

A banner with a blue top half and a yellow bottom half, separated by a wavy line. A faint sunburst graphic is visible in the background. The text 'SUFFOLK' is written in white on the blue background.

SUFFOLK

UKRAINE BULLETIN

Welcome to the Suffolk Homes for Ukraine Bulletin. Here we will share updates about the Homes for Ukraine Scheme in Suffolk, provide reminders about where to access support and let you know about events happening locally. Suffolk County Council will use this bulletin to keep you updated on government announcements about any changes to the scheme.

We are grateful for your continued support to Ukrainian guests and your ongoing commitment to helping those who are fleeing conflict.

The next bulletin will be on Wednesday 8 July 2026. [You can read previous editions of the Suffolk Ukraine Bulletin on our website](#)

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

Councillor Nadia Cenci,
Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member for Equality and Communities

Stuart Keeble,
Director of Public Health and Communities in Suffolk

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SUFFOLK'S

RESPONSE



English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes launched

Suffolk ESOL Hub has been launched in Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket. Across the two venues, ESOL learners will be able to access free lessons.

Available levels

Pre-Entry / Entry 1 - (Stowmarket) - **The Mix** - 127 Ipswich St, Stowmarket IP14 1BB

Entry 1 / Entry 2 - (Bury St Edmunds) - **Quaker Rooms** - Saint John's St, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1SJ

Entry 3 / Level 1 - (Bury St Edmunds) - **Quaker Rooms** - Saint John's St, Bury St Edmunds IP33 1SJ

Who can join?

Anyone who is a refugee or forced migrant living in Suffolk and aged over 19. To sign up [click here](#).

Using Suffolk Libraries

"All of Suffolk's public libraries are free, warm and welcoming spaces for everyone to use and enjoy with staff on hand to help you find advice and information. Every branch has books, Wi-Fi, printing, scanning and photocopying facilities and some have toys,


crafts, public toilets and puzzles. There are activities and events held every week for all ages, including songs and rhymes for babies and toddlers and their parents or guardians. Ukrainian guests do not need a library card to access the library, but if they would like to use the computers or borrow books, they can sign up for free at any branch or online."

<https://suffolkcommunitylibraries.co.uk/libraries/>

There are also a range of volunteering opportunities!!!!

[Volunteering roles - Suffolk Community Libraries](#)

Please see library information in Ukrainian -



**Ми тут, щоб
допомогти
вам у
бібліотеці**



suffolkcommunitylibraries.co.uk

Suffolk
Community Libraries

 **Suffolk**
County Council



Безкоштовний Wi-Fi та
доступ до Інтернету



Друк та сканування



Соціальні заходи та події
для дітей та дорослих



Допомога з запитами



Книги різними мовами



Інтернет-газети
різними мовами



suffolkcommunitylibraries.co.uk

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Інтернет-газети різними мовами



Якщо вам потрібна допомога в розумінні цієї інформації іншою мовою, зателефонуйте за номером **03456 066 067**.

Se precisar de ajuda para ler estas informações em outra língua, por favor telefonar para o número abaixo. 03456 066 067

Португальська

Jakžili potrebujete pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer. 03456 066 067

Польська

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى المساعدة في فهم هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على 03456 066 067

Арабська

Jeiigu jums reikia šios informacijos kita kalba, paskambinkite 03456 066 067

Литовська

Dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru a înțelege această informație într-o altă limbă, vă rugăm să telefonați la numărul 03456 066 067

Румунська

Если для того чтобы понять эту информацию Вам нужна помощь на другом языке, пожалуйста, позвоните по телефону 03456 066 067

Російська

Щоб отримати цю інформацію в іншому форматі, включаючи аудіо або великий шрифт, зателефонуйте за номером **03456 066 067**.





Town vigil marks four years of conflict in Ukraine

A vigil and evening song service has been held to mark the fourth anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

About 150 people gathered in Ipswich town centre on Sunday 22 February, before walking together to Ipswich Minster for a service including prayers and music in Ukrainian.

Russia's full-scale invasion began on 24 February 2022, exacerbating a humanitarian crisis that has been [ongoing in eastern Ukraine since 2014, external](#).

Since the start of the conflict, 1,700 people have resettled in Suffolk under the [Homes for Ukraine, external](#) programme, administered by Suffolk County Council.

See full article here: - [Vigil in Ipswich for Suffolk's Ukrainian community - BBC News](#) - **Written by Jon Wright – BBC**

Looking to the Future – Supporting your guests into independent living

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.

We know things are difficult for many households and, while you cannot be charging your guests rent and receive Thank You payments, you may decide to ask your adult guests to contribute something reasonable towards household bills.

All Ukrainian adults arriving under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and holders of UPE visas are eligible to work here and have the right to receive benefits while they are in the UK.

We encourage you to have a conversation with your guest/s about their next steps and work with them to develop a plan for their future.

If you would like to continue to support your guests in the long term, you could move to a more formal arrangement, for example, by renting a room in your home through the Government's 'Rent a Room' scheme. Or you may wish to rent another property that you own to your guest.

