



Hay, Brecon & Talgarth Sanctuary for Refugees

Registered charity no 1173570

Annual report 2018

Overview

Respite Sanctuary/ Away Days

Away Days out in Breconshire		10	
Small groups	Talgarth walking festival	Hay literary festival Volunteer stewards stayed. Visits of others	Bike maintenance x3
Farm short breaks	Several .		
Holiday cottage stays	14 families	25 adults	40 children
Others	Newport Football match	Group from Rivers of Gold visited Llangorse	Group from Newport to Alder Carr Llangattock.

Attendance at Respite sanctuary days by people seeking sanctuary *

At these days we provide a 53 coach from Swansea which sometimes picks up a few people from the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme [VPRS] who are based in Ystradgynlais. In addition we have also extended a welcome to other people on the VPRS based in Newtown, Hereford and Abergavenny and to people who are able to make their own way to the venue. Attendance varies between 40 and 80+ at any day and often the numbers of local people attending exceeds this considerably.

* throughout this document we have used the term people seeking sanctuary to describe people seeking refuge/ asylum/ safety.

Hardship fund

This was established to meet emergency or one off needs and has been well used this year with responses to requests within a day on most occasions. Application forms on Website but we do respond to any form of request and seek supportive information.

We have had requests from individuals and from Groups such as Swansea asylum seekers support, The Sanctuary and Sharetawe a charity that helps destitute asylum seekers. Marilyn of Sharetawe, Wayne of Swansea Asylum seekers support, Jeni [Swansea Asylum seeking Womens group] and Sarah [The Sanctuary] have been very helpful in ensuring money reaches the people in need

In addition, we established a separate fund for Nappies and Feminine Hygiene products administered by Maria Nicholas, a volunteer in Swansea. She has been advised that we can afford to allow up to £50 a month to be spent in this way.

January	£230 for living expenses for destitute £800 for travelling to Solar Panel course
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February	£15/mth for gym £250 SIA badge*
May	£250 SIA badge
June	£140 for 2 people who are destitute for a months bus pass and living expenses
September	£80 for replacement fridge £55 bus fares £150 Uniform for work £300 for 2 school uniforms £300 for equipment for college course £200 destitute help £70 via Marilyn for urgent help
October	£200 Exam course fees £490 Bus passes for college x2
November	£360 transport [Newport] / access course
December	£245 for transport [but Wayne was able to negotiate a free pass so returned!] £100 for living expenses for destitute person Request for a course of alternative therapy for asylum seeking man from Newport- to be paid later

**SIA Badge is issued by security industry authority and is required to work as a security guard. The badge has allowed people to obtain work when the cost of applying would have meant the person would have been unemployed.*

We also allocated £500 to be used for bike parts as Bike maintenance has become a valuable way of providing people with transport.

Membership and Support

As at 31st December 2018

Email newsletter subscribers	447
Facebook followers	540
Twitter followers	632
Instagram	47

Fundraising/ Awareness raising activities

Stalls	Talgarth Volunteers get together January Hay Bookstagram festival/ Book launch April Hay Literary festival. May Brecon Cathedral mission day Hay Fair trade day Brecon Artisan market Brecon Theatre Brecon market 23rd December
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Collections	Hay Literary festival Refugee week talks Open evening in Brecon Talks at Coleg Trefecca Bucket at The Mill Talgarth.
Donations	Many from individuals and businesses both in money and in kind
Events	Music event at the Globe Hay on Wye 19th May. Raffle African meal and talk 4th December

More detail and suggestions for the future

Open evening 15th November- attendance about 40 people. Speakers John Anderson, Margaret Blake and Mark Seymour. Commendations given to new groups of people who have supported us.

<https://hbtsr.cityofsanctuary.org/2018/11/12/dont-forget-our-open-meeting-please>

Future plans

Consider if we give an award to groups, people or businesses who have supported us for several years. possibly as well as recognising new support.

Schools of Sanctuary

No new awards this year although Ysgol Trefonnen hosted a further day out, Llangynidr school choir attended a day out and collected goods in April and Ysgol Mynydd Ddu and Archdeacon Griffiths participated in donating goods for away days.

