



WELCOME PACK
<https://hbtsr.org.uk>
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You can download this Pack in either English or Ukrainian [here](#).
Please notify any errors or suggestions to: mike.gatehouse@phonecoop.coop

Welcome

Welcome to this beautiful part of Wales. Despite the terrible circumstances which forced you to leave Ukraine, we hope that you can feel safe and start to build new lives here for as long as may be necessary. We will do our best to help you. Our communities have a fine record of welcoming and assisting all those seeking sanctuary.

Who are we?

We are Hay, Brecon & Talgarth Sanctuary for Refugees, a registered non-profit charity established in 2018 when Europe's mounting refugee crisis became more visible. We work across the rural communities of South Powys, linked to similar groups in the South Wales cities of Swansea, Cardiff and Newport, and are members of the UK-wide organization [City of Sanctuary](#). We have 495 members, plus over 1,000 followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. You can find out more about us at:

Website: hbtsr.org.uk Facebook: facebook.com/groups/hbtsr Twitter: [@hbts4refugees](https://twitter.com/hbts4refugees)
Email: <mailto:hbts4refugees@gmail.com>

Who else is helping you?

You may have arrived via a 'super-sponsorship' programme of the [Welsh Government](#) or by being sponsored by individuals. All arrivals in the area will be helped by **Powys County Council**: They can help with housing, education, benefits, financial advice, etc. **Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations (PAVO)** organise volunteers and befriending schemes and coordinate other voluntary groups across Powys. Their contact is [Clair Swales](#), Head of Health and Wellbeing.

Where is this place?

We work in the southern part of Powys, a large rural county with a population of about 120,000. There are three small towns here, Brecon (population 8,000), Talgarth (1,700) and Hay on Wye (2,000). We are in the Brecon Beacons National Park, an area protected for its beauty.

The nearest cities are Swansea, Cardiff and Newport, each about one hour away. The nearest railway stations are Abergavenny and Hereford. The nearest large airport is Bristol.

Wales

We are in Wales, a separate nation within the United Kingdom, with its own devolved Welsh Assembly government. Wales has its own language, Cymraeg, spoken mainly in the North and West of the country. In Powys most people speak English as their first language.

Wales is famous for its welcome, rugby and singing!

You can read much more about Wales at <https://sanctuary.gov.wales/>, a website created to help sanctuary seekers to understand their rights. You can read the information there in various languages, including Ukrainian, Russian and Polish, or have it read it aloud to you.

Things to do and see locally

Llangorse Village hall has a drop-in Coffee Morning every Thursday. You can practise English conversation and meet English speakers and teachers.

Swimming

- Brecon: [Brecon Leisure Centre](#)
- Bronllys: [Riverside Caravan Park](#) has a small swimming pool.

Football & Rugby: There is a Rugby Club and sports pitches at Talgarth and in Brecon.

There are pitches at [Brecon Leisure Centre](#). HBTSR members can help you join many of these clubs.

Walking: this is a beautiful area for walking in the hills. HBTSR members can show you routes and accompany you.

More information:

- o <https://visitbrecon.org/>
 - o <https://www.breconbeacons.org/discover/visitor-information>
 - o <https://information-britain.co.uk/county66/townguideTalgarth/>
 - o <https://www.hay-on-wye.co.uk/tourism/>
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Sources of help

In an emergency *phone: 999* for Police, Ambulance or Fire service.

The Red Cross Wales emergency response email: ERWales@redcross.org.uk. Or, for general advice to refugees, their National Helpline 0808 196 3651 (10am to 6 pm)

Being exploited: If you, or anyone you know, is **being exploited** (for instance by an employer, or by being 'trafficked' – compelled to undertake illegal or degrading work), *contact:* <https://gov.wales/live-fear-free> or *phone* 0808 8010800

Contact and communication

We know how important it is for you to stay in touch with friends and family.

Computers: HBTSR may be able to give you your own laptop computer.

Mobile phone simcards: Vodaphone and Three (two of the largest mobile phone network companies) have offered free simcards to people arriving from the Ukraine. HBTSR and [The Red Cross](#) may have simcards available.

