

The header graphic features a blue and yellow background, representing the Ukrainian flag. The word 'SUFFOLK' is written in white capital letters on the blue background, and 'UKRAINE BULLETIN' is written in blue capital letters on the yellow background. A faint sunburst pattern is visible on the right side of the yellow section.

SUFFOLK

UKRAINE BULLETIN

Dear all,

Welcome to the Suffolk Ukraine Bulletin. This monthly bulletin provides an update on the situation in Suffolk along with information about the work of the county council and partners within Suffolk's Ukraine Task Group and answers to frequently asked questions.

In this edition you will read about Guidance updates, upcoming events and a reminder on where to receive local support. We are grateful for your support and our regular updates will include further information on how you and your communities can get involved, as we continue to work together to do all we can to help those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine.

The next bulletin will be on Wednesday 11 June 2025. [You can read previous editions of the Suffolk Ukraine Bulletin on our website](#)

With best wishes, on behalf of Suffolk's Ukraine Task Group.

**Cllr Councillor Philip Faircloth-Mutton,
Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Equality and Communities**

Stuart Keeble, Director of Public Health and Communities in Suffolk



Host Thank You Payments – Action Required – Guests with Homes for Ukraine permission

Effective 1st April 2025 host thank you payments provided by the UK Government will be at a reduced flat rate of £350, irrespective of the length of time your guest(s) have been in the UK.

Please see the published government guidance for sponsors for further information explaining this change [Becoming a sponsor: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK](#)

Suffolk County Council will fund an increase to the rate of the government monthly thank you payment of £25. Therefore, the standard payment rate to all eligible hosts will be £375.

We will also uplift with an additional £150 per month once hosts have been hosting their guest(s) at the property for at least 6 months, making a total monthly payment of £525.

As the government increase no longer applies hosts will need to complete a new thank you payment claim in April 2025. This will include the option to opt-in to receive the Suffolk County Council funded uplift for the duration of their guest(s) Homes for Ukraine visa permission.

A form to claim for Host thank you payments and opt-in or out of the uplift has been sent to current sponsors/hosts. Please complete this in a timely manner so that your payments can continue.

If you have already hosted guests at the property for at least 6 months prior to April, and you are eligible to continue to receive payments when the claim form is completed, you will receive the uplift immediately.

Please note – As this is a new thank you payment claim Government eligibility criteria for sponsorship and receiving thank you payments in place at the time of the claim will be applied. This may result in some existing thank you payment recipients no longer being eligible to receive payment e.g. In situations where a close family member is being hosted.

See our website for further information about host thank you payments [Ukraine: information for hosts - Suffolk County Council](#)

Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme – (UPES): A Guide for Ukrainians in the UK

The UK Government has introduced the Ukraine Permission Extension scheme (UPES). The scheme allows people currently living in the UK under an existing Ukraine Visa scheme to apply to extend their stay in the UK for a further 18 months when their valid Ukrainian visa expires.

The Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme (UPES) **is now open for applications.**

It is free to apply for the UPE scheme, and if an application is successful, your guests will be able to continue to live, work and study in the UK and access public funds.

It is important that your guests actively apply to extend their visa. (Please note –visas will NOT be extended automatically).

How and when to apply?

- Your guests should submit an application when they have 28 days or less left on their current permission.
- If your guest applies too early, their application may be rejected and would then need to reapply when their current permission has 28 days or less remaining.
- If your guest doesn't know the date when their current leave to remain ends, they can sign into their [UKVI account](#) to find out or refer to their permission letter to verify the visa's expiry date.
- Applications can only be submitted while your guests are physically present in the UK.
- To get more information about how to apply for an extension, follow the instructions provided on the official UK government website [Applying to the Ukraine Permission Extension scheme - GOV.UK](#)

Please note

- Your guests should not leave the UK while their UPE application is being processed. Leaving the country will result in the cancellation of an application.
- Transitioning to an e-Visa is not the same as extending a visa under the UPE.

If your guest has any questions about their current visa, UPES or immigration status, they should contact, [GOV.UK website](#), [UKVI](#) or a registered [immigration adviser](#).

