

**Dear Ukrainian neighbours, hosts, volunteers and supporters** **Ukrainian translation attached.** Український переклад додається

## **Important news for the future of the group**

It has been nearly a year since our community group came into being – with a simple mission - to support Ukrainian families fleeing the war in Ukraine, to enable them to be safe, settle, learn English and to feel part of the community.

Since that time we have got to know families, wonderful generous hosts, developed excellent working relationships with Shropshire Council teams, linked to other local support groups, been blessed with caring volunteers, and gathered links within the statutory and voluntary sector.

We have recently been given an opportunity to receive funding to develop the support that we offer to refugees/migrants and host families in South West Shropshire and North Herefordshire. This funding will enable the development of a wider range of targeted support, and provide greater coverage for the South West and North Herefordshire area.

We would like to offer some paid employment (on a self employed basis) to a refugee and a local person living in the South Shropshire or North Herefordshire area, to work very closely with families and host families in the area to move this help to the next level.

If you are interested in finding out more, or think you may know anyone who may be interested, please contact, in the first instance, Erica Garner – [ericagarner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ericagarner@hotmail.co.uk) or mobile 07974001310.

## **News for April, and a Fun event for May!!**

### **1) Independent Living – Help is available.**

**The lack of social housing and private rented accommodation in the area is causing great worry and stress to both hosts and Ukrainian families. This is a problem affecting all people, not just refugees, as there is a local and national shortage of suitable, affordable properties.**

**If you are aware that a friend, colleague or neighbour may have a property to rent, even if rental may be for a relatively short period of six months, please do make contact. This could make all the difference to a family locally. We are also looking for additional host families, as, although the need has reduced, there are still Refugees looking for a safe haven.**

Therefore to aid the transition from host family to independent housing we will offer :

- **Support with completing Homepoint (the social housing register.)** We will work with Ukrainian families and host families along with our colleagues in Shropshire Council, to provide as much support as if possible to make that difficult jump to living independently

- We can help with linking families to letting agents, help with providing references for landlords, and acting as an advocate, for local contact for refugees and host families.
- Providing donated household items to start families off in their new homes, we have found a temporary solution for storing donated items, at a local village hall. We also have two volunteers based in Ludlow who will manage the collection, storage, cataloguing and re-distribution of items to families once they are needed .

If you think you may have items to donate, please can you ensure that all items are:

- In very good condition, in full working order and require no repair or maintenance.
- Items that are of practical value only, including beds, mattresses, bedding, dinner service, pots pans, towels, kitchen equipment, white goods, fridges/freezers, cookers , washing machines etc. If we receive donated electrical goods we will test all portable electrical appliances using a PAT test. Please contact Richard Ellis on 07933323330 if you have items to donate.

## 2) Fun Spring event in May for all the family! Date for the diary. Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May, from 5.00pm



Venue – Ashford Carbonell Village Hall, near Ludlow SY8 4BZ

This will be a chance for families to show their superior Ukrainian BBQ cooking skills 😊 We can provide a BBQ if necessary (please ask, or families can bring there own. If there is a poor weather forecast, pre home cooked food can be brought to the hall, or you can brave the weather and BBQ outside under a gazebo.

- There will be a patio to cook on
- A marquee in the grounds
- Lots of outdoor space for children to play – games will be arranged
- Bar available

Please invite friends and family, volunteers, hosts supporters, let this be a celebration of community.....

## 3) Bike Loan

The Shrewsbury Cycle Hub has bikes to loan refugees. The link to the application form is below. Also attached is information about the scheme, this is an excellent opportunity to have a bike on loan, with ongoing support and help with queries on maintenance etc. [Bikes For Ukraine - Application Form](#)

#### 4) **Grow your own food**

There are lots of opportunities to start growing your own food by sharing a plot with friends. There are a number of organisations that have expressed an interest in helping refugees start growing. We will be able to provide simple hand tools to get you started, and maybe pots and seeds at the start of the growing season.

These are the some of the locations where a small plot may be available:

- **Ludlow Quakers Meeting House, St Marys Lane, Ludlow, SY8 1DZ**

There is a lovely garden at the rear of the hub and the lower part could be used for growing veg, it could be shared by local refugees .

- **Wigley Field Allotments – Organic Allotments (10 mins walk from Castle Square, by the Cliffe Hotel)**

These are beautiful organic allotments that are placed in an idyllic place in Ludlow. There is a waiting list but if anyone is interested in sharing a half plot they can put their names down. As part of the conditions, plot holders need to be living within the town boundaries .

- **Richards Castle ( approx. 4miles from Ludlow)**

For those living in North Herefordshire or outside of the Ludlow area, there are allotments in Richards Castle, that may be available.

- **Rockspring Community Gardens (Sandford Road, Ludlow, SY8 1SX) Walking distance from central Ludlow.**

A possible plot may be available for sharing .