Tracing family: [The Red Cross](#) family reunion and tracing service. Contact MariePritchard@redcross.org.uk

Health

The Health Service in the UK is free and you will not have to pay to see a doctor, go to hospital, have an X-Ray or other test, or to use an ambulance. In Wales, medicines prescribed by your doctor or hospital are also free.

You should have a health check soon after your arrival to determine your immediate health needs and Covid status and enrol with a doctor.

Doctors: Doctors in the UK are known as GPs (General Practitioners). Everyone can enroll with a doctor at their local GP Surgery. You usually have to make an appointment and may have to wait a number of days to see a doctor or the practice nurse.

Dentists: You can register with a dentist as either an NHS patient or a private patient. Find a dentist at: <https://111.wales.nhs.uk/>

Pharmacies: (often called Chemists). If you need medicine, your doctor (GP) will write a prescription which you take to the nearest pharmacy (in some cases this may be in the surgery). There are pharmacies in Brecon, Talgarth, Hay-on-Wye and most larger towns.

Common remedies: remedies for colds, influenza ('flu'), and some eye, foot and skin complaints can be bought 'over the counter' without the need for a prescription from a doctor. Pharmacies, supermarkets and some village shops sell these. But medicines such as antibiotics, strong pain-killers, etc., can only be obtained with a doctor's prescription.

Psychological Help

You may have had traumatic experiences before you left Ukraine; or on your journey; or be extremely anxious about family and friends still remaining in your country.

There are free daily trauma and resilience meetings online for Ukrainian citizens to give them the opportunity to chat to people experiencing the same things. The sessions are 45 minutes long. The website is <https://saneukraineonline.org/sane-ukraine-online/>

An organisation called Psychology Tools has prepared helpful documents, available free, in Polish, Russian, Ukrainian and English.

You can view or download Psychology Tools documents from the links in the table below:

Issue	Symptoms	Link to view or download
How Trauma can Affect you	Symptoms experienced post-trauma can be physically and emotionally powerful and can feel especially disturbing if the person doesn't know why they are occurring. This illustrated information handout describes and normalizes common reactions to traumatic events, including feeling scared, having unwanted memories, or having nightmares and sleeping badly. It can help children and adolescents to understand that they are experiencing normal reactions to powerful events. It can also be used to help wider family and other people to understand how young people might be feeling.	Ukrainian Russian Polish English
Reactions to Trauma	This is an information handout designed for adults. It describes symptoms which commonly follow trauma – including re-experiencing symptoms, hyperarousal, and avoidance. It also gives helpful pointers about what to do to help someone who has experienced trauma.	Ukrainian Russian Polish English
Understanding Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	This is a guide designed to help people with PTSD to understand more about their condition. As well as a description of trauma, symptoms of PTSD, and effective treatments, this guide explores key maintenance factors for PTSD including: unprocessed memories, beliefs about trauma and its consequences, and coping strategies including avoidance.	Ukrainian Russian Polish English

Money

Benefits: this is money paid by the UK government both to UK citizens and to others like yourselves, resident in the UK. The system is complex and there are many different kinds of benefit!

Universal Credit: The most important benefit you will be able to claim is called Universal Credit. You can apply for this at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>.

Advice: Anwen Peters is a technical money advice and support officer employed by Powys County Council who will help with Universal Credit applications. *Phone:* 07919 044393. *Email:* anwen.peters@powys.gov.uk

Bank account: You will need a UK bank account in order to receive benefit payments, and you must open one before applying for the benefit. This will be an ordinary account, known as a 'current account'.

Monzo is an all-online bank which can [open and approve an account](#) for you within a few hours and cards are sent out quickly. They will require a scan of your passport and a short face video. Full details on how to open an account at: <https://monzo.com/blog/2019/08/28/how-to-open-a-monzo-account>.

Advice on banks: Other banks and accounts are available and general advice from the consumer organization [Which](#).

Education

School places: You can apply for local school places for your children at <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1158/Applying-for-a-School-Place>

The school year runs from September to July, but you should not have to wait until September to enroll your children. You can check the exact dates of school terms in 2022-23 here:

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/1166/School-Term-Dates>. The school day is usually from 8:50am to 3:15pm.

