

BATUHN Annual Report:

April 2023 - March 2024

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Introduction

April 2023 to April 2024 marks the second year of the Berkhamsted and Tring Ukraine Hosting Network (BATUHN). This was a busy year during which we became a registered charity. This was a sometimes challenging but ultimately positive process that has formalised the group's status. We also ran and then ended the Citizens Advice service, closed our free shop and hosted small events – commemorations and celebrations.

During this year, many Ukrainian guests moved on to new hosts, new homes or, sometimes, back to the Ukraine. As a result our activities became quieter and we scaled back some of our services accordingly. Our aim is to be supportive and respond to need. As the year closes, BATUHN will be moving forward offering a meet-up in Tring and English lessons as well as events and outings as required.

Charity management and governance

During this year our Chair, Vicky Album, took maternity leave from May to September 2023. Many thanks to the rest of the Trustee team for picking up extra work during this time and making this possible.

In last year's report, it was noted that BATUHN had taken steps to become a registered charity. This was a legal requirement due to successful fundraising early on in our existence. The application was undertaken by our Chair Vicky Album with the support of Trustee Leila Ward while Vicky was on maternity leave. The process was complicated and required a new constitution, however the Charity Commission were extremely helpful and we became a charity in June 2023.

The Board of Trustees as submitted on the application were:

Vicky Album (Chair)
Melanie Bradding
Kate Benton (Treasurer)
John Borton
Sally French
Amie Shearer (Secretary)
Leila Ward

John Borton resigned as a Trustee in April 2023. We are grateful to him for his support and wisdom during our foundations. Amie Shearer, our Secretary stepped down in April 2024. Amie played a huge role in setting up BATUHN and making it a success and her input is much missed.

In September 2023 we recruited a new trustee, Cathy Wickenden. Cathy brings huge experience from her role as a host and previous charitable volunteering. Cathy was voted in as Secretary at the end of the year as Amie stepped down. We are now in the process of recruiting new trustees. At the end of this financial and administrative year, our Trustees are:

Vicky Album (Chair)
Melanie Bradding
Kate Benton (Treasurer)
Sally French
Leila Ward
Cathy Wickenden (Secretary)

Charity Activities

Communications

BATUHN retains a presence in the Ukrainian whatsapp group which is a useful way to share information and updates with guests and local residents. The hosts whatsapp group has gradually become dormant but is still in existence and can be used for occasional communications.

There is also a significant group of volunteer English teachers who also communicate via a whatsapp group. Trustees Kate Benton and Leila Ward are members of that group and share communications between teachers and trustees as needed.

Weekly Meet-ups

Thursdays 10:30am -11:30am at Tring High St Baptist Church

Offering meeting spaces for Ukrainian guests has been a core activity since BATUHN was first established. The Tring coffee morning has continued in Tring Baptist Church and, despite some fluctuations, remains generally well attended. In response to patterns of attendance, the meeting was shortened to one hour before the English lesson and this has worked well. This continues to be organised by Leila Ward and attended weekly by Sally French and Mel Bradding, along with volunteers such as Alan Linfield, and previously Janet Briant, and Nicky Bull. Elena Muttik (English lesson volunteer) has also been trained how to run the coffee morning with some of the Ukrainian ladies who come to the group, so they can run the group on occasions where members of our team are unable to. This was partly due to staffing issues, but also we would like our service users to take more ownership and get involved as much as possible.

The meet up in Berkhamsted had been converted into an hour of conversational English. However this was not being utilised and the decision was taken to end this meeting. Open Door remains the venue for the Monday English class.

English lessons

Mondaysat Open Door, Berkhamsted

Thursdays 11:30am -1:30pm at Tring High St Baptist Church

English lessons continue to be well attended with 12-15 people attending each session. This is now well established and much appreciated by students and volunteers alike. In January the Tring English class decided to move out of the large hall in the Baptist Church and into the Foyer where the coffee morning takes place. This was largely to do with the lack of adequate heating in the larger space.

