

Sanctuary Breaks

Hill House
Littleworth
Amberley
Stroud
GL5 5AL

Charity Number 1204540

Annual Report April 2024- March 2025

Chair's Report

Our Mission and Purpose

Sanctuary Breaks was founded with the aim of improving the lives of refugees, those seeking asylum, and survivors of torture by offering opportunities for recreation and social connection.

Our mission is 1) to create safe, supportive environments where individuals facing significant social challenges can experience moments of respite and joy and 2) to create opportunities for connection between people seeking sanctuary and the host community in Stroud District.

This year has seen us continuing with our monthly Days Out days offer with the new addition of monthly Arts Days Out, offering visitors the chance to come to a series of creative art days, with their work being part of the upcoming SITE arts festival in Stroud in June 2025. We continue to seek out and connect with other organisations supporting refugees and those seeking asylum whilst strengthening our presence in the local community. We welcomed a new trustee Bill Crooks, who brings a wealth of expertise and energy to our arts and crafts offer.

Governance and staffing

Our charity is governed by a passionate and dedicated group of six trustees, whose collective expertise has been instrumental in guiding us. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:

- **John Patrick Njau**
- **Naomi Millner**
- **Sally Pickering**
- **Judith Large**
- **Bill Crooks**

In July 2024 we recruited our first part-time paid Development Worker which has considerably strengthened our capacity. We must also thank Caroline Beatty, Director of

Hill House Retreats CIC for her continued dedicated inspiration and support for all our endeavours.

Our Activities in 2024

In 2024, our key program, *Days Out*, continued to take centre stage. Through this initiative, we provided people with a monthly opportunity to experience the joy and relaxation of simple, nature-based activities, while building a sense of community. We continued to partner with **Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (GARAS)**.

We introduced a new offer, a monthly *Arts Days Out*, to welcome up to 10 returning visitors over 4 sessions to create art which will be shared with the wider community as part of the SITE Arts Trail Festival in Stroud in June 2025.

Throughout the year, we welcomed **98 visitors**, including **50 new faces**, to our days out. Our guests come from a wide range of countries, including Uganda, Kenya, Russia, Syria, Venezuela, Botswana, Afghanistan, Sudan, Eritrea, Congo

Our activities foster a sense of belonging and well-being. Visitors took part in a variety of activities including:

- **Home-cooked meals** providing familiar cultural foods, with the invitation to guests to cook their preferred foods
- **Village walks** and nature explorations (blackberrying, taking photos of the local scenery)
- **English language** practice in an everyday context
- **Singing and music making**
- **Indoor and outdoor games**
- **Varied arts and crafts activities** with visiting artists
- **Gardening**
- **Tea, cake, and good conversation**

Our days out offer opportunities to unwind, connect with others, all in a beautiful countryside setting. Activities brought people together and provided an opportunity for relaxation and social engagement, building confidence and self-esteem and offering guests the chance to share skills and interests. On these days we build in moments of contact and engagement with the wider local community outside the house - through visiting local churches, cafes and taking part in local activities

“We have all enjoyed a wonderful day”

“Enjoyed it so much, feels like I am at home”

“ I felt safe & happy”

Our Days Out and Arts Days Out days were supported by **15 volunteers**, whose passion and dedication have been vital in making each day a success. From preparing meals to leading activities, our volunteers have been at the centre of what we do and how we do it, and we are deeply grateful for their involvement.

Therapy Days. GARAS (Gloucestershire Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) have used Hill House for therapy days for young people, with remarkable results. This will continue.

Away Days. Refugee Support Organisations from Bristol and Gloucester have used the house for away days for staff and residential stays for those they support. This will continue.

Events.

In June 2024 we held a Tibetan cultural day at HJill House to which around 80 local people came to learn about Tibet, and enjoy Tibetan food, music and dancing.