This means that you may need to become a landlord, which could require you to take on more responsibilities, and if you charge rent you won't be entitled to claim a Thank You payment as well.

Your rights and responsibilities could be different depending on whether the guest remains living in your property or moves into another property you own. Information on what this means is available on GOV.UK and in the 'How to Let' in England guide –

[How to rent: the checklist for renting in England - GOV.UK](#) please also see below: -
Rent a room in your home - [Rent a room in your home: Becoming a resident landlord - GOV.UK](#)
Renting out your property - [Renting out your property: Landlord responsibilities - GOV.UK](#)

You can also find helpful information about housing in the UK on OPORA's website - [Opora - Housing in the UK.](#)

OPORA is a registered UK charity supporting Ukrainians in rebuilding their lives sustainably in the UK. They provide Ukrainian language information, support and emergency assistance.

If you would like to discuss your options with one of our case workers, please email: - refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk

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 90 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 90 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 the change to their current visa, UPE 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 guests UPE application

HS-Legal - may be able to provide immigration support - Phone: 01206 500 181, WhatsApp- 07404 451 881 - 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 has extended thank you payments for 18 months of the Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme at a flat 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. Please note - SCC will NOT be providing an uplift to the government flat rate.

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

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.

Your guest(s) can apply for the Independent Living Payment by downloading the form.
[Ukraine: information for guests - Suffolk County Council](#)

Please ask your guest(s) to send the completed application form and copy of their tenancy agreement to Suffolk County Council at refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk



Ukrainians to receive greater certainty about their futures

Ukrainians fleeing Russia's invasion will now have 3 times as long to renew their stay.

From: [Home Office](#) and [Mike Tapp MP](#) Published - 25 February 2026

Ukrainians offered sanctuary in the UK will gain greater certainty about their ability to remain as Russia's illegal war continues into its fifth year.

Those wishing to extend their stays will now be able to apply up to 90 days before their current permission expires – three times the current 28 days.

Ukrainian communities had raised concerns that the shorter window created undue stress and uncertainty about their legal status in the UK.

The government has listened and made changes, giving families a greater sense of security about their futures in this country.

The Ukraine Permission Scheme has offered a safe place to live for 310,000 people since it was established in 2022.

See full article here: - [Ukrainians to receive greater certainty about their futures - GOV.UK](#)

Expansion of the Ukraine Permission Extension Application Window

From the 8th April 2026 applicants to the UPE scheme will be able to apply within the final 90 days of their current Ukraine scheme permission.

Applying at any point within this window will not reduce the total period of permission granted - any remaining valid permission will be added to the new grant.

This change will allow applicants to submit their extension application earlier so they can plan ahead with greater certainty.

For more information: - [Apply for a visa under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme - GOV.UK](#)

Ukraine Permission Extension 2 – (UPE 2)

On 1 September 2025, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLH) have confirmed that after a guest's 18-month UPE period, they can apply for another visa under UPE 2, for a further 24 months.

It provides further temporary permission for those who remain eligible and who apply before their current permission expires.

Application

To qualify, applicants must:

- currently hold permission under UPE.
- be physically present in the UK (or Islands) at the date of application.
- have been living in the UK (or Islands) since being granted permission under the Ukraine Schemes, including the UPE. Temporary periods spent outside the UK - defined as absences of no more than 12 months, whether continuous or cumulative - will not count as time outside the UK for the purposes of this requirement.

Applications for the UPE extension must be submitted online. It is essential for UPE holders to apply for the extension before the original UPE permission expires. Not doing so will result in the loss of rights to work and access to benefits, healthcare, and housing.

The long lead time before the discontinuation of thank you payments was designed to

provide guests and hosts with time to plan and if needed, to secure independently funded accommodation.

To support this transition, Suffolk County Council's Homes for Ukraine Team have been supporting guests by working with them to address any barriers they face to moving on into independent living.

We are encouraging hosts to have conversations with their guest/s about their next steps and work with them to develop a plan for their future.

If they wish to continue to support their guests in the long term, they could move to a more formal arrangement, for example, by renting a room in their home or another property they own.

Rent a room in your home - [Rent a room in your home: Becoming a resident landlord - GOV.UK](#)

Renting out your property - [Renting out your property: Landlord responsibilities - GOV.UK](#)

You can also find helpful information about housing in the UK on OPORA's website - **[Opora - Housing in the UK](#)**.

OPORA is a registered UK charity supporting Ukrainians in rebuilding their lives sustainably in the UK. They provide Ukrainian language information, support and emergency assistance.

Council Tax Disregard – Ukraine Permission Extension

Ukraine Permission Extension 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.

Please note if your guest(s) have extended their visas under the Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme and are moving into independent accommodation they will no longer be exempted from paying Council Tax.

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

Other Exemptions and Disregards under Ukraine Permission Extension

Income Tax

Thank you payments made in respect of UPE guests will continue to be disregarded from income tax calculations.