In March 2023 an English teaching sub-committee was established to discuss English classes, make decisions and feedback to Trustees. This was in acknowledgement that the English classes, which make up such a significant part of BATUHN's offer, are organised and run almost entirely separately from the remainder of the work. A request to Nicola Holden, who had been running the English teaching offer to become a Trustee was turned down as she didn't feel she had sufficient capacity. As a result, it was decided to instead set up a sub committee consisting of Nicola, Kate Benton and Leila Ward to discuss and share information. Another volunteer who originally joined, had to step aside due to ill health.

Nicola, who did an incredible job coordinating the English classes almost from their inception, decided to take a step back from September 2023. She remains involved but takes on less of the organisation. Her contribution has been invaluable and we extend our thanks to her for all her hard work.

We recently asked for feedback from students. Their comments are included below and are a testament to the hard work of Nicola, Kate and the amazing team of volunteer teachers.

"I really like English lessons. Excellent English teachers led by Nicola. Lots of good books and printed materials were provided by her.

This helped me a lot when first I joined the group. I knew very little. Now I speak and

understand much more. I really like these lessons and would like to continue them. Without Nicola's help and dedication the classes would not be possible."

"Nicola did an excellent job of organising English courses for Ukrainians who came to England because of the war in Ukraine. At first Ukrainians had difficult understanding and



expressing themselves in English. Already in the first few lessons, we learned common expression in communication. Under Nicola's guidance and thanks to the well coordinated work of a volunteer group, we students have made significant progress in learning English. Nicola's dedication and effective teaching methods have really contributed to the [success] of the language courses"

"A simple 'thank you' is too little to express my gratitude for your work. You can't even imagine how much you do for us. Getting to another country without knowing the language, the rules, the opportunities is very hard You all helped us to fall in love with England and not to feel left out of life here".

We are all incredibly grateful to the wonderful team who have inspired such heart warming comments.

The Free Shop

The Free Shop closed its doors in March 2023 due to a decline in usage and difficulty in finding volunteers to help. Leftover stock was donated with the Salvation Army with DENS collecting some items and school uniform being given to a group that distributes free items to local families.

It was agreed that a pop-up shop could be run if and when the need and opportunity arose. After an offer from Aston Clinton Rugby Club to host once again in the Summer, the shop ran as a pop up in June, July and August managed largely by Sally French with the support of Mel Bradding and another key volunteer.

The pop up was appreciated but saw fewer attendees than the previous year as many people are now more settled in the UK. Many of those who did use the shop came from the surrounding area rather than from Tring and Berkhamsted. However the shop continued to be a valued resource for those most in need and we are grateful to Sally for putting in so much effort to run it.

BATUHN Citizen's Advice Service

The Citizens Advice Service ran throughout the year operated from the CAB office in Berkhamsted and Tring Baptist Church. The service closed at the end of March 2024. The decision was made to extend it from its original end date of December 2023 in order to a more gradual ending and ensure anyone who had not yet taken advantage of the service had the opportunity to use it.

Over the course of the service (from December 2022 to end March 2024) the service supported 97 people with 258 advice issues, achieving expected income gains of £60,255 (for example by providing advice on accessing additional benefits). 50 people were seen more than once. The top 3 advice issues covered were Benefits (32%), followed by Housing (27%), then Immigration and Asylum and Housing (23%). As might be expected by the

nature of the Ukrainian population living locally, the service was attended predominantly by women. The main age range was 40-44, with only 2% of clients identifying as having long term health conditions or a disability.



A key factor in the success of the service was the advice worker, Debbie, attending the coffee morning meet up in Tring (from where the service ran). This enabled her to get to know people and build trust prior to them accessing her service. This proved essential in giving people confidence to use the service.

We are extremely proud as an organisation to have been able to deliver professional targeted advice to local Ukrainians and thank Kate Benton, Debbie and Managers and staff at Citizens Advice Dacorum for their time and expertise.

Guest Involvement

In December 2023, BATUHN distributed a survey (both online and on paper) to gain feedback on our services and find out why people might not be attending activities we run. Feedback was positive and mostly pointed to working hours as a reason for non attendance.

