

BATUHN Annual Report: **April 2024 - March 2025**

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Introduction

April 2024 to March 2025 marks the third year of the Berkhamsted and Tring Ukraine Hosting Network (BATUHN). During this year we continued our activities of providing English classes, weekly meet-ups and special events such as seasonal celebrations and commemorations. The group also arranged its first outing, to St Albans which proved a success.

We were grateful to have received full funding from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) during this year which enabled us to concentrate on our activities without the concern about funding. However we did also receive income from a small number of other sources and will need to continue to develop and build these relationships for 2025-2026.

In this financial year we also undertook considerable work to publicise the shift to digital e-visas and supported Ukrainians through the process. This work was led by Trustee Cathy Wickenden who has continually raised awareness of this important issue. More information on this can be viewed below.

We received the following feedback "I'm grateful for your work and time you spent helping Ukrainians. Thank you very much BATUHN"

Charity management and governance

During this year we said a very sad farewell to our Treasurer Kate Benton, who resigned at the end of the financial year to give her more time for other activities. Kate was a mainstay of BATUHN from its inception and the driving force behind many of our proudest achievements. Kate played a key role in setting up and running the English classes and was, for a long time, the primary contact between the trustees and the English teaching team. Kate was also the mastermind behind contracting Citizens Advice Dacorum to deliver a specialist service to local Ukrainians and played a leading role in setting up and overseeing the service. She introduced us to our first Ukrainian trustee. She also took up the mantle of being our first Treasurer and established excellent systems and processes for managing our finances. Overall Kate's contribution to BATUHN and to the support of local Ukrainians has been outstanding and we are very grateful.

We are delighted, however, to have begun the recruitment process for two new Trustees to BATUHN, both of whom were formally recruited at the beginning of 2025-2026. Alan Linfield has been a weekly volunteer at the Tring meet-up since its inception and has shown great dedication to supporting local Ukrainians. Christina Paduchak is Ukrainian living locally and has experience of working in schools and in psychology. She brings a wealth of knowledge and energy to the team. Both will be introduced more fully in next year's Annual report.

In March, BATUHN arranged Safeguarding training organised and funded by Hertfordshire Community Foundation. This is essential training that was attended by 5 Trustees and 7 English teacher volunteers. The training proved very useful and resulted in an interesting discussion about our role as an organisation in supporting the welfare of people in contact with us. This has led to a number of concerns being raised that, whilst not always specific safeguarding issues, have been examples of volunteers taking positive action to ensure the wellbeing of local Ukrainians.

Leila Ward led the organisation in developing relevant financial policies and created a Financial Controls Policy, Expenses Policy and Card Payment Policy in line with our obligations to the Charity Commission. These were formally adopted in March 2025.

Charity Activities

Communications

As in previous years BATUHN retains a presence in the Ukrainian whatsapp group which is a useful way to share information and updates with guests and local residents. There is also an active whatsapp group of English teaching volunteers of which Vicky Album and Leila Ward are members in order to share communications between teachers and trustees as needed.

We retain the website which contains basic information about our activities as well as our contact details.

Weekly Meet-ups

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

The Tring coffee morning has continued in Tring Baptist Church. The meet ups continue to be valued by Ukrainians many of whom find it a key source of community and support. Hosting a weekly space has also proved useful in connecting Ukrainians with other vital services such as support for visas mentioned below.

The meet up continued to be organised by Leila Ward in 2024-2025 and attended weekly by Sally French and Mel Bradding, along with volunteer Alan Linfield.

We received the following feedback which sums up the value of the coffee morning and English lessons:

“These events and meetings will help me live here. I look forward to Thursday every week to go to coffee and class at Tring. The atmosphere of kindness, care and joy helps overcome mental difficulties, fills us with energy, inspires us that we will succeed in everything.”

English lessons

English lessons continue to thrive thanks to the incredible team of volunteer teachers (and their dedicated students). There are so many volunteers doing fantastic work. This year we would like to acknowledge Jenny Watson who organises the teachers in Berkhamsted for her hard work and dedication. The lessons simply couldn't run without her efforts and it is greatly appreciated. Jenny gave the following feedback about English lessons:

“The classes are very settled, with each class completing a curriculum. I feel we have it well organised. We always have cover, students know where/ when they are attending and length of time per session.”

A total of 44 people have attended BATUHN's English classes since April 2024. Of those 29 are regular or semi-regular attendees. Most students are female and aged over 40 with younger students tending to attend less frequently due to work commitments. In general the beginners classes have the oldest students with the younger students often having a more advanced level of English.

Whilst progress isn't formally measured, teachers report progress through moving onto more difficult text books. For example, the advanced Berkhamsted class started the year on Level 3 text books and are now on the latter half of Level 4. The beginners group began on a pre-beginner's text book and are now halfway through the beginners level. Teachers report increased confidence as well as observing a marked improvement in conversational English.

A small number of students also attend college courses elsewhere but some have reported doing very little spoken English in those classes and finding the BATUHN classes a useful addition.

