



West
Northamptonshire
Council

Refugee Resettlement Update

8 April 2022

Background

Key work areas:

- Afghan resettlement
- Ukrainian resettlement

Afghan Resettlement

- 2 Bridging Hotels in West Northants
- Went 'live' Sept 2021
- Expected to operate until end June/early July (possibly September 2022)
- 379 arrived at the bridging hotels
- 132 people moved out of hotels (122 into permanent accommodation)
- Currently more than 200 people accommodated in the hotels
- Every child of school age, has had a place in our local schools, whilst staying at the bridging hotels.
- No Afghan refugee children without their parents supported in the hotels
- Permanent resettlement pledge: 10 households – 3-year support programme

Ukrainian Refugee Resettlement

Currently 2 key routes set up to welcome Ukrainians to the UK:

- Ukraine Family Scheme
- Homes for Ukraine Scheme (part 1)

*** Guidance & information is regularly being updated & re-issued ***

Ukraine Family Scheme

- Family Scheme is an extension of usual family visa scheme.
- Free to apply.
- Immediate & extended family living in Ukraine on or before 01/01/22 can apply to join UK-based family members.
- UK-based family members not just British Citizens but some other people with settled or pre-settled status
- No income test; no English Language test
- Applications subject to security checks
- People can stay in the UK for up to 3 years.
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa>

Background – Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

- Similarities with Canadian Refugee Resettlement Programme – strong element of "private & community sponsorship".
- "Sponsor" = individual, group or organisation who has been approved to accommodate an individual or household from Ukraine under the 'Homes for Ukraine' sponsorship scheme.
- "Guest" = individual or household who have secured a visa under the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme which enables them to be housed by a sponsor.

Background – Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

- 'Homes for Ukraine' Phase 1:
 - from 14 March - sponsors could register in hosting a guest
<https://www.gov.uk/register-interest-homes-ukraine>
 - from 18 March – Home Office visa applications opened
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-visa-under-the-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme>
- Scheme expected to be expanded at some point – 'Phase 2'.
- Phase 2 – enable community groups or organisations to sponsor multiple guests.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Eligibility

- Scheme open to Ukrainian nationals resident in Ukraine prior to 01/01/22; to their immediate family members (e.g. spouse/partner and children under 18) who may be of other nationalities, to be sponsored to come to the UK.
- Applicants can apply from Ukraine or from any other third country.
- The number of people who can access this scheme is uncapped and is dependent on the capacity of the sponsors who come forward
- Those arriving need to meet standard security checks prior to being issued with a visa.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Eligibility

- Guests will be able to live & work in the UK for up to 3 years.
- Guests will be able to access benefits, healthcare, employment & other support.

Requirements & Role of Sponsors

- Sponsors must be in the UK.
- Any nationality and any immigration status provided at least 6 months leave to remain
- Sponsors and all adults in sponsors' households will also be subject to initial criminal records checks by the Home Office before the visa is approved.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Requirements & Role of Sponsors

- Accommodation must be:
 - at least a private room, with suitable access to bathroom and kitchen facilities
 - be free of serious health & safety hazards
 - full details of accommodation requirements set out in the scheme FAQs

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions>

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Requirements & Role of Sponsors

- Sponsors are required to:
 - check with their mortgage lender or landlord (if a tenant)
 - notify their insurers (prior to arrival of guests)
 - stay in contact with guests to organise/coordinate arrival in UK and instructions to reach their accommodation
 - support & help guests to: adapt to life in UK; have access to food and essential supplies; have access to mobile phone and/or internet to stay in touch with family members; and help direct guests to public services e.g. GP and dentist.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Requirements & Role of Sponsors

- No rent can be charged
- Sponsors can receive an optional £350 per month 'thank you' payment for up to 12 months (1 payment per residential address regardless of number of individuals sponsored/accommodated)
- Payment does not affect benefits, council tax etc
- No requirement to cover food & living expenses – although can choose to offer this.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