BATUHN has not been successful in finding a Ukrainian who would like to become a Trustee. This is perhaps understandable as people are busy working hard to establish lives in the UK. This remains a target for the organisation. However, we have been encouraging Ukrainians to take a bigger role in our activities, for example by training attendees to run the coffee morning and by volunteering to help on a charity stall in the Summer.

Grant Funds

During BATUHN's application to become a charity it was noted that we had a grant making function mentioned in our constitution. This then led to discussion of our grants policy which was outdated and the use of funds as grants had fallen into disuse. It was agreed to reinstate this function of BATUHN and to provide grants to Ukrainians who needed financial help to enhance their life in the UK. A reserves policy was agreed to give clarity to when grants could be given.

In September 2023 BATUHN began accepting applications in line with these updated policies however the fund was closed again in November due to insufficient funds. While it was open 6 applications were received of which 5 were granted. Items funded were varied including money towards a laptop, translation of qualification documents, driving lessons and a contribution towards a musical instrument.

Events

Christmas Party (Dec 2023)

In December 2023, we held a Christmas Party at Tring Baptist Church for guests, hosts and volunteers. We received a £250 grant from Herts Community Foundation for the party.

The Christmas party was attended by approximately 80 people with music from local Ukrainian Alina and Rob Schafer. Presents were given to all children who were also able to choose and wrap a present for their parents. Food was enjoyed by all.

The opportunity to celebrate Christmas together with other Ukrainians was hugely beneficial and was also an opportunity to reflect together and think of those left at home. It was an important event for all who attended.

Huge thanks to Amie for organising food and to Sally and Mel for providing presents for the children.

Marking two Years of War (Feb 2024)

24 February 2024 marked two years since the beginning of the recent Russian invasion. This year the date fell during half term. It was arranged that the Minister of Tring Baptist Church would lead some prayers during the coffee morning the following week and everyone had the opportunity to light a candle. The service was translated into Ukrainian so that everyone could understand and the whole group said the Lords Prayer at the end.

Thank you to Leila Ward who organised this important event and to Tring Baptist Church for their continuing support.

Financial Review

Treasurer's Report

The financial position of BATUHN on 5th April 2023 was £8,082 unrestricted, £1,302 restricted and £4,000 designated (a total of £13,384). A total of £8,680 of this was held in the Treasurer's account, with the remainder held on our behalf by Community Action Dacorum (Registered Charity No. 288080). The financial End of Year is 4th April.

The balance of funds of £9,896.12 were transferred on 27th & 28th July 2023, into a Business Community Current Account for BATUHN, held with Metrobank.

The remaining funds at Year End were £2,257 of which none were restricted.

Receipts and Payments accounts have been prepared for the year 2023-24, which can be viewed in detail in the Financial Statement.

Receipts:

The total receipts this year on funds were £2,922, of which £1,030 were restricted.

Key receipts were from Tring Lions (£1,000), the Aston Clinton Wine Club (£1,000), the Christmas Stall at Berkhamsted Festival of Lights (£293) and individual donations (£632).

A direct payment was made to Open Door, Berkhamsted on our behalf by Berkhamsted Rotary (£500) for the provision of rooms for English lessons, which was not included in the accounts.

Payments:

Citizens Advice Dacorum Ukrainian Advice Service:

The cost of the Ukrainian Advice Service was £6,700 in this financial year, which covered 8 months at two sessions per week of our initial contract, and 4 months of contract extension at one session per week. This was covered by unrestricted funds.

The cost of the Advice Service room rental was funded by Hertfordshire Community Fund until November 2023, held in restricted funds after which it was paid for from unrestricted funds.

English Lessons & Meet Up Room Rental

Rooms for lessons at Tring High Street Baptist Church and Open Door in Berkhamsted were paid for by a combination of a grant from Berkhamsted Rotary (Berkhamsted) and unrestricted funds.

English Lesson Books

Our Bookshop, Tring kindly raised funds on our behalf to provide English books for students until March 2024. We are now supplying books to students from unrestricted funds.