Here are a few organisations that may be able to assist with your UPE application:

HS-Legal - may be able to provide immigration support - Phone: 01206500181,
WhatsApp- 07404 451881 Email: info@hs-legal.co.uk

Settled is a charity that provides immigration advice to Ukrainians who are already in the UK and need support. You can contact them via email ukraineadvice@settled.org.uk

Gyros – offers advice & guidance on a range of issues including but not limited to: - Immigration Advice (OISC Level 2 accredited) Website - <http://www.gyros.org.uk/>

Host Thank You Payments – Ukraine Permission Extension scheme

To support guests still in sponsorship as they transition to living independently, the government have extended thank you payments for 18 months of the Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme at a rate of £350 a month.

When your guest(s) Homes for Ukraine permission expiry is reached, a new claim form and declaration for the Ukraine Permission Extension scheme will be sent to the lead host.

Please complete and submit this form if you wish to receive thank you payments.

Payments for eligible UPE claims will be at the government rate of £350 per month.

See our website for further information about Ukraine Permission Extension scheme host thank you payments [Ukraine: information for hosts - Suffolk County Council](#)

Education Funding

Funding has been available in 2022-23 to support the education of refugees on the Homes for Ukraine scheme when they join Suffolk schools. Although the government is no longer providing this funding, Suffolk County Council will continue to provide funding for new arrivals in 2025-26.

Funding will be available per pupil for up to three terms; when children move between schools, payments follow the child.

Schools should contact us at refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk if they have not already done so. It is up to each setting to decide how the funding will best support each child's education.

This can include a wide range of options such as help with uniform and transport or English language tuition and mental health support. Parents can speak to their school if they believe their child needs support in a specific area.

Opt-in for School Travel

Parents can now opt-in for Suffolk County Council funded school travel.

If your child is eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel you will need to opt-in by 31 May 2025 to receive travel for the start of the 2025/2026 school year.

If your child already receives Suffolk County Council funded school travel you still need to opt-in every year.

If your child is starting secondary school in September 2025 and they are eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel you will be contacted by 3 April 2025. You will need to opt-in if you would like your child to use this service.

If your child is starting primary school in September 2025 and they are eligible for Suffolk County Council funded school travel you will be contacted by the 10 May 2025. You will need to opt-in if you would like your child to use this service from 31 May 2025.

For more information on the Suffolk County Council school travel policy and getting your child to school please visit: <http://www.suffolkonboard.com/optin>

Independent Living Payment

Suffolk County Council is offering a one-off Independent Living Payment (ILP) of £2,000 to Homes for Ukraine guests who are leaving their host accommodation and moving into their own home. To issue this payment certain criteria must be met, and Suffolk County Council will ask to see a copy of a valid, signed and dated (by both parties) legal tenancy agreement in the guest's name.

The funding can be used for purchasing items to support the move to independent accommodation. The new accommodation can be either furnished or unfurnished and can be situated outside of Suffolk.

You can apply for the Independent Living Payment by downloading the form.

[Ukraine: information for guests - Suffolk County Council](#)

Please send the completed application form and copy of your tenancy agreement to Suffolk County Council at refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk



NATIONAL UPDATES

Apprenticeship funding rules

Most learners are eligible to undertake an apprenticeship if they have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years. However, certain groups are exempted from this requirement, including those on the Ukraine Family scheme, Homes for Ukraine, Ukraine Extension scheme and the Ukraine Permission Extension scheme. However, these individuals must meet the other eligibility criteria in the rules which apply to all learners. This includes the requirement that they have enough time left on their visa to complete the apprenticeship.

The Apprenticeship funding rules state that “An individual must be able to complete the apprenticeship within the time they have available, including the end-point assessment. If the provider knows an individual is unable to complete the apprenticeship in the time they have available, (e.g., because their visa will expire or because they have a fixed-term contract that is shorter than the duration of the apprenticeship), they must not be funded.”

The reason for this rule is to ensure that learners can complete an apprenticeship within the time they have available, including the end-point assessment. This rule ensures that we are protecting public funds and preventing investment in someone who is ultimately unable to complete their course (for example, because their circumstances have changed, and they are not able to extend their residency).