Other schools have also enquired about participating in Away days. A group of pupils from Gwernyfed High school and a pupil of Crickhowell High School attended Project Get together.

Future plans try to encourage and assist schools to apply for School of Sanctuary status

Respite Sanctuary/Away days

10 days were held this year. One had to be cancelled due to illness in Swansea which delayed further days. It was a helpful pause to take stock and ensure these days out were still the most appropriate and helpful way for us to operate. A comment from Maria Nicholas summed up the response 'I think that a price cannot be put on their value. They change desperate people's lives, if only in the short term but for many in the longer term.'

Many people benefit from the days out, not only people seeking sanctuary but also the people and communities hosting. There are benefits in working together for a common goal and providing activities that local people including children can access. Community cohesion and intergenerational working are immediate benefits that areas hosting have noted.

All days are written about with quotes and thanks on our website and press releases sent to the local press.

This year days were held at Hay on Wye, Llangorse, Llangynidr, Penpont [x2] Craig Y Nos, Ysgol Trefonnen Llandrindod, Talgarth Sports, Brecon and Bronllys.

Football : Football is a constant feature at any away day that has space and people who want to play. This year Newport Sanctuary Football team played against Talgarth FC at the Talgarth Sports festival. HBTSR donated money to buy football kit for the Newport team and bought 12 pairs of boots in a sale that meant most people had new boots to play in.

Gareth Davies, Senior Coach Educator for the Football Association Wales put us in touch with Newport County football club. They kindly arranged for us to have 50 free tickets for

a match in April and for the BME inclusion officers to have use of a playing area near to the ground for a training session beforehand for people seeking sanctuary in Newport and Swansea . The Sanctuary In Newport agreed to be the base for the afternoon/evening. Subsequently Newport County have given season tickets and additional free tickets to people seeking sanctuary in Newport.

Coincidentally the date of the Newport County match was during the Amnesty International 'Football Welcomes' campaign highlighting the importance of football in people's lives.

Organisation: each respite sanctuary day requires careful planning in close partnership with the drop-in centres and support organisations in the cities, in particular Swansea Asylum Seekers Support (SASS, previously called SBASSG). We rely in particular upon those individuals and support workers familiar with their local communities of people seeking sanctuary: Wayne and Maria in Swansea [With help from Raz, Thanu and Saba] , Sarah and Mark in Newport and Rina and Hamed in Newtown. The uncertain lives of those seeking sanctuary, their dispersion and lack of transport, makes gathering the group to take the coach a difficult process and is not to be underestimated.

We rely also on a source of reliable transport and have been fortunate to have found Bluebird Coaches who not only submitted the cheapest tenders initially , but have also been very accommodating and friendly.

In our own communities, we rely on a steadily growing band of people prepared to host, arrange and provide activities and food and gifts. Melrose and Ailsa will visit and help with planning and Melrose frequently helps to coordinate food donations. All the wonderful hosts and their teams have been thanked.

Virginia, Penny, Andrew, Janet and others have coordinated donations of short dated goods from supermarkets prior to away days

No untoward incidents have been reported other than a concern about an inappropriate communication after an away day. Following this an emergency trustees meeting was held and the decisions reported to the next group meeting. The person reporting the communication did not want any further action taking although the other person involved was told about the concern and appropriately counselled by a volunteer well known to them. Subsequently we have produced a briefing sheet for all volunteers at Away days in easy-read format. There is a welcome/information desk present and with people available throughout the day and a signing in book. HBTSR badges are given to regular volunteers and name badges to others. Safeguarding training is now available and the safeguarding policies have been updated.

Future plans

We hope to continue a programme of days out and have dates arranged until the summer 2019. Try to arrange a football outing again- possibly to coincide with Amnesty Football Welcomes campaign if running again.

Other Respite Sanctuary Activities

Farm stays

Two of our supporters Chris and Sarah have a small holding that they offer for hosting people from time to time. This was used to accommodate 2 volunteer stewards for Hay festival and the accompanying volunteer from Swansea. It has not been used so often by other people this year as the hosts have been busy, the link person in Swansea went through a difficult period and the demand reduced.