Transport: School buses will usually collect children from a point near home. School transport is run by Powys County Council. Details here: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/9122/Education-support-services>.

Learning English

Neath Port Talbot College provide English courses as do Adult Learning Wales

HBTSR has some volunteer teachers of English who may be able to help your learn English

Online courses may be available here: <https://www.busuu.com/en/course/learn-english-online> or here: <https://www.duolingo.com/learn>

Free, downloadable worksheets for English for Ukrainian speakers are available here: <https://www.twinkl.com>

Translation and interpreters

Google Translate. This app is quite good both for written translation and, if you use the microphone on your phone you can use it in conversation mode to act as a *live* interpreter. While not perfect, the results are surprisingly good. If you download the Ukrainian language module to your phone, you will then be able to use it anywhere even without a phone signal.

It is tiring trying to communicate in a foreign language so try to allow yourself time to rest or take a break.

There is a free Ukrainian-English phrase book produced by *Lonely Planet*. You can download it here: <https://media.lonelyplanet.com/ebook/ukrainian-phrasebook-5-for-shop.pdf>

Visas and official documents

If the Visa you were given to reach the UK is only for 6 months, then you should apply for a biometric residence permit (BRP). You do not have to do this immediately, but it must be done before your 6-month visa expires. This can be done online at: <https://apply.visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/ukraine-scheme-brp>.

Biometric details: may be provided online using the UK Immigration ID Check app or in person at a regional application centre.

Clothing and other necessities

Many local charities, including HBTSR, will help with provision of clothing, sewing machines, and other items. When the Russian invasion began, large quantities of clothing and other goods were donated and collected at local churches and other collection points. Some were sent to Ukraine or Poland. But some remained here to be used by refugees reaching the UK.

Transport

HBTSR may have volunteer drivers with their own cars to help as public transport is scarce in some areas

Buses: There are bus services between Brecon – Talgarth – Hay-on-Wye – Hereford; Brecon – Crickhowell – Abergavenny; Brecon – Cardiff; and Brecon – Swansea.

You can plan your journey and download timetables at: <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables>

The Wales Free Bus Travel for Refugees Scheme provides eligible people with free unlimited travel on all local bus services across Wales until 30 September 2022. You will need to show one of the following documents when getting on to a local bus: Valid Passport or Letter issued by the Home Office or Biometric British Residence Permit marked 'refugee', 'has HP' or 'Humanitarian Protection'.

Trains: the nearest railway stations are Hereford from which you can travel to London, Birmingham, Newport and Cardiff; and Abergavenny, from which you can travel to Manchester and the North of England; Newport, Bristol, London, Cardiff and Swansea. Train tickets in the UK are very expensive! You can plan journeys and book tickets at: <https://nationalrail.co.uk>

Coaches: slower, but much cheaper than trains. National Express coaches run to most of the UK from Newport or Hereford. You can plan journeys and book tickets at: <https://www.nationalexpress.com/en>

Locating yourself: The 'What Three Words' app (<https://what3words.com/ways-to-use>) is a useful tool and it may be sensible to record a link to the location of your accommodation.

Other useful information

General advice. One of the best sources of advice, both on-line and in person, is the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#), which knows about money, benefits, housing, legal matters, etc. They have branches in Brecon and Abergavenny.

Electricity and charging. UK mains supply is 230V and most plug sockets use a 3-pin system different from the ones used elsewhere in Europe. You can buy adapters at local shops (e.g. WHSmiths in Brecon).

Shopping. Local shops are usually open between 9am and 5pm. Supermarkets often open between 8am and 8pm and the Coop in Talgarth is open 7am to 10pm. There are Polish shops in Hereford and other larger towns.

Churches: Most churches are open during the day and will welcome you for private prayer or to join services. People and churches of many different faiths in this area have collected money and goods for Ukraine. All will welcome you. There are church services for Ukrainian worshippers being organised in Hereford, where there is also a large, established Polish community. The nearest Orthodox churches are in Cardiff or Swansea.

Other groups nearby: Hereford Help for Ukraine Group has a useful [Facebook page](#). They organize regular meetings on a Thursday 6-8pm for their growing group of Ukrainians settling in Hereford and have a group of Ukrainian/Russian/Polish speakers.