

# HOST *Matters*

Welcoming International Students

Issue No. 27 Autumn 2014

## A host family

*Philip and Anne-Marie Mears* are hosts in Sussex, who enjoyed 'a wonderful weekend' with two international students from Surrey University.

'Our visitors were keen to help when I showed them the seedling plant-trays ready to be potted. We later walked



along Bexhill seafront, visited a photo exhibition, a chamber concert, bluebell woods, a castle, and had drinks at the Bull Inn. Philip played the

accordion with

reels and jigs, and we attended Sunday Service. 'It was an enriching experience for us as hosts, learning about Muslim cooking customs, costumes and feasts, and Chinese home life and music.

'These visits are wonderful opportunities to exchange information about culture, language and heritage; to show some warmth to young people far from home and family; and to enjoy new activities and experiences together.'

## An international student

'This visit has added a lot to my understanding of the English culture. It is an experience I believe will affect my thinking and future life. I truly think that communication and engagement is what is missing between people of different backgrounds.'

*Hilal, a student from Oman*



**Does HOST really matter?  
These people are some of those  
who think so!**

## A University International Officer

*Julie Zhu* was once an international student here herself. Now she works at Leicester University, which encourages more international students to apply for HOST visits than any other university in the UK.

Having had a HOST visit when she was

a student, Julie understands just how valuable the opportunity to 'live the culture' really is.

'It's amazing,' Julie says, 'the things which students don't know, or misunderstand, about this country. An extreme example occurred when I picked up a student from the airport, and was alarmed to see a white powder trickling from her rucksack. The girl explained that her mother had sent her with a bag of salt—not a strong enough bag, as it turned out—in case this commodity couldn't be found in the UK.'

Well, some of us prefer to take our own tea when we go abroad!



[www.hostuk.org](http://www.hostuk.org)

## Regional Organisers

HOST is dependent on, and very grateful to have, a wonderful band of volunteer Regional Organisers. We aim to have one RO for every county, but we don't always have a full complement.

We are delighted when new ROs join us, and are pleased to introduce the three ladies below.

**Sue Beech**, recently retired from her job at the University of Warwick, is the new RO for **West Midlands and Warwickshire.**



**Rebecca Snell**, formerly a teacher, is looking after **Bristol and Avon.**



**Yi Wang** first came to the UK as an international student, and greatly appreciated the three HOST visits she had then. Now living and working in **Nottingham**, she is hoping to arrange to pass on her good HOST experience to today's students.



We are looking for ROs for Surrey, Kent, and Derbys/Staffs, to start in the New Year. Any offers?

## Urgently needed..

As ever, HOST, is urgently seeking new hosts. Students are currently applying at exactly double the rate they did in the same period last year—which is



great! But only if we can find enough invitations for them all.

Publicity has been going out at a terrific rate all summer and autumn, to the press, hundreds of community and church newsletters, hundreds more schools, branches of the U3A, the United Nations Association, the English Speaking Union, and more.

But the best advertisement for HOST is... YOU! We know you've asked them already, but please do continue to encourage friends and relations to give HOSTing a go, even just for one day to start with.

**With your help, we hope to give a record number of students—and their hosts— a very happy Christmas this year.**



## HOST Matters

*Three at a time—this is one HOST couple's way of helping us place more students*



From time to time we receive a message from a host—

sometimes really close to the visit date—saying 'I haven't heard from my student'; or from a student saying 'I haven't heard from my host'.

Communication breakdown is one of the most common reasons for cancellation. We do tell the students to make contact with their hosts. So this is a special plea to hosts—please do drop your guest a line when you receive their

details from us: a personal note from you will reassure them that you are expecting them. And then if you can encourage them to stay in touch with you, that would be great. **Thank you.**

## You've been framed—again!

After the success of last year's Photo Competition, **HOST is once again looking for the year's best photos. On top of that, there will be a prize for the best video.**

We are looking for interesting entries which give an idea of the activities, feelings and experiences of a HOST visit.

For all rules and terms and conditions, and the sign-up form, please visit our website. If you have any questions, please contact us on [info@hostuk.org](mailto:info@hostuk.org).