The Apprenticeship funding rules can be found here: [Apprenticeship funding rules - GOV.UK](#)

Children being sponsored by a parent or legal guardian: Homes for Ukraine

As of 31 January 2025, a parent (or legal guardian) who holds permission under any of the Ukraine Schemes can apply to sponsor their child.

Children sponsored by their parents (or legal guardians) will hold permission to live in the UK for up to 18 months. They will have access to education, healthcare, benefits and employment (as appropriate under UK law).

Please note that a parent or legal guardian who is sponsoring their child will not

qualify for thank you payments.

Find further information and details about eligibility and the application process here - [Children being sponsored by a parent or legal guardian: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK](#) and [Guest eligibility, application process and checks: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK](#)

Council Tax Disregard – Ukraine Permission Extension

Ukraine Permission Visa Holders are disregarded for the purpose of council tax only if they live in accommodation provided by a sponsor/host who is entitled to ‘thank you payments’ under Ukraine Permission Extension, and they previously held a Homes for Ukraine visa.

For further information please see updated guidance - [Work and benefits: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK](#)

Support for Ukrainian Refugees and their hosts

Suffolk Refugee Support

Suffolk Refugee Support continue to provide a range of advice, supporting people into employment and training, helping with benefits applications, facilitating access to ESOL classes, visiting community hubs, organising [social events](#) and providing free SIM cards.



If you are a Ukrainian refugee (or a host) in Suffolk and you need support or advice, please contact Suffolk Refugee Support on 01473 400785 or via office@suffolkrefugee.org.uk

Training

Understanding Gender Based Violence & Supporting Survivors

The sessions aim to identify gender-based violence (GBV) and its impacts, clarify the links between GBV and migration and demonstrate how to effectively support survivors.

Date: 15th May 2025

Time: 6:30pm – 8:30pm

To register email training@resetuk.org

Trauma Informed Care: Supporting Refugee Families

The session aims to ensure a clear understanding of trauma, to clarify the impacts of trauma on the body, brain and memory and to demonstrate how these impacts may

present in the behaviour and wellbeing of refugee families. It also aimed to demonstrate the value of a trauma informed approach, building trust, a sense of safety and enabling choice through a strength-based approach.

Date: 29th April 2025

Time: 6:00pm - 8:30pm

To register email training@resetuk.org

Volunteer Wellbeing Workshop

Supporting refugee families can be emotional and challenging. As empathy is at the core of Community Sponsorship, it is important that we look after ourselves so that we can provide the best support and care to the families that are welcomed.

Date: 3rd June 2025

Time: 12:30pm - 1:30pm

To register email training@resetuk.org

Conversation Classes

Hope Church English Conversation Classes continue every Thursday morning during school term followed by a Community Cafe. No need to book. Just come along for beginner, intermediate and conversation level classes.

When: Every Thursday

Venue: Hope Centre, 10 St Margaret's St, Ipswich IP4 2AT.

Time: 10:00am -12:00pm (during school term only)

Budget Workshop (held monthly)

Please contact Anglia Care Trust for dates and times

Phone: 01473 622888

Email: admin@angliacaretrust.org.uk

Barnardo's Refugee Family Helpline

Our Helpline provides emotional and practical support as well as advice and signposting to children and young people seeking sanctuary aged 25 and under (as well as their families). Our Helpline is open from Monday – Friday 10am – 8pm, and Saturday 10am – 3pm. The Helpline can be contacted via free phone on 0808 156 9877 or via an email to RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk.

REFUGEE FAMILY HELPLINE

We are here to support children and their families seeking sanctuary in the United Kingdom.

Refugee Family Helpline
Freephone 0808 156 9877

Email RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk

The Helpline is open:
Monday to Friday: 10am-8pm
Saturday: 10am-3pm

Please scan QR code to find out more information or visit: helpline.barnardos.org.uk



Our Helpline provides emotional and practical support as well as advice and signposting to children, young people and their families.

All services include access to interpreters if required.



