



Sanctuary/Welcome days. Basically, when we started the group, it was in order to link ourselves with others who were interested and to be welcoming to people seeking sanctuary.

†to inform ourselves and others about the 'Refugee Crisis' and to help by collecting money and other donations.

†to tell our elected representatives that we thought the country should be doing more to actively help show our support and welcome.

At the first meeting an elderly lady told us about how people from the cities used to come to the countryside for a day out and some food, usually hosted by one of the large houses and we thought this might be a good thing to try -the idea of Welcome days. Our main link is with Swansea as they were the first to reply when we started! We've now held over 40 of these days in many different venues but with things in common:

†A local volunteer who is happy to be the contact point and coordinator (usually has been to at least one event so knows what to expect and plan for). We have a supply of business cards to help when trying to obtain discounts/freebies.

†we will let the HBTSR wider group know of this persons email/phone and seek volunteers to assist but the coordinator will also recruit friends/family/others.

†Hold a meeting of potential helpers so they can meet each other and divvy up the work. Let each person recruit others to help.

†A venue that the coordinator is happy with that is large enough for about 100 people [we usually try to feed our invited visitors and anyone else who attends] - the venue will preferably have catering facilities, crockery and cutlery, tables and chairs, heating and space around for parking and play. HBTSR keep and supply as needed a large collection of mugs, tea and coffee, a large urn, cafetieres, a number of tea towels, table cloths and some drinks flasks.

†Aim to provide welcoming hot drinks and biscuits, lunch and tea with tea, coffee, water and juices and fruit available throughout the day. Our churches/faith groups have been a great supplier of cakes! Usually we provide various vegetarian dishes. Salad is popular as is bread. Hard boiled eggs are very popular. Take away containers are needed! If a meat dish is provided then it needs to be Halal.

†Need some people allocated to kitchen duties but this should be in shifts so everyone has a chance to meet people or sit down and need a steady supply of washer uppers!

†Aim to make available - exercise (e.g. football, volleyball, badminton, table tennis) a walk, some craft activities (e.g. clay, printing, painting, jewellery-making, wood carving), somewhere for children to play (a playpen is invaluable and we can borrow one), possibly some basic games e.g. scrabble, cards, boggle. Time to chat. Possibly some music or dance - find local musicians or supply instruments that visitors can use.

†Possibly need space to change and feed babies and whenever possible provide a private space to pray.

†Need space to display any takeaway items that might be useful e.g. clothing, kitchenware etc. And bags to take away in! We often don't have these items now as we send them directly....

† Groceries and toiletries are appreciated leaving gifts. We can make up bags of groceries and toiletries to take home but recently we have been sending all donations to the drop in centres where they can be shared between everyone who attends.

† Ailsa/ group Secretary will communicate with our contacts in Swansea about dates and details (Sunday is a good day as there is not much else going on and it allows working volunteers to attend) and let them find people who want to come. They provide a list with names, ages, countries of origin and dietary/other needs [usually only a few days beforehand.

†HBTSR usually hire a 53 seater coach to bring people (always good to have a mixed group though several trips have been mainly for families - nb if a family drops out a short notice this can impact greatly on numbers whereas a few singles dropping out can often be replaced from

the waiting list) and always include some of the local volunteers as well. It's worth noting that people seeking sanctuary often lead very chaotic lives and often can't commit to attending so there are frequent changes to the list and frequent 'no shows'.

†We have organisers' tips on our website (<http://hbtsr.org.uk/how-can-i-help/away-days/respice-days-tips>) and safeguarding policies with some health and safety guidance and a risk Assessment tool.

†We decided that we wanted to be as inclusive as possible so we always have an open door policy that anyone who wants to drop in can do so and as we can't DBS check everyone we insist that we don't have any children attend without a responsible adult. We invite the local community to call in and involve the local schools and children's groups such as cubs, brownies, scouts where and when we can

†Helpful to have amplification for announcements (also pictorial signs of which we have a collection) and to allow 'simultaneous' translation.

†Have someone who can act as Welcomer to let everyone know about the format of the day and any risks. Someone who can troubleshoot and liaise with the volunteer coordinators, who know the visitors well in case of any issues - Very rarely are any problems. First aider and person to report any safeguarding or other concerns to. [HBTSR have people who regularly do these duties]

†Teamwork- we've been amazed at how well goodhearted people work together and how a few leaders emerge and how some people will drop in regularly to help in many different ways.

†The need to have plans but also be flexible: it is a mix of careful planning and making do creatively with what and who is there on the day and the weather and the wishes of the visitors..... **Possible outline / timetable**

8:30 – Begin setting up Venue

9:30 – 10 bus leaves Swansea- phone call to confirm numbers!

11:00- 12:00 – Arrival at venue for Welcome, drinks and eg bread, butter, jam, biscuits, fruit, tea, coffee, fruit juices etc

11:30-13:00 – Group activity/greeting – morning activities: eg Art/print-making, Bread making – dough needed, Five aside football (weather permitting) Badminton, Walking (round the village)

13:00-14:00 – Lunch:- eg vegetarian stews, vegetarian curry, salad, baked potatoes, boiled eggs, rice, fruit

14:00-16.00 ,Afternoon activities: music, walks, crafts etc

16:00 – 17.00 Tea, cakes, and coffee.

†Be prepared for fun, friendship and laughter.

†Remember to thank those who have helped! Ailsa/ Val will write up for the press as a good news story and for website but she is always pleased to have help.



Website: <https://hbtsr.cityofsanctuary.org>

Email : hbts4refugees@gmail.com www.facebook.com/groups/hbtsr