Grants

We awarded a total of £1,018 in grants to local Ukrainians in accordance with the BATUHN Grant Policy

Other Payments

The following have been covered by unrestricted funds:

Meet up refreshment costs, fundraising, insurance, training, shop costs, DBS checks, organisation memberships and general administration costs.

Reserves Policy

It is BATUHN policy to maintain a cash reserve of unrestricted funds of £3,000 to cover basic running costs for approximately five months. No grants will be awarded which require use of the cash reserve. If the unrestricted funds fall below this level, the Trustees will either make an active, concerted effort to raise more funds or agree how to run down funds in a managed way.

Fundraising

During 2023-2024 BATUHN received grants from a number of supportive organisations. Some of these were funds that we applied for directly. Others approached us with donations.

As noted above, in 2023-2024 our activities were funded by the following grants and donations:

- Tring Lions Club (£1000) to cover the costs of the meeting rooms in Tring and costs related to running the coffee morning
- Aston Clinton Wine Club (£1000) of unrestricted funds
- Berkhamsted Rotary club (£500) donated to Open Door to cover the room rental for the English Class
- Hertfordshire Community Foundation (cost of room rental for the Citizens Advice Service in Tring received in the previous financial year)

- Individual donations (£632)



- Purchase of books for the English classes by Tring Bookshop through their own fundraising.

In addition to this we ran a stall at the Berkhamsted Festival of Lights and raised £293.

Unfortunately our stall at the Tring Summer Carnival 2023 had to be cancelled due to the poor weather.

We would like to extend our thanks to all of our funders for enabling us to continue our vital work.

Get in touch:

Whether you have feedback for the committee, know someone who wants to host or would like to volunteer, get in touch with the team!

www.berkotringukraine.com

batuhostingnetwork@gmail.com

Join our Facebook group: [Berko And Tring Ukraine Support Group](#)

If you're a host in the local area, contact a committee member to join our private hosts WhatsApp group.

Ukrainian WhatsApp Group

If your guests have not yet joined our local Ukrainian WhatsApp group (age 18+) please send them the following link to apply to join: <https://form.jotform.com/221374799463064>

Berkhamsted & Tring Ukraine Hosting Network

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from 16th June 2023 (Charity Registration Date) to 4th April 2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Designated funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
Receipts					
Balance at Charity Registration on 16th June 2023	7645	1302	4000	12947	-
Tring Lions - Xmas party & Tring Rooms	-	1000	-	1000	-
Aston Wine Club	1000	-	-	1000	-
Xmas Stall Berko Lights	293	-	-	293	-
Bank Interest	9	-	-	9	-
Individual Donations (Restricted for Berko English Rooms)	602	30	-	632	-
Total receipts	9549	2332	4000	15881	-
Payments					
Citizens Advice Dacorum Ukrainian Advice Service			6700	6700	-
Advice Service Room Rental	612	1302	-	1914	-
English Lessons Room Rental	1728	274	-	2002	-
Meet Up Costs (Room Rental & Refreshments)	771	766	-	1527	-
Shop	6	-	-		-
Christmas Party	232	-	-	232	-
Training	0	-	-		-
DBS Checks	0	-	-		-
Organisational Memberships	0	-	-	0	-
Insurance	0	-	-	0	-
Grant Payments	1018	-	-	1018	-
English Books	48	-	-	48	-
Fundraising Costs	133	-	-	133	-
Administration / Miscellaneous	43	-	-	43	-
Total Payments	4592	2332	6700	13617	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	4957	0	-2700	2257	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-2700	0	2700	0	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	0	0	0	0	-
Cash funds this year end	2257	0	0	2257	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Designated funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Funds Held in BATUHN Metrobank Account	2257	0	0
	Total cash funds	2257	0	0
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Designated funds to nearest £
B3 Investment assets	None	-	-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	None	-	-	-
B5 Liabilities	None	-	-	-

Notes

- These accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments Basis.
- Balance from accounts prior to Charity Registration are included as a receipt this year.
- Grants were paid to eligible Ukrainians in accordance with BATUHN Grant Policy to support their integration into the local area

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval

Treasurer

Kate Benton

Trustee

Vicky Album