Funded by
UK Government

BARNARDOS

Barnardo's Registered Charity Nos. 216250 and SC037605 24915shc24

Therapeutic Support Service

Barnardo's are able to offer free therapeutic support to children and young people aged 21 and under living in England under the Ukraine and Afghanistan pathways (ARAP and ACRS). Referrals can be made by contacting the Helpline via email/phone, or by

submitting a professional referral form. For further details visit: - [Therapeutic support | Barnardo's Helplines](#)

THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT

Funded by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities we can offer free therapeutic support to children and young people aged 21 and under on the Ukraine and Afghanistan pathways who are living in England.



For more information contact our Refugee Family Helpline

 **0808 156 9877**

Our lines are open
Monday - Friday (10am-8pm)
and Saturday (10am-3pm)

 RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk

Professionals can make a referral via our website helpline.barnardos.org.uk

 **Funded by UK Government**

 **BARNARDOS**
Changing childhoods. Changing lives.

What is therapy?

What can our therapy service support you with?
Our therapist will listen to you and explore your feelings and experiences in a safe space, without fear of judgement. It is a chance to discuss any difficulty or distress you may be experiencing or have experienced in the past.

They can help you to accept the things that you cannot change and help you to bring about the changes that are possible.

We offer you 8 sessions with the therapist. Each session will last 45 minutes. This will take place virtually (via phone call or video call). We have over 90 therapists who speak over 40 languages.

How can I access this therapy support?
If you would like therapeutic support, you can contact our Helpline service by telephone on our freephone number **0808 156 9877** or you can email RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk

When you contact our Helpline our friendly Advisors will listen to you to learn and understand more about your situation.

With your agreement our Advisor will refer you to our therapeutic support service.

The therapist will then make contact with you in within approximately 2-4 weeks at a date and time that is convenient for you to begin sessions.

Whilst you are being supported by our therapy team, you can continue to contact our Helpline Advisors who will be happy to offer you any additional support that you may require.

How do I know if I could benefit from support?
If you are feeling low, lonely, stuck, hopeless, feel like you need someone to talk to or listen to you, then therapy may be for you.

We can support children and young people aged 21 and under who have settled in England on one of the following schemes;

- The Homes for Ukraine scheme
- Ukraine Family scheme
- Ukraine Extension Scheme
- Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (Pathways 1, 2 and 3)
- Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy

 **Funded by UK Government**

 **BARNARDOS**
Changing childhoods. Changing lives.

Upcoming events

Ukrainian Well-being Café

Together for Ipswich is supporting Bridge Church Ipswich in providing a Ukrainian Well-being Café in Ipswich. There will be coffee, cakes, and the opportunity to talk with those who have the compassion, training, and skills to listen. No cost, and no pre-booking required. (Families welcomed).



Ukrainian Wellbeing

ON THE HUH at *café*

Location: 'On the Huh' cafe, St Peter's Street, Ipswich IP1 1XF.

Dates: Mondays

Times: 16.30-18.00 and 19.00-20.30.

Please, join the action [#standwithUkraine](#)
Saturday 26th April 2025

Angel Hill 11:00-12:00

Please, stand with us to show
your support for Ukraine and to
let people know that the struggle
continues.

*We dream we'll hear -
"Wake up, we've won!"*



Promote your events

We would like to invite you to let us know of any events happening across Suffolk so that we can help promote to them the wider network. If there is any future event you would like to promote, or would like a member of the Homes for Ukraine team to attend, please email refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk using 'Event' in the subject line.



Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme Visa and arrival data as of 17th December 2024

The data below is issued by The Home Office and available at [Ukraine Visa Schemes: visa data - GOV.UK](#)

- Total Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme visa applications received: 243,800
- Total Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme visas issued to people: 194,800
- Total arrivals of Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme visa-holders in the UK: 159,800 (Data as of 16th December 2024)

The below table shows the number of visas issued and arrivals, sponsored by individuals, by lower tier local authority of the sponsor's property (LTLA) as of 26 November 2024:

Source: Operational data, Home Office (HO), and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

Lower Tier Local Authority	Number of Visa applications	Number of Visas issued	Number of arrivals in the UK by sponsor location
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Babergh	311	257	236
East Suffolk	641	555	495
Ipswich	420	287	239
Mid Suffolk	403	335	301
West Suffolk	637	489	426

