

Alumni Newsletter

Welcoming International Students

Issue No 4 Spring 2017



Hosts Catherine and Paul Barnes with guest Alaa Aldubush from Syria

My opening question to my first HOST guest was 'What music do you like?' and we never stopped from there.

Al was adorable: easy-going, said what he wanted with a charming smile, he ate everything, tried everything (marmite was a one-off!), chatted to all, didn't mind being teased, fell about laughing, loved music, and helped in many little ways.

I wanted to ask him a lot more about the situation in Syria but when he said he hadn't been able to get back for four years and his family were scattered about now I just thought, he needs a little holiday, and we will make this one.

Al and I are Facebook friends now and if his parents can't get over we will be at his graduation and take the photos. He won't be alone.

Paul and I have learned a lot in so many ways, listening to our young guest gently explaining every day, astonishing, facts of life back home. We have made a new friend through this HOST visit.

Catherine Barnes, West Sussex

Great British Mag

The only magazine dedicated to international students, GB Mag offers advice, news, entertainment and competitions. Visit their [website](#) to learn more.

Send us your updates

We'd love to know what alumni HOST students are doing now. Please contact HOST with an update, and let us know your best memories of your HOST visit.

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Make Yourself at Home, by Bailea Pakkebie, USA

Through HOST, I was placed with a lovely lady called Daphne. She hosted a girl from South Korea named Kiyun at the same time. We all became very close friends and had a fantastic weekend. I had the chance to...

Live like an English person: I slept with a duvet and showered in a half wall tub using a hand held shower head.

Attend an English church: It was nice to be able to participate in a church service with some familiar songs and prayers.

Make connections with new people: I had the chance to meet a number of different people from England, Korea, and Russia. I think it is important to take the time to meet new people from all over the world because it brings the world closer together. I am realising that we are all more alike than we are different.

Play new games: On Saturday evening we had a chance to play games. Kiyun suggested Monopoly. I opened the box, started to set up the board, and noticed that the titles of all the properties were different!

Things I have learned about myself...

I like tea: I have had the more tea this weekend than the whole rest of my life, but I enjoyed every sip and the conversations that came with it.

I am outdoorsy: I haven't really realized how much I have missed natural wide open spaces.

I can live without Wi Fi: Daphne did not have Wi Fi and I survived the whole weekend. It was nice to take a minute to put technology aside.

I want to live the lifestyle that Daphne lives: She is neighbourly, environmentally friendly, buys local produce, walks where she can, and turns everything positive.

I have lived a privileged life: I have experienced more things in my life up to this point than some people will ever dream of doing.

It was nice to feel like I was at home again with a nice bed and home cooked meals. I am very grateful that I made the choice back in January to step outside my comfort zone and sign up to do a homestay. It was a life changing experience.

Read more from Bailea on [her blog](#).

TELL US WHY YOU LOVE HOST

I Love Small Charities Day takes place on the 19th June 2017 and we want you to share why you love HOST.

Simply go to the Small Charity Week page on Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook and post a photo or video of yourself holding a piece of paper that says 'I love HOST because (why you love HOST)'. Use the hashtag #ILoveSmallCharities when you post and don't forget to tag HOST.

The charity that has the most responses on each page wins £150 towards its work.

Find out more on the official [Small Charity Week](#) website.

Don't forget to join us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) for regular updates.



John and Marion Wright, hosts in Pembrokeshire, enjoyed this Christmas with a married couple they first hosted in 1996. Minnie and Jingran, from China, were also joined by their two sons.

#NEWPOUNDCOIN

On the 28th of March a new pound coin went into circulation and, from the 15th of October, the old pound coin (the 'round pound') will no longer be legal tender.

The #PoundForPound scheme is a way for you to get rid of your old coins and, at the same time, help charities raise extra funds. Every time you receive a new, twelve-sided pound coin, why not donate an old pound coin to HOST? Your friends and family can join in, too!

Once you have collected your old pound coins, you can deposit them in your bank account and send a cheque to HOST UK or donate the amount online via our [Big Give page](#).

Celebrate your good deed and be a part of the bigger conversation on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram by using the hashtags #PoundForPound and #NewPoundCoin.

How you can help

If you would like to give back, so that the HOST scheme can continue to help international students, as it helped you, please consider offering your support in one of the following ways.

Friend of HOST

Become a Friend of HOST and give a regular donation. Find out more on the [HOST website](#).

One-off Donation

Make a one-off donation at [HOST's Big Give page](#) or by sending a cheque to HOST's office.

Challenge Yourself

Run, swim, jump and more. Raise money while completing a challenge. Set up a fundraising page with [Virgin Money Giving](#).

Host

If you have graduated and now live in the UK, sign up to invite international students to your home for a day or a weekend.

Tell us your stories

We want to hear your HOST memories, see your photos, and know what you're doing now. Please get in touch with HOST with your details.

THANK YOU

Thank you for helping to make the world a friendlier place by supporting HOST.