The Process

- Matching - sponsors and guests can find each other but from early April DLUHC has funded RESET to pilot a matching service
- <https://resetuk.org/about/ukraine>
- Visa applications can be made by the sponsor or applicant – online
- On approval of visa ‘permission to travel’ letter issued to guest
- Specific councils with primary ports of entry (key airports/ports) are providing welcome arrangements for guests including: meet & greet; immediate humanitarian assistance; social care for safeguarding concerns flagged by Border Force.
- If required guests are eligible for one free single onward journey from port of entry to anywhere in UK.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

The Process – other information

- Reset is working with Refugees at Home, an independent UK charity, to deliver training to the sponsors.
- <https://www.refugeesathome.org/>

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Role of Councils

- Central Government considers councils have a critical role to play in the success of the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- Guidance has been issued to councils in England on the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme but this does not replace or contradict their statutory duties or responsibilities.

This slide-deck is based on the guidance for councils on GOV.UK

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Role of Councils

- When a visa application is received, councils will be notified of the sponsor household and guest household, including address.

Accommodation checks

- At least one in-person visit & check of accommodation prior to arrival of guests wherever possible.

Safeguarding checks

- Complete DBS checks of all adults in the sponsor household and enhanced DBS if any guest is under 18 or a vulnerable adult
- Following guest(s) arrival councils should confirm asap that: the guest is well; there are no serious safeguarding/welfare concerns; or needs for care & support.
- If concerns emerge to be dealt with under usual safeguarding practices and procedures.

Homes for Ukraine (Phase 1)

Role of Councils

- To administer an interim £200 cash payment per guest on arrival for subsistence costs (funded from the tariff).
- Provide school places for school age children (specific funding will be provided to support this).
- Where necessary, provide advice and referrals to specialist public and health services as appropriate e.g., mental health services, adult social care, and children's services (further advice to follow).
- Support guests to access local Jobcentre Plus appointments for benefit assessments and job-seeking.
- The Council's statutory homelessness duties will apply where sponsor/guest relationships breakdown.
- Supporting integration into local communities, including access to translation services and working with faith groups & local voluntary sector organisations to help signpost guests to advice and support.
- To administer the £350 'thank you payment' to the sponsor each month.

Homes for Ukraine – Funding for Councils

- Tariff offered = £10,500 per person for first year.
- Future years funding to be reviewed
- Additional grant to pay £350 per month in arrears to sponsor households

Councils will be expected to use the tariff to meet all of their associated costs (both for providing council services and for administering payments)

Homes for Ukraine – Funding for Councils

- Councils will be paid additional funding to support with this. Further details are set out below
- DfE will allocate funding on a per pupil basis for the three phases of education at the following annual rates:
 - Early years (ages 2 to 4) - £3,000
 - Primary (ages 5 -11) - £6,580
 - Secondary (ages 11-18) - £8,755
- These tariffs include support for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Homes for Ukraine - Current Position

Governance

- System oversight via countywide Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)
- TCG includes WNC, NNC, health, Police & Fire.
- WNC internal working group.

Data Management

- Anticipated arrivals across West Northamptonshire – 08/04/22
- Total number of sponsor households – 155
- Total number of Ukrainian guests – 303

Homes for Ukraine - Current Position

LA role & duties

- WNC has access to Homes for Ukraine database & receives data for West Northamptonshire on a daily basis – live data on visa applications made.
- Trained staff to facilitate DBS applications.
- Visits to sponsor/host households commenced w/c 04/04/22 for accommodation and safeguarding checks.
- Process to pay cash payments to guests in place.
- Developing a process to pay thank you payments to hosts.
- New post of Resettlement Manager – commenced 01/04/22
- 4 x Resettlement Support Worker role – being advertised w/c 11/04/22.

Homes for Ukraine – Current Position

Role of Community/Voluntary Organisations, Faith Groups & Town and Parish Councils

- Initial meeting with key voluntary/community organisations and faith groups took place w/c 4th April.
- Task & Finish Group being set up where key voluntary/community organisations and faith groups can work with the council to develop our local response.
- The council will support the development of locality groups in locations where there are clusters of sponsors.
- Town & parish councils also being given the opportunity to become actively involved in developing the local response.