

OLHA'S STORY

Olha originally came from the Ukraine with her husband, having lived in Portugal for 15 years prior to arriving in the UK. Unable to speak English at the time of her arrival, she was a carer for her young child and her mother who is elderly and unwell. She quickly realised that to establish her life again she has to learn English and search for a job. As part of her search for work, she visited her local Job Centre Plus who assessed her English and advised her to join Together South.

On top of being able to improve her English and secure a job, Olha was keen to learn about the country's history, culture, law, and regulations. She believed that through the group conversation, individual English Language support, and employment advice provided by Together South would enable her to achieve her goals.

When considering what aspect of the programme she enjoyed most, she felt the informal environment of the group sessions enabled her to take part in conversations and understand important words and topics of conversation. She also found the one-to-one sessions were an added level of support, as they allow her to ask questions about things she didn't understand in the group sessions.

Olha also found that the community aspect is diverse, with participants ranging in age and cultural background, and hopes to connect with participants as soon as lockdown ends and everyone can meet in person.

When looking back to her first days in London, Olha could not speak English at all and would panic if she was asked anything in the language. After getting the support from this programme, she no longer panics as she can communicate better and understand others. Her vocabulary and confidence has improved, alongside the opportunity to learn about music, bands and how to traditional English recipes.



This project is part funded by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. Making management of migration flows more efficient across the European Union.