



### ***Shropshire Supports Refugees – second half of June 2024 update***

During the second half of June, Shropshire Supports Refugees (SSR) continues providing vital support to Ukrainians, meeting new families, and improving service. SSR implements acquired skills & knowledge and runs different projects in the Ukrainian language aimed at covering Ukrainians in various parts of the county.

#### **Key Points**

SSR supports Ukrainians with housing, employment, volunteering & training opportunities, health & wellbeing, free ESOL resources and classes at the Hub & online, distribution donations, collaboration with numerous external organisations, and many more. Furthermore, SSR runs activities & events, provides informational support, daily support, interpreting/translation support, etc.

#### **ESOL**

SSR runs ESOL classes not only at the Hub and online but also supports ESOL classes in smaller hubs in Ludlow, Oswestry, Church Stretton and Market Drayton, sharing funding, training and resources.

SSR is always very proud of Ukrainians and their achievements. Only during the second half of June, 8 Ukrainians received Certificates of Participation for completing an ESOL course with Shropshire Supports Refugees achieving Elementary level, 2 Ukrainians achieved Pre-Intermediate level, 2 Ukrainians achieved Intermediate level, 4 Ukrainians achieved Strong Intermediate level, and 2 Ukrainians achieved Upper-Intermediate level. SSR team & Ukrainian course teacher Nataliia Townsend is so proud of all of them!

#### **Selective Statistics**

SSR runs informative and practical information-sharing sessions, as well as psychosocial activities. The statistical data for just a few of them within the last two weeks of June is the following:

- 28 Ukrainian families had housing appointments with Housing Options Team and SSR team;
- 90+ Ukrainians took part in SSR activities & events;
- SSR Community Hub had 500+ Ukrainian visits (among them 100+ from different towns) and 50+ volunteer visits who are supporting Ukrainians in various ways;
- 11 Ukrainian families attended employment support sessions;
- 46 hours of ESOL were provided at the Community Hub;
- 29 hours of online ESOL;

- 20 Ukrainians got tickets to visit beautiful Shropshire gardens and many more.

### **Events and activities**

In addition to all these projects, SSR runs a lot of different events & activities that not only improve personal wellbeing, mood and overall mental and physical health but also boost self-esteem and confidence, increase energy levels, extend their social networks and provide Ukrainians with new skills and abilities that are vital in their integration.

During the second half of June, SSR promoted numerous events across the county and hosted "Ukrainian & Bulgarian Day" for children of both cohorts, "Celebration of Cultures", 24 sessions of Swedish massage and yoga sessions for adults & yoga for children aged 4–15. SSR always receives a lot of positive feedback from the participants. At the same time, as well as running events & activities, SSR promotes them run by other organisations across the county to reach more Ukrainians. SSR promoted and participated in a fabulous event, Shrewsbury Town Youth Awareness Day in the Quarry. SSR contributed there with a clothing sale and yoga from our lovely Ukrainian yoga teacher.

### **Refugee Week**

As always, SSR took part in Refugee Week (17th June - 23rd June) celebrating the creativity, contributions, and resilience of refugees & people seeking sanctuary.

Within the SSR Refugee Week events were a wonderful & breathtaking art exhibition "Our Home" at the Theatre Severn, "Ukrainian & Bulgarian Day" with a Printing & Drawing Workshop — a collaboration between SSR, the Hive & the Bulgarian Community well-being team from Shropshire Council, and a "Celebration of Cultures" at The Hive — a morning celebration with Ukrainian songs and dances, drumming workshop, delicious international food, and a wonderful expression of how welcome people from other cultures in Shrewsbury and Shropshire. These events were very popular and brought different cohorts together.

### **Free sessions & "Talented Ukrainians" Project**

With the help of SSR, Ukrainians still have an opportunity to have mental and emotional support counselling as well as expert guidance, free massage sessions, free entry to Attingham Park, free support on legal issues from a Ukrainian lawyer with a total experience of more than 11 years in jurisprudence, and get free tickets to visit beautiful private gardens all around Shropshire.

Also, SSR launched the employment project "Talented Ukrainians" to help Ukrainians create/expand their client base and popularise their skills and abilities in Shropshire County. This project is for those who intend to provide their services to Ukrainians and not only.

### **Informational Support**

SSR not only creates different guides & tips to help Ukrainians but also promotes useful free webinars, such as "Studying at the best universities in Great Britain" & "Renting housing in Great Britain" etc, free courses, among them, "Profession: Data Scientist" & "Profession: Journalist" etc, and provides

various information, to name just a few: Children's camps during the summer holidays, Legal Aid, and The HAF Programme, and many more.