



Shropshire Supports Refugees – first half of July 2024 update

Shropshire Supports Refugees Team works 6 days per week & overtime to support Ukrainians in various ways. Friday afternoons are staff development, so the SSR team can expand their knowledge and improve their skills to make the support even more efficient.

"Talk & Create"

SSR greeted this July by collaborating with The Sea Change Trust and started the "Talk & Create" project, a series of art workshops at the Hub for 16-25 y.o. These sessions offer a safe, supportive space for everyone to express their experiences and emotions through creative art. The workshops aim to foster, community connection, and personal growth. Within the first two weeks of July, SSR hosted 2 sessions of "Talk & Create". These sessions are run every Wednesday for 16-25 y.o. The next session will be on the 24th of July. All materials are provided, and no prior art experience is necessary. Come, create, and connect.

Syrian Cooking Workshop

SSR hosted a hands-on two-hour cooking workshop at the Hub, learning to cook traditional Syrian small plates. It was an exceptional morning with limited places but fully booked, where people from different countries learned how to make 2 courses: samosa and baklava.

Free sessions & projects

Free support on legal issues from a Ukrainian lawyer, free Swedish massage sessions by certified Ukrainian massage therapists, free entry to Attingham Park, free tickets to visit beautiful private gardens all around Shropshire, and free (according to their income) mental and emotional support counselling as well as expert guidance.

The employment project "Talented Ukrainians" is gaining momentum and the SSR team is very happy about it. SSR is currently working on and planning to run new projects this summer, as well as varied activities & events to reach more people in different parts of Shropshire. All these events and activities that SSR runs not only take pressure off local services but also help Ukrainians rebuild their lives. SSR involves Ukrainians in the projects, events & activities. It helps to discover their talents & "find themselves", empowers them, and contributes to the well-being, sense of belonging, & community cohesion.

Statistical Data

The selective SSR statistic within the first two weeks of July is the following:

- 10 tickets to Shropshire Garden Open (Cleobury Mortimer Trail);
- 139 members of the employment WhatsApp group;
- 19 therapy sessions (Swedish massage);
- 2 yoga sessions for adults & 2 sessions of "Yoga For Kids" for children aged 4-8 & 9-15;
- 100+ attendance ESOL classes at the Hub;
- 28 Ukrainian families had housing appointments with Housing Options Team and SSR team.

Planned July workshops & activities

SSR is going to run an advice session "Fuel Poverty Workshop" in collaboration with the National Energy Action to provide Ukrainians with information & advice regarding understanding bills and meters, tariffs, energy efficiency, mould and condensation, supplier issues, energy debt, energy myths, extra support for vulnerable people, and lots more. The session will be held in English language with the Ukrainian translation by the SSR team.

SSR will run a "Doodle Workshop" for children & adults with Nataliia Denysova on the 20th of July at the Hub (colouring and displaying the large doodle designed by a local artist Luke Crump for the SSR Hub), a Shropshire Hills Bus Tour on the 23rd of July (a tour to beautiful Shropshire Hills), and a "Kids Football Session" on the 24th of July at the Sundorne Youth Centre & Games Hall (a free football session for children 5–8 years old).

Within the last few months, SSR has been conducting different social polls and now SSR is working towards implementing plans, based on the need and Ukrainian choice.