Future plans

We will continue to offer this as mutually convenient.

Holiday Cottages,

Although we were offered a number of holiday cottages last year we opted to use only the one based in Brecon near to the bus stop and near to carefully selected volunteers who can check that the stay progresses well, that the visitors have fun, leave the cottage tidily and catch the transport home. We are very grateful to Rowland Jepson who has allowed us to use his cottage when it is not otherwise booked. Lynne Rogers liaises with Rowland, Thanu, Maria and Wayne about availability, suitability, need and arrangements and arranges for support from a small group of volunteers. The group pays bus fares and for food/ subsistence during the stay on an agreed formula taking into account the numbers visiting and the duration. We also try to assist with the changeover tidy up.

Future plans

Continue as possible.

Short breaks for small groups

A small group attended the Talgarth Walking festival and stayed in a small apartment paid for by HBTSR. Supporters provided food and meals and people participated in the walks. Hay Festival was again a source of great activity written about as a blog on the website. 2 volunteer stewards assisted by Jonathan enjoyed the experience and were accommodated by Sarah and Chris[one coming for a second year]. A number of small groups came up from Swansea to attend events with complimentary tickets provided by Hay Box office. 10 people from Newport came to Dylan Moore's book launch as he used to work at The Sanctuary. They were given complimentary tickets for this and another event as well as being treated to supper by the festival.

We have also had two smaller groups visit for the day - one from Birmingham and one from Newport.

Future plans

The small group day visits to different parts of our area are something we hope to help facilitate. And we certainly hope to continue our successful links to Hay Festival who have provided enormous support to one of the young men who volunteered and was detained at Christmas.

Bicycles

Drovers Cycles in Hay have hosted a number of bike maintenance days for people seeking sanctuary as well as offering a ride as part of the Hay day out. . The first maintenance day was at the end of last year for Space4U Cardiff and in April for Newport Sanctuary. Newport have subsequently had a number of visits from Miv who helped them to set up a regular session in Newport. They now have a weekly maintenance session and visited Drovers for a master class in more complex matters at the beginning of November. HBTSR have supplied bikes to Cardiff, Swansea and Newport over the last year. Thanks to donors and to people who have provided storage and transport - in particular Miv, Sean, Stuart and Vanessa.

HBTSR have paid for most consumables needed but are very grateful to Drovers Cycles who have provided items at cost or below and negotiated a gift from Raleigh.

Future plans

Bikes provide a free way to travel, a source of exercise and independence. We hope to continue to support this.

English Language Tuition

Mac continued to visit Unity in Diversity[UID] to teach an IELTS course. And to take donated goods from our store that are useful to people seeking Sanctuary. He has been unable to do this for the last month.

Future plans

Await news from Mac but we will continue to send goods to UID

Courts/ Home Office group

People seeking sanctuary are understandably very anxious about attending hearings and whilst friends and Swansea based volunteers often help by accompanying them, a small group of HBTSR volunteers have agreed to be available to accompany when asked. There have been a number of requests and it seems this activity may increase.

Future plans

Continue as requested and maybe find additional volunteers

Friendships

Individual HBTSR supporters have befriended individual people seeking sanctuary and offer support, time out and in one case acted as a birthing partner. HBTSR often writes letters of support and helped to raise money via 'chuffed.org' to help with a Citizenship application.

Project Get Together.

HBTSR were given a grant of £7500 by City of Sanctuary [via the Guardian Refugee fund] to run a project to bring together up to 80 young people from the three South Wales cities (both those who had lived in the UK all their lives and those seeking asylum/ refuge) for a residential weekend of out-door activities to be run by PGL (one of the UK leading activity holiday providers and where one of our supporters [Steve] works) designed to build team working and leadership qualities in participants. This took place on 5,6,7th July.

The aims were to develop mutual understanding through this project and to demonstrate

*a positive vision of welcome and hospitality for all,

*opportunities for friendship and solidarity between locals and people seeking sanctuary,

*partnership and network development across localities

*identify opportunities for working on common cause issues within and across communities.