Entries should be submitted as an email attachment, please, in a picture format (e.g. jpg, png) with the completed sign-up form. Send to [info@hostuk.org](mailto:info@hostuk.org) with the subject line 'HOST Photo Competition Entry'.

Videos should be no more than 3 minutes. If a video file is too big for an email, please contact HOST for other methods of submitting.

### Prize

One photo and one video, selected by a panel of judges, will be the overall winners, and the senders will win a hamper of British food as well as a HOST apron and a certificate signed by HOST's Chairman of the Trustees, Mark Pellew, CVO. Please note that, prizes can only be sent to a UK address.

Three photos will be commended in the following categories and will win a HOST apron and a signed certificate:

*Holiday Celebrations*

*This was Fun!*

*Out and About*

### Deadline

20th September 2015 and the winner will be announced in October.

*Last year's winning entry by  
Clare Warren, seen below  
enjoying her prize*

**HOST**  
*Matters*



### Advertise in HOST Matters?

HOST Matters is circulated twice a year to some 2,500 hosts, other volunteers, university staff, and suppliers. Contact [info@hostuk.org](mailto:info@hostuk.org) if you would be interested in advertising your business here.

### Christmas shopping online?

Did you know you could help HOST to raise money whenever you shop or search online. Just register at [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hostuk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hostuk) to register and shop and you might also like to use <http://hostuk.easysearch.org.uk/> for all your searches. It's easy, costs you nothing and really mounts up for HOST.



### The things they say about HOST

It is the most unreal experience. The person welcoming you is amazingly awesome and magically fantastic. You will experience something entirely novel and will leave with a lot to think about. I come from New York City, so a quiet village in Norfolk was as radically different as is possible to imagine while staying in the Northern Hemisphere. *Maria, USA*

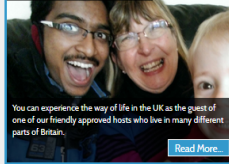
International Students and UK Hosts  
Welcome to HOST



Are you a newly-arrived international student?

Welcome to the UK! HOST hopes that you will really enjoy your stay in this country. You will be busy now with a lot of different things to think about - finding your way around the

International Students



You can experience the way of life in the UK as the guest of one of our friendly approved hosts who live in many different parts of Britain.

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The

HOST promotes international friendship and understanding by arranging for international students at British universities to meet UK residents in their homes.

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HOST Matters Spring 2014

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Unit K106, The Biscuit Factory, Tower Bridge Business Complex, 100 Clements Road, Southwark, London, SE16 4JG

# HOST Matters

We proudly present our new website!

[www.hostuk.org](http://www.hostuk.org)

Yes, it's the same address, but otherwise it's all new, with intriguing buttons to click and unusual horizontal scrolling.

Most importantly, it's packed with pictures and stories, which will be constantly changing. So please do look at the samples on this page, and go to the website to read the rest.

And please send us your contributions, to keep the site alive and interesting!

## Jingya's story..

You can find Jingya's story on the student page 'About HOST visits'. Jingya was invited to hosts in Cornwall this March, when they kindly gave her a traditional Christmas dinner. Now Jingya has applied again, and at her own request is returning to Cornwall, so she can show it to her friend. And they are going to experience a real-time Christmas .. **..to be continued**



top: 2014 in Beijing; above: 2004 in Abingdon

## It's a small HOST world!

Margaret Hancox, who hosts in Oxfordshire, sent this story.

My son and I recently met in Beijing a student who spent Christmas with us 10 years ago. Li Tao is now a senior administrator at the University of Tianjin. HOST friendships last a long time!

A few days after this story was posted on our website news page, it was seen by Mandy Talbott, our Regional Organiser in Lincolnshire. Mandy writes:

We hosted Li Tao about 10 years ago too - he was our second student from Tianjin, the first one being 'Ben'. When we showed Li Tao some pictures from that earlier visit, he pointed at Ben and said, 'That guy was my boss'.

**The HOST world is indeed a small one.**



Unit K106, The Biscuit Factory,  
Tower Bridge Business Complex,  
100 Clements Road,  
Southwark, London, SE16 4DG

Telephone: 020 7739 6292

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