If you are interested in exploring the idea of finding a plot, for any of the above areas or would be interested in a different location, please contact, in the first instance Erica Garner [ericagarner@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ericagarner@hotmail.co.uk) or 07974001310

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#### 5) **Regular activities and Support including Children's Activities**

1. **Art and Craft Morning for Children and young people age 4 -15 (this will be a regular monthly event) Next session on Saturday April 15<sup>h</sup> 10.30 – 12. Noon (free) and Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May, pottery session.**

Held at the Ludlow Boxing Club, Community Room, Wheeler Road, Ludlow, SY8 1JD. Please bring your own refreshments. Please see images above taken from the session held on the 11<sup>th</sup> Feb. Parking is available, and if you need transport, please contact Peter Higgins whose contact details are above in section 8 below.

#### 2. **Facebook Group**

We would like to reach as many guests, hosts, volunteers and supporters as possible so please join the Ludlow Supports Refugees facebook page

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/1239189220242149/?ref=share\\_group\\_link&exp=7ffb](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1239189220242149/?ref=share_group_link&exp=7ffb)

3. **The Bordervoices – Emotional and Mental Health support to hosts, guests and families.**

The support for Emotional and Mental health has been operating successfully in the Leominster and Leintwardine area. We have been offered this support for our area. Support is offered via a telephone call, you will find further details on the attachment. Please email [thebordervoices@gmail.com](mailto:thebordervoices@gmail.com) giving your name and telephone number and a brief description why you are making contact. You will then receive a call back.

4. **English Assessments and English Language lessons (all levels )**

- Guests are very welcome to attend lessons more than once per week, and in addition to face to face classes in Ludlow, there are online lessons from Shrewsbury. These lessons cover all levels and there is a plan to provide further on line lessons at different times. Please contact Jacki Moore if you are interested. Contact details for Jacki below.
- **English teaching Google classroom** - Jacki Moore our English teacher coordinator is using a google Classroom to add additional English work which will be available to enhance and complement the face to face lessons. In the coming weeks Jacki will be sharing a link for the new Google classroom. The extra work will be available for those who want to practice their reading, listening and writing, as well as grammar and vocabulary. If you would like to receive more details please contact Jacki directly.
- **English Lessons Timetable** Quakers Meeting House (QMH) St Marys Lane, Ludlow SY8 1DZ
- **Tuesday mornings** 10-11.30am – Three class levels, including the most able learners whose class will include preparing for IELTS
- **Wednesday evening** 6.00-7.30 pm
- **Thursday afternoon** 1.30-3.00 pm
- **Saturday, early afternoon English conversation sessions** 1.30 -3.00pm for more able English speakers (the format for this session may change so please make contact ,if you are new to the group before you attend
- **Saturday 3-5 English assessment for new students, or requests for an English assessments or queries**
- **Homework club – Wednesday 6.00 – 7.30pm**  
Our homework club for young people at school or college aged 11+ , is popular and this runs alongside the adult English classes on Wednesday's between 6.00 and 7.30 pm. We provide help with understanding school topics and completing assignments, and will also give particular support with English Language GCSE.

**Please contact Jacki Moore** email [jackiamoore@gmail.com](mailto:jackiamoore@gmail.com) or mobile 07929656545 to book onto a lesson, or if you are interested in the homework club.

5) **Help to find work -**

Alison Toulson from the Enable service will be at the Quakers Meeting House (QMH ) once per month on Saturdays from 3-5 pm . Please do come and meet her and discuss your individual job needs. You can also register on line by **opening the QR code, from**

**the above attachment.** We will post the next date in March on our facebook group so please check fb regularly.

6) **We continue to offer a core menu of activities in the week, and as a reminder this is our offer on a Saturday:**

**Saturday get- togethers 3.00pm – 5.00pm** Just to confirm that our regular weekly meetings at the Quakers Meeting House St Marys Lane, Ludlow SY8 1DZ on Saturdays will continue into 2023

**On Saturday afternoons hosts/ guests can:**

1. Complete an English diagnostic assessment and book your lesson(s)
  2. Hosts/ guests can collect SIM cards.
  3. Talk to a volunteer or a member of the Enable service about help with finding a job, and making contact with local employers on your behalf. (Use a lap top, and talk to us if you are struggling with IT and need support.
  4. Book a lift to an appointment or social event etc
  5. Take home children's games, books and toys
  6. Meet with professionals including health care specialists on a monthly basis.
  7. –If you are looking for bikes or white goods let us know and we will see what we can find locally
  8. – Help with negotiating the next steps from host family to independent living
  9. Monthly job search sessions on a Saturday with Alison Toulson from Enable (dates will be circulated via email and facebook.)
- 7) **Transport is available** to help you attend English lessons or social events, please contact Peter Higgins who is our transport coordinator . Peters contact details are : email [refugeesludlow@gmail.com](mailto:refugeesludlow@gmail.com) or mobile 07757989708

**Please let me know if you would like your email address removing from the mailing list**

**Erica  
07974001310**