In order to run the weekend we had regular meetings to plan activities, troubleshoot any issues and to learn to work together. It became obvious as we met that people were starting to learn from and about each other and good contacts were made that have led to a number of further joint activities. The weekend was a great success and partners have asked that we try to set this up again. The groups represented were The Sanctuary Newport, Tros Gynnal Plant Cymru, Llanishen High School [School of Sanctuary status awarded just before the weekend away] City of Sanctuary Swansea and Bloom Swansea as well as HBTSR. During the weekend the groups met with Kirsty Williams AM, Archbishop of Wales John Davies and motivational speaker Scary Guy. We are very grateful that these busy people were able to show solidarity with this group.

Future plans

To try to raise funds to run a similar weekend with partners next year. Will apply to Big Lottery.

Goods

Supermarkets. Aldi have continued to donate surplus, end of date, perishable foods for away days. The Coop have given foods for specific days as part of their charitable activity. Morrisons have changed managers and have much less waste. Virginia continues to coordinate these links.

Other goods

We continue to be given large amounts of clothing, bedding, toys, household and kitchen items that are of use to people seeking sanctuary both here and abroad. Brecon Rotary

again offered all the surplus from their Caledonian market to Swansea Humanitarian Aid Response Project [SHARP -a humanitarian aid project who send clothing, toiletries, medical equipment and bedding to refugee camps] and Oranges and Lemons Cymru [a community aid project who provide household goods to people in need in Swansea]. In the end other groups mainly benefitted from this generous offer.

Drop off points

the Liberal Democrats office in Brecon and St Marys Church in Hay continue to take in our donations for which we are extremely grateful. We have worked upon a kindly message thanking people but asking for quality goods that they would share with friends

Store

Ty Mawr Lime continue to provide us with a warm, secure storage area where we can sort out items to be sent to UID, Newport Sanctuary, SHARP or Oranges and Lemons.

Stores Group

Sue, Erica, Carola, Brenda and Ailsa collect goods from the drop off points and sort check and package it. Recently some additional people have started to help with Transport of goods -

Trish, Sarah, Carol and others have joined with Lawrence, Ailsa, Trevor, Jonnie, Mac, Miv, Anthony and Sally in transporting items.

Future plans

Continue all this activity

Christmas presents.

Christmas gifts came in a variety of forms this year. Several support groups indicated that they had gifts offered from other sources. We paid for and wrapped gifts for a Children's party at Swansea asylum seekers support [thanks to Sue and Sarah for sourcing, wrapping and taking these down] we wrapped presents for men , women and children at UID [thanks to the stores group and Claire who oversaw the wrapping and to Lynne Philip, Lawrence and Ailsa who delivered these] and were given some generous gifts from Timeout Brecon and decorated shoe boxes full of gifts from Christ College Brecon also shared at UID. And some reverse advent calendars including a generous gift of 24 jars of jam that were shared at the Christmas Party of UID

Future

Hope to repeat this as needed.

Fundraising

We again raised money at Hay Festival both on site and via stalls at the homes of supporters and via various stalls at other festivals. Our rescue teddies in need of homes seem to be a popular way to engage with children about seeking sanctuary.

The Mill in Talgarth have a collection box for us which is helpful. We had a music event at the Globe in Hay and helped with a Concert by Ian Shaw at Brecon Jazz that raised us some money as well as funds for Side By Side with Refugees [A small charity helping with Refugees in France].

We were recipients of a share of the Bishops Lent appeal and were delighted by the generosity of the donation.

We had a big raffle and an African dinner with Speakers.

Future plans

Continue to run stalls and fundraise as it also helps to highlight the asylum system and issues

Book

We published a book of drawings and writings by supporter Eugene Fisk who sadly died before the book was published. Sales of this book and others of his have brought in some

monies as well as raising awareness. Books have been given to people featured in the book. The book was launched as part of the Bookstagram festival in Hay and is for sale in a number of bookshops [Addymans, Richard Booths, Brecon Bookshop, Bookish Crickhowell] and online via Green ink Publishing as well as from the group..

Lobbying, Awareness raising and Education.

Margaret, Mike and Philip met with Chris Davies MP in January to discuss concerns and followed up on actions that he had undertaken to do. Both as a Group and individually we have written to him about family reunion, a kinder asylum system and Lifting the ban on work for people seeking asylum.

