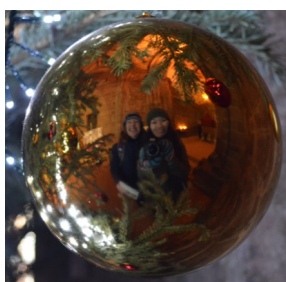


HOST Matters

Welcoming International Students

Issue No 30 Spring 2016

PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS



We are delighted to announce Helena Somerville (top) as the winner of this year's Photo Competition. Helena will receive a traditional hamper, HOST apron and a certificate signed by HOST's Chairman, Mark Pelew, CVO. Congratulations!

Commended prizes go to Sergey Tsay (Out and About), Gerelmaa Myagmarsuren (Festive Fun), and Eucharia Nwaichi (Cooking Capers). They will each receive a HOST apron and a certificate.

Thank you to everyone who submitted photos. With over 400 entries, this was not an easy Competition to judge.

VACANCIES

HOST is currently recruiting for a number of voluntary Regional Organiser positions. If you would like to try your hand at arranging visits and signing up new hosts, please visit the HOST website for more information. Various voluntary opportunities are available throughout the year.

Office Move

The HOST Head Office has now moved. Please update your records, using the address below, and ensure all postal correspondence is sent to this new address.

Sylvia Adams House
24 The Common
Hatfield
Hertfordshire
AL10 0NB
Telephone: 020 7739 6292
www.hostuk.org
info@hostuk.org



Reg Charity 327592
Reg Company 2179430

A Family for Life, by Oluwaseun Sunday Bamgbopa, Nigeria



Graduation, Jan 2016. From left to right: student Oluwaseun with hosts Trevor and Sue, and father, Olusoji.

During my Masters' degree in the United Kingdom, the desire to experience British culture filled my thoughts.

I was fortunate to go on a HOST visit, where I met an amazing family in Edinburgh. They were very nice and hospitable; they fulfilled all my expectations of a typical British family by showing me much love and friendliness.

I was exposed to the beauty of Scotland and the ancient cities. I visited several interesting sites within Scotland which were relevant to structural and engineering geology. They knew that was my field of study and thought to motivate me. We had a wonderful road trip, had dinner together, played several games together.

I completely felt like part of their family; it was really an honour, and gave me lovely memories to smile about.

My HOST visit made it possible for me to associate with this family. Up until now we still communicate like family. They inspired me about life and what comes next, and I motivated and inspired their son about my university degree. I am proud to say that he will be heading to university soon. I have made a family for life.

This winter, they joyfully graced my graduation ceremony at Newcastle University with their presence. I was so happy to see my British family. Thank you, HOST, for giving me an experience of a lifetime.

HOST TIPS

Be open-minded; read up a little on the country of origin of your guests - ask questions about what they might like to do. **Jill Rhodes, Derbyshire**

As mature hosts try to remember when you may have had young adults of your own. Try to meet them as equals, they are usually much more mature than you may give them credit for. Don't be blind to their use of technology. They can be a great help as you struggle with mobile phone selfies and instagrams. **Anne and Richard Roberts, Cornwall**

Do you have a top tip to share with other hosts? Let us know by using the contact details at the front of this newsletter.

YOUR EXPERIENCES ON FILM

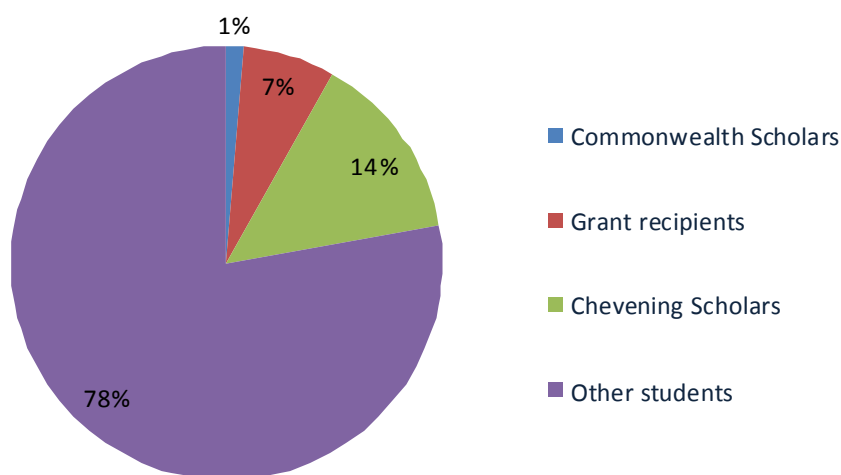
HOST is partnering with [The Age of No Retirement](#), a social enterprise working to overcome the inter-generational gap, to tell the stories of Hosts and students who have come together during a HOST visit.