Measure	Number	Detail
TOTAL number of individuals who have attended English classes with BATUHN from April 2024 to present	44	This number includes all students who have attended at least one class since April 2024.
Number of female students	40	
Number of male students	4	
Students attending Tring only	17	
Students attending Berkhamsted only	17	
Students attending both	16	
Approx proportion aged 40+	84%	
Approx proportion aged under 40	16%	Younger students tend to attend less regularly due to work commitments

BATUHN completed a survey of local Ukrainians and received some of the following feedback about English lessons,

“Please keep the existing English language classes in Tring and Berkhamsted going forwards. These courses provide us with everything we need to learn English. And we express huge thanks to the teachers for their dedicated, professional, creative work and sincere desire to share their knowledge with us.”

Mondays 12:45 - 3pm at Open Door and then the Quaker Meeting House in Berkhamsted

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

Visa Extensions

During the last year BATUHN, led by Trustee Cathy Wickenden has made a considerable effort to raise awareness of the forthcoming changes to a digital visa from the physical card BRP, which had been issued when Ukrainian guests first arrived. We started publicising the changes in 2024 and sought support from Herts Help Ukrainian support workers, Viktoriia Myronova and Anna Lesnic. They attended several meetings in both Berkhamsted and Tring to help guests register online (an essential first stage of applying) and apply for their visa extension.

It was clear that the extra support was needed and more than 20 people came to meetings at Open Door or Tring, or had their questions answered online. Further help has been needed in 2025 as the date of expiry of 3 year visa approaches for individuals and Herts Help liaised

with BATUHN to be present within the meet up and at Open Door in Berkhamsted on a monthly basis to offer support (although to date they have instead opted to meet people on a more ad hoc basis). They communicate directly with potential applicants via the Ukrainian whatsapp and can meet either at those set times or individually.

For some people, visa renewal has been easy and straightforward, for others less so, as a face to Face ID check at a visa centre has also been required before their new visa was issued.

All new visas are only for 18mths which brings further uncertainty for the future of the H4U scheme. It is vital all guests renew their visas for travel plus, without it the supporting payments to their UK host will cease. A card BRP is no longer valid for travel to the UK. Digital visa extension is mandatory from now on.

Guest Involvement

In 2024-2025 work was started that led to further guest involvement in the following financial year. We began the recruitment process of our first Ukrainian Trustee. This has been something that we had hoped to achieve since our foundation. We were thrilled to welcome Christina to our board in May 2025.

We also began work on a new feedback survey. This was published in May 2025 and therefore does not form part of this report.

Grant Funds

We have not given grants in 2024-2025 due to having insufficient funds.

Events

Christmas Party (Dec 2024)

In December 2024, we held a Christmas Party at Tring Baptist Church for guests, hosts and volunteers. This was well attended by around 35 adults and 10-15 children and included festive food and drink, music and gifts both for Ukrainian children and for the children to choose and wrap for their parents.

The highlights were described by one of the organisers, Trustee Mel Bradding: "It was great seeing faces and families we don't see very often getting on so well. And seeing how well they have settled into their new lives in the uk. Everyone loved the food and drinks especially the Mulled wine. The children were very grateful and appreciative of the gifts and loved wrapping gifts for parents and grandparents.

We also got to see the quieter guests come out of their shells and see their true personality shine (probably due to the amount of mulled wine consumed by all)".

BATUHN is grateful to all the committee members who helped to make the party a success most notably Mel Bradding, Sally French, Cathy Wickenden and Leila Ward.

Marking three Years of War (Feb 2025)

This year, the anniversary of the war fell during the Easter holidays when there is normally no meet up. Instead Leila Ward liaised with the minister of Tring Baptist Church to commemorate the date. A brief service of reflection and prayers was held on February 27th during the regular Thursday meet-up in Tring to mark the 3rd anniversary of the Russian invasion, led by Rev Ruth Egan of High Street Baptist Church.

Trip to St Albans

In July 2024, a group of 10 English students and a group of volunteers visited St Albans for a tour around St Albans Abbey. The idea originated from the English class and the tour was arranged by one of the teachers.

As the cost of a coach proved too high and trains overly complicated, it was decided to give lifts in a number of volunteer cars. In order to avoid issues relating to Safeguarding it was agreed that there should be more than 2 people in each car. In addition there needed to be pickups from different locations to accommodate the students. This worked logistically but proved a challenge to organise and we are grateful, as ever, to Nicola Holden for taking on this military-style operation!

The trip was a great success and appreciated by all. Elena, one of the volunteer organisers gave the following feedback "We all had a really wonderful time in St Albans. The highlight was a tour in the Cathedral with light projection of restored medieval wall paintings. Amazing what technology can do nowadays! Thank you so much to everyone who made the trip possible"

We also received the following feedback from one of the Ukrainian attendees "Thank you very much for our English friends for organising and accompanying the trip to St Albans. Everything was at the highest level!"