Benefits Thank you payments made in respect of UPE guests will continue to be disregarded from benefits calculations.

Property tax - Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwelling (ATED): Those hosting UPE guests in a dwelling normally subject to ATED will continue to be exempt.

Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT): Those hosting UPE guests will continue to benefit from relief from the 15% stamp duty rate, which is usually payable on properties owned by a company, a partnership with corporate members, or a collective investment scheme.

Second Homes for Ukraine Visas

The Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) is an in-country visa route: Those who wish to apply can only do so from the UK and must stay in the UK whilst awaiting a decision.

- Homes For Ukraine visa holders who need to leave the UK for an emergency or work reasons cannot apply to UPE. They are however eligible to apply for a second Homes for Ukraine visa.
- Any Homes for Ukraine visa holder could apply for a second visa. This will be granted if the immigration conditions are met, including having an approved Sponsor.

The eligibility criteria are outlined here:- [Apply for a visa under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme - GOV.UK](#)

Second Homes for Ukraine Visa Council Tax exemption

Second HFU visa holders will be entitled to the council tax disregard when living independently. They will be entitled to the disregard as if they were on their first HFU visa.

Aligning a child's Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) with a parent or legal guardian

Since the launch of UPE, children who apply with their parent will have their period of permission aligned to their parent. As of 11 November 2025, the immigration rules were changed so that a child's permission may also be aligned to that of a legal guardian. The adult (parent or legal guardian) must be in the UK for a child's permission to be aligned. For further information, please see section 5 - [Explanatory memorandum to the statement of changes to the Immigration Rules: HC 1333, 14 October 2025 \(accessible\) - GOV.UK](#).

Homes for Ukraine - Eligibility, Safeguarding, Disclosure and Barring Service and accommodation checks

Information about **not** meeting the requirements to sponsor a guest, has been updated. Find updated information here: [Eligibility, safeguarding, Disclosure and Barring Service and accommodation checks: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK](#)



Support for Ukrainian Refugees and their hosts

Suffolk Refugee Support continues to provide a range of advice, supporting people into employment and training, helping with benefit 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.



OPORA

OPORA is a registered UK charity supporting Ukrainians in rebuilding their lives sustainably in the UK.

They provide Ukrainians with language information, support and emergency assistance.

You can also find helpful information about housing in the UK on OPORA's website [Opora - Housing in the UK](#).

Training

Supporting Refugees with Disabilities: An Introduction

If you're welcoming a family with known disabilities and have little to no experience working with individuals with disabilities, this course is for you. It offers a clear overview of inclusion, helping you build confidence and navigate this important area with greater understanding and empathy.

How will this course work

This is a self-paced e-learning course that you can complete in your own time. The e-learning platform is designed to be simple, clear, and easy to follow, even if you're not tech-savvy.

Who is this course for?

For hosts who would like to learn more about supporting refugees with disabilities.

Aims of this course:

- Understand disability as a category
- Explore top tips for effectively supporting people with disabilities
- Identify strategies to promote inclusivity
- Examine the intersection of culture and disability
- Learn about disability rights and benefits for refugees in the UK

Please follow the link to register - [Supporting refugees with disabilities](#)

Safeguarding Essentials

The course aims to support you in understanding safeguarding vulnerable adults and safeguarding children. It will explore types and indicators of abuse and neglect.

You will develop knowledge and skills in recognising, responding and reporting safeguarding concerns.

As refugee families often come from vulnerable backgrounds and may have experienced trauma, exploitation, or neglect, it is important that groups understand how to provide the support and protection these families need to settle and thrive.

How will this course work

This is a self-paced e-learning made up of videos, reflective questions and activities. You can dip in and out whenever it suits you—no classroom needed, just you and a cuppa!

For further details and to register: [Training - Safeguarding Essentials - Reset Communities for Refugees](#)

Introduction to Community Sponsorship

This short session is designed to help you understand what community sponsorship is, how it works, and where you might fit in. It will take around 15 minutes to complete.

Content

There are seven short sections of text along with three short animations that help explain different aspects of Community Sponsorship.

Please follow the link to register: [Introduction to Community Sponsorship](#)

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



STEP (Specialist Training and Employment Programme)

STEP (Specialist Training and Employment Programme) is a free programme run by World Jewish Relief, offering personalised employment support and high-quality English classes to refugees and forced migrants in the UK.

Due to the continued success and high demand for their services, the World Jewish Relief will be continuing to offer STEP to Ukrainians.

Their English classes will be delivered by the British Council, and the programme remains completely free for eligible refugees and forced migrants across the UK. All the information is available on their website.

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 SC037606 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.

 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

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).



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

Dates: Mondays

Times: 16.30-18.00 and 19.00-20.30.

Upcoming Events

Stand with Ukraine Event

Saturday 25th April, 2026

Please, join the action #standwithUkraine
Saturday 25th April 2026

Angel Hill 11:00-12:00



*"Standing strong. Holding firm.
Helping each other."*

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.



WELCOMING UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

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](#)

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.