We would like to hear from hosts aged 65 and over who would be interested in speaking, on film, about their positive HOST experiences. If you would be interested in learning more, please contact HOST.

HOST BY NUMBERS: OCT 2015 TO MAR 2016

During this period, 35 Regional Organisers across the UK worked tirelessly to arrange invitations for hundreds of students and hosts. 627 of our 1,563 registered hosts welcomed 1,014 students into their homes during the previous six months.

Students continue to show great enthusiasm for a HOST visit, applying in large numbers.



In 2015/16, the Chevening Secretariat and the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission are again covering the application fees of Scholars who wish to experience a HOST visit. A number of Trusts and Foundations also gave Grants to enable more students to benefit from a visit. The above pie chart shows the spread of these students.

Visits continue to be a great source of enjoyment, with the average rating from students given as 92%, and 90% from hosts.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

“It is such a privilege to get to know people whose way of life is often very different, but whose innate human-ness is so beautiful and easy to appreciate; something that can be forgotten when world events appear to say that other nationalities/religions/world-views are so at odds with our own.” **Margaret Thomas, host from East Sussex**



Hafield Rum, from Indonesia, with Sarah Barker, West Midlands

“British people are amazing and a HOST visit is an outstanding experience for international people during their stay in the UK.” **Blerina Bulica, Albanian student**

“Thank you so much for everything. I am your daughter and your sister. I love you all, my family.” **Uyen Vu, Vietnamese student**

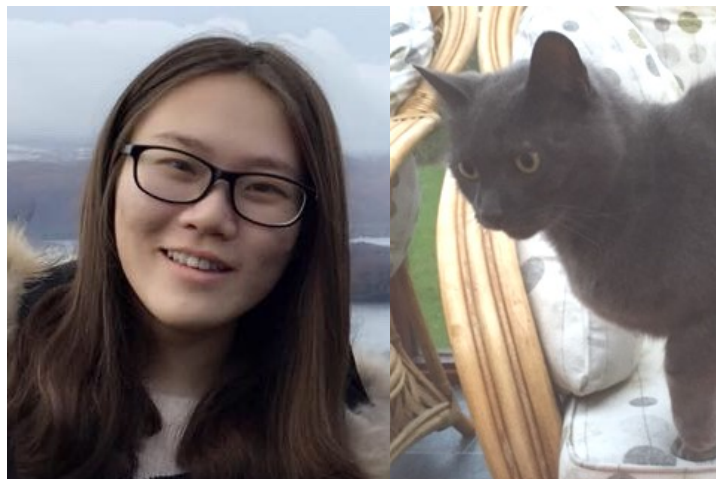
HOST Matters is made to be enjoyed by everyone and anyone interested in international friendship and cultural exchange. Why not pass on the newsletter to someone who you think would like a read?

MARGARET BAGGED THE MARILYNS

In our last issue, we introduced you to Margaret Hancox, who was climbing 7 Marilyn's (hills with at least 500 feet of ascent on all sides) for her 70th birthday, all to raise money for HOST.

We are delighted to announce that Margaret completed her challenge in October, raising a fantastic £2,146.

Thank you, Margaret, and congratulations on your achievement.



Xiaojing Xu, from China, bonded with her Host's cat in an unusual manner!

AN EPIC BATTLE

Celia was unable to physically touch our cat. The cat, sensing fear, decided to dominate. Having armed Celia with a water pistol, we were kept awake by the street battle taking place upstairs as the cat desired to sleep with her when she retired to bed. Neither the cat nor Celia harboured any grudges about the struggle. **Peter Bracewell, host in Lanarkshire**

How you can help

Friend of HOST

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

Gift Aid

If you are a tax payer, gift aid your donation and increase its value by 25% at no extra cost to you.

One-off Donation

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

Legacies

Make a gift to HOST in your will to help the work continue. [Contact HOST](#) to find out more.

Challenge Yourself

Raise money while completing a challenge. Set up a fundraising page with [Virgin Money Giving](#), or contact HOST for an offline sponsorship form.

Host

HOST's work would be impossible without its wonderful volunteers. If you haven't hosted in a while, please contact your Regional Organiser, and do encourage your friends to host, too!

THANK YOU

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