Kirsty Williams Am corresponded [and shared with us] with the Minister for Immigration about lifting the ban on work after hearing about the death of Mustafa a young Sudanese man in Newport who fell to his death after his illegal place of work was raided. We have had a presence at some festivals with information about the group and have updated our information leaflet twice during the year.

We have talked about seeking sanctuary and HBTSR at several schools and given talks to various groups including Coleg Trefecca.

Our open evening was an opportunity to learn more about aspects of seeking sanctuary whilst promoting the group.

HBTSR have been represented at Sanctuary in Sennedd and Sanctuary in Parliament. We presented a petition to Chris Davies asking for a fairer asylum system on 14th December

On 20th December a man who was a volunteer steward at Hay festival was taken into detention. As part of a rapidly formed group of lobbyists in our area and Swansea, we were able to ensure that social media helped to publicise the issues, mount a petition calling upon the Home Secretary to halt the plans for deportation, assist with securing a new solicitor and achieve considerable publicity for the man and possibly to highlight the shortcomings of the asylum system.

Future plans

We hope to meet to discuss the latter activity and have an action plan ready for if we have to do this again. Meanwhile we are trying to keep all interested parties up dated on progress

Website and social media

The website is maintained by City of Sanctuary and Ailsa with help from Mike and Paul. This has all our newsletters, write ups, policies and links to other groups.

Facebook remains a public group with posts approved by Steve and Ailsa

Twitter is run by Maria and really came into its own with the Campaign to free Otis.

Instagram is run by Alex.

Neil and Cate continue to help with design of our leaflets and posters to ensure that we have a consistent, recognisable and effective visual presence.

Future plans

Consider if we need to alter our privacy settings on Facebook and see if we need to raise our profile on Instagram.

Expenditure

Detail is provided in the Finance annual report. We have continued to support other groups working with people seeking sanctuary. We have helped many individuals with items such as SIA badge, uniforms, Bus passes, food and kit.

We pay for transport to away days and associated costs of these days. Frequently we are able to negotiate favourable rates for halls, food and gifts are donated and we appreciate the generosity of so many people.

Administration.

All policies are on our website and are reviewed annually by the Chair and trustees. . Our Safeguarding policies were revised by Aideen Naughton for which we are extremely grateful. Aideen has delivered two training sessions on safeguarding.

We have over 400 people on our mailing list who receive a regular mailing with details of activities and agenda and minutes of meetings. All are welcome to attend meetings and usually about 20 people are in attendance.

We meet most months and report upon activities, income, expenditure, any issues, plans and seek views and aim for consensus about future work.

Officers and Trustees are appointed at the AGM with Trustees able to co-opt additional Trustees between AGMs as needed. Trustees meet formally about twice a year or as needed.

We were awarded a Volunteer of the Year award by Powys Association for Voluntary Organisations.

Post Holders.	Holder
Chair	Margaret Blake
Vice Chair	Sally McColl
Treasurer	Lawrence Duffy
Secretary	Ailsa Dunn
Trustees	Margaret Blake* Lawrence Duffy* Ailsa Dunn* Melrose East appointed 12/2017 Sally McColl appointed 12/2017 Sean O'Donoghue* resigned 8/2017 Mike Gatehouse* resigned 02/2018 * appointed 06/2017 when Charity registered.
Policies	Mike Gatehouse
Hardship fund group	Mike Gatehouse, Lynne Rogers and Lawrence Duffy. Appointed annually
Fundraising coordinator	Rachel Giaccone
Respite day Welcomer/ information officer	Philip Oliver
Supermarket liaison	Virginia Brown
Store user group	Sue Richards, Carola Tipton, Erica McCarthy, Brenda Charlwood, Ailsa Dunn

Post Holders.	Holder
Webmaster	Paul Funnell
Facebook administrator	Steve Buzza
Twitter lead	Maria Duggan
Instagram Lead	Alex Benfield
Schools Liaison/ educator	Sue Richards,
Holiday stays coordinators	Lynne Rogers, Thanu Hettiarchchi, Rowland Jepson