The below table shows the number of visas issued and arrivals, sponsored by individuals, by upper tier local authority of the sponsor's property (UTLA) as of 31st December 2024:

Source: Operational data, Home Office (HO), and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

Upper Tier Local Authority	Number of Visa applications	Number of Visas issued	Number of arrivals in the UK by sponsor location
Suffolk	2412	1923	1697
Cambridgeshire	3464	2932	2587
Essex	3900	3194	2804
Norfolk	2643	2122	1851

Further information, and Frequently Asked Questions about what we are doing in Suffolk to support Ukrainian Refugees and how you can help, can be found on our website via the following links:

- [Support for Ukraine](#)
- [Information for Sponsors](#)
- [Information for Guests](#)
- [Further information](#)

An information pack for Sponsors in Suffolk, is available on the [Suffolk County Council website](#). This pack is updated regularly and contains information about the Homes for Ukraine programme, access to support and health care services, applying for a school place and more.

Please check these webpages first. If you cannot find answers to your questions here, please email refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk and we will endeavour to respond as soon as possible.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Could you help a family in need?

In February 2022, the UK was asked to help support Ukrainians displaced by the war. Since then, the people of Suffolk have welcomed more than 1,400 Ukrainian Refugees into their homes.

Unfortunately, the war continues, and we still need hosts to offer a safe place to stay for individuals and families in Suffolk.

Can you help? Homes for Ukraine Suffolk still need safe and secure places in the larger villages and towns, with good access to public transport and amenities. If you can offer a safe place for a Ukrainian guest, please visit [Homes for Ukraine: record your interest](#) to express your interest by completing the online form. Accommodation must be available for at least 6 months and be fit for purpose.

If you sign up to the scheme and all checks are completed, you will be eligible for a monthly 'Thank you' payment.



Would you consider providing a safe home to a displaced person from Ukraine?

USPUK (Universal Sponsorship Pathway UK) is a registered charity and one of the government's [recognised providers](#) for sponsorship under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. USPUK's Ukrainian Sponsorship Project has been matching hosts to Ukrainian guests for the last two years. We have supported the resettlement of around 1000 displaced Ukrainians through the Communities for Ukraine programme. However, hundreds of Ukrainians still contact us every month looking for hosts, and these numbers are rising due to the deteriorating situation in Ukraine as winter approaches and the war continues.

USPUK's Ukrainian Sponsorship Project team includes native speakers of both English and Ukrainian. We have a rigorous safeguarding process to ensure the safety of both guests and hosts, and we are committed to supporting you in your journey to becoming a host. Further information about our Ukrainian Sponsorship Project can be found on [our website](#), and we initially ask prospective hosts to fill out a [short form](#) to express their interest in hosting. If this is something that could interest you, please get in touch!

Best wishes,
USPUK team

Frequently Asked Questions

We know you will have questions about what we are doing in Suffolk to support Ukrainian Refugees and how you can help. [You can find answers to common question on our website](#)

Our [Ukraine: information for hosts](#) is also regularly updated.

Further information, and Frequently Asked Questions about what we are doing in Suffolk to support Ukrainian Refugees and how you can help, can be found on our website via the following links:

[Support for Ukraine](#)

[Ukraine: information for hosts](#)

[Ukraine: information for guests](#)

[Ukraine: latest news and further information](#)

An information pack for Sponsors in Suffolk, is available on the [Ukraine: information for hosts - Suffolk County Council](#). This pack is currently been updated and contains

information about the Homes for Ukraine programme, access to support and health care services, applying for a school place and more. Please check these webpages first.

If you cannot find answers to your questions here, please email refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk and we will endeavour to respond as soon as possible.

Suffolk County Council is committed to protecting your privacy and will treat an individual's personal data in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Legislation. Your information will not be used for other purposes or supplied to third parties except in accordance with the law.

Under the Data Protection Legislation, you have a number of rights regarding any personal data held by us in relation to this project. [See our Homes for Ukraine Scheme privacy notices for full details.](#)