Another thank you from the Trustees to the English teaching volunteers who organised and those who drove. Although we offered to pay petrol and parking expenses (and would happily have done so) no volunteers claimed and we should also acknowledge their generosity in this.

Financial Review

Treasurer's Report

The financial position of BATUHN on 5th April 2024 was £2,257 of which none were restricted. The remaining funds at the end of the year on 5th April 2025 were £2,343.61 none of which were restricted.

During this financial year our activities were primarily funded by a large grant from Hertfordshire County Council for £4,768. We also raised £167.18 at Tring Carnival and £139.50 for University of the Third Age (of which £50 was a fee for speaking at their meeting and £89.50 was raised at the meeting from donations). In addition we received an indirect donation from Berkhamsted Rotary Club of £500 which was paid directly to Open Door to pay for our room hire.

Receipts and Payments accounts have been prepared for the year 2024-25, which can be viewed in detail in the Financial Statement.

Receipts:

The total receipts this year on funds were £5085.18, of which £4,768 were restricted.

Receipts were from Hertfordshire County Council (£4,768), Tring Carnival (167.18), U3A (£139.50) and Bank interest (£10.50).

Payments:

English Lessons & Meet Up Room Rental

Rooms for lessons at Tring High Street Baptist Church cost (£2,232) was paid for by the grant from HCC. Rooms for lessons in Berkhamsted at Open Door/Quaker Meeting House cost £1715.50 of which £500 was paid for by Berkhamsted Rotary club paid directly to Open Door and the remainder was covered by the grant from HCC. An additional £160 cost appears in the count which was an outstanding amount from 2023-2024 that was paid in this financial year.

English Lesson Books

£411.02 was spent on books for English lessons taken from restricted funds.

Grants

We did not award grants in 2024-2025.

Safeguarding Training

Training cost

Other Payments

BATUHN also has the following additional costs that were met by the grant from HCC:

Meetup refreshment and other costs (£96.31), fundraising (payment for stall at Tring Carnival), insurance, Safeguarding training and general administration costs totalled £884.01 of which £292.82 was for the Christmas party.

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.

As we ended the year with £2,343.61 after all costs, we have an additional fundraising target of £656.39 to bring our reserves back up to £3000 at the end of this financial year.

Funding

During 2024-2025 BATUHN was grateful to be almost entirely funded by the grant from HCC with a few additional sources of income..

As noted above, in 2024-2025 our activities were funded by the following grants and donations:

- Hertfordshire County Council (£4,768)
- Berkhamsted Rotary club (£500) donated to Open Door to cover the room rental for the English Class
- Hertfordshire Community Foundation (cost of Safeguarding training £410 but not paid until 2025-2026)
- Fundraising activities: Tring Carnival (167.18), U3A (£139.50)
- Bank interest (£10.50).

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 BATUHN, know someone who wants to host or would like to volunteer, get in touch with the team!

www.berkotringukraine.com

batuhostingnetwork@gmail.com

Ukrainian WhatsApp Group

If you know or someone you know has 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 5th April 2024 to 4th April 2025

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					
Bank Interest	11	-	-	11	-
Hertfordshire County Council Grant	-	4768	-	4768	-
Tring Carnival Takings	167	-	-	167	-
U3A Talk Fee & Donations	140	-	-	140	-
Total receipts	317	4768	0	5085	15881
Payments					
Citizens Advice Dacorum Ukrainian Advice Service	-	-	-	0	6700
Advice Service Room Rental	-	-	-	0	1914
English Lessons Room Rental	160	2777.5	-	2938	2002
Meet Up Costs (Room Rental & Refreshments)	8	758.81	-	766	1527
Shop	-	-	-	0	6
Christmas Party	-	292.82	-	293	232
Training	-	386	-	386	0
DBS Checks	-	-	-	0	0
Organisational Memberships	-	-	-	0	0
Insurance	165	-	-	165	0
Grant Payments	-	-	-	0	1018
English Books	-	411.02	-	411	48
Fundraising Costs	38	-	-	38	133
Administration / Miscellaneous	2	-	-	2	43
Total Payments	373	4626.15	0	4999	13624
Net of receipts/(payments)	-56	141.85	0	86	2257
A5 Transfers between funds	0	0	0	0	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	2257	0	0	2257	-
Cash funds this year end	2201	141.85	0	2343	-

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	2201	141.85	0	
	Total cash funds	2201	142	0	
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK	
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Designated funds to nearest £	
B2 Other monetary assets	Unpaid Invoice for Safeguarding Training	-	386	-	
B3 Investment assets	None		-	-	
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	None		-	-	
B5 Liabilities	None		-		

Notes


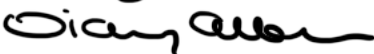
1. These accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments Basis.
2. CAB Service discontinued End March 2024
3. Previous year submission for partial year from date of incorporation of BATUHN of 16th June 2023, 8.5 months. Comparisons between years should take this into account.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Treasurer

Trustee

Signature

Print Name

Kate Benton

Vicky Album

Date of approval

