiative “Non ti scordar di me”, and the outdoor basketball court in Via Berlinguer.

“These initiatives can arise and grow, if they are based **on trust, responsibility and inclusiveness**. It’s obvious that people cannot and must not take on the duties of the council, but in order to have a more beautiful and shared city, **it’s also essential we have the commitment of the people who live here**. The common good is everyone’s, and taking care of it is the right way ahead for a better quality of life,” Proto concluded.

Work by asylum seekers assisted by Exodus workers (who are mostly Italian) was already tried out in Gallarate, where, until 2016, “teams” of two people were involved, particularly, in **removing graffiti and tags from walls and street furniture**.

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