In October 2024 we held a volunteer recruitment day, offering those interested a chance to hear about what we do. 3 new volunteers have consequently joined our team

In December 2024 we welcomed 2 of our refugee guests who have joined our volunteer team, bringing valuable lived experience and fresh energy and ideas to our planning and delivery.

In January 2025 we held a small celebration event for Sanctuary Breaks inviting trustees and volunteers to share their experiences over the last year and collate feedback and ideas for the future growth of our work.

We continued to support the series of culinary community engagement days through 'A Taste of Home', allowing the local community to experience food from other cultures through a workshop and shared meal with refugee chefs/cooks.

Building Connections

The website continues to be developed, alongside a joint logo with Hill House (where all our activities take place). The strong connection between Hill House and Sanctuary Breaks has come into focus helping us plan more strategically for the future.

Insights from the previous year are helping shape content for the website and other social media channels, with the aim of connecting us more strongly with organisations working in the sector and those we support. The Newsletter continues as a regular monthly update, sent to all volunteers, helping everyone stay informed and connected.

Funding and Financial Support

Grants will be pivotal in supporting our activities, and will allow us to continue to employ staff to further the development of the work we do, strengthening current, and building new connections with organisations in Gloucestershire, the SW and the UK.

We will be applying for multi year funding once our first full year accounts (these accounts) are submitted.

Looking Ahead

Our plans include:

continuing with our *Days Out / Arts Days Out* program to reach more individuals and families

Being part of the SITE Festival Arts Trail in JUNE 2025 (partnering with SVA, Stroud Valley Arts), supporting a local refugee artist in residence as well as showcasing the work of our guests

Building a clay bread oven with our guests so our guests can make bread together when they visit, and which can be used for community pop-up events to raise awareness of the work we do

Continuing to enhance and expand our volunteer network

Continuing to build meaningful partnerships within the community and with other organisations supporting our client base.

We aim to increase understanding and connection between local communities and refugees and those seeking asylum through supporting one-off events including 'A Taste of Home', Storytelling performances, the SITE Arts Trail Festival, a music and food event marking Refugee Day in June 2025, and pop-up bread making events

A Heartfelt Thank You

Once again I wish to extend my deepest thanks to everyone who has supported Sanctuary Breaks — our trustees, volunteers, partners, and donors. Your commitment, energy, and belief in our mission have made all of this possible.

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "SE Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Sarah Hughes

Chair, Sanctuary Breaks



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Sanctuary Breaks	1204540
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Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	01.04.2024	To	31.03.2025
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Barnwood Trust Grant	-	-	-	-	-
Hill House Retreat Donations	970	10,000	-	10,000	-
Other donations	2,955	-	-	970	5,000
Bank Interest	41	-	-	2,955	-
GCC Grant	-	-	-	41	2
NHS	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
	-	-	-	5,000	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,966	10,000	-	18,966	10,002
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,966	10,000	-	18,966	10,002

A3 Payments

Salary	-	9,689	-	9,689	-
Transport	-	1,244	-	1,244	-
Event Expenses	-	515	-	515	-

Subsistence	-	327	-	327	-
Subscriptions and Professional Fees	-	480	-	480	-
Insurance	-	157	-	157	-
Administration Expenses	-	151	-	151	-
Publicity	-	139	-	139	434
Bank Charges	-	60	-	60	10
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	12,761	-	12,761	444

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	

Total payments	-	12,761	-	12,761	444
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Net of receipts/(payments)	8,966	- 2,761	-	6,204	9,558
A5 Transfers between funds	-		-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	4,558	5,000	-	9,558	-
Cash funds this year end	13,524	2,239	-	15,763	9,558

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	CAF Bank Account	13,389	2,239	-
	Petty Cash	135	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	13,524	2,239	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account (s))	OK	OK	OK

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	Details			
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details			
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

		-	-
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B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Sarah Hughes	16 June 2025

Note to the Accounts

A property has been made available to Sanctuary Breaks by Hill House Retreats CIC for Charitable Usage with the value of the donation for this financial year being approximately £2,840