

STOP PRESS

At last the UK government has announced the Homes for Ukraine scheme so that people here can offer sanctuary to Ukrainian refugees. The situation is changing fast so please check national media for the latest information. See the government website, gov.uk, for more details.

We also think at least one Ukrainian mum and her children will reach connections in Horsham soon. As soon as we know what's needed, we will let you know via our usual channels.

Offering accommodation for refugees

WSCC is looking for ways to help people from Ukraine; however, there are still a number of Afghan families waiting to be housed following the crisis there last year. If you can provide the type of accommodation they need the WSCC Resettlement Team would love to hear from you - find out more westsussex.gov.uk on the community and leisure pages under 'information for prospective landlords'.

Ukraine

Like everyone else, we are watching with horror as events unfold, but we have no way to offer practical help until people arrive here. Unfortunately we cannot accept donated goods until we make specific requests, but we will certainly let you know when we do need things.

What *can* you do? Organisations with connections in Poland have been collecting goods at local pickup points; we suggest you look out for these and/or donate via the Disasters Emergency Committee, www.dec.org.uk.

We hope to set up drop-in centres, run by our volunteers, to support not only Ukrainian people who arrive here, but also their local hosts - and hosting, as the Refugee Council noted, might not be straightforward as the new arrivals will be stressed and traumatised. We're looking for venues and will keep you updated on this.

HRSRG exists to help refugees who arrive in the area; this is what we're good at and what we'll keep doing. Thank you for all your offers of help; we are volunteers working from home, so please contact us by email rather than phone: admin@horshamrefugeesupportgroup.co.uk.

Some good news



ONE of the of the Syrian dads is an expert tiler with 20 years' experience - you might have seen the article about him last month in *All About Horsham* magazine. He's had some glowing testimonials, so if you need a tiler do get in touch.

Meanwhile, the ever popular Syrian Kitchen reached the finals of the Horsham Life Awards in the Market Trader category. As this newsletter goes out, we're eagerly awaiting the final result. The Syrian Kitchen now offers a Deliveroo service on weekdays, as well as from the stall on Saturdays; [find them on Facebook](#).

Meanwhile one of the Syrian mums, who arrived five years ago with just a few words of schoolbook

English and has worked incredibly hard to learn more, has just passed the complex Life in the UK Test. We are in awe of her!

Afghan families

EARLIER this month we welcomed Horsham's second Afghan family. Having spent three months in London, then moved to Crawley before coming here, they are pleased to be settled at last - and the children look forward to resuming school (and staying there!).

The dad is a surgeon; with his faultless English and great enthusiasm, we hope he will soon find a pathway into work. However, as you probably know, it's far from straightforward: he needs to pass the Occupational English Test, then find a route back into the UK medical profession. If you're a medical professional or have relevant contacts who can help, please contact us.



Getting together

AS SOON as lockdowns allowed we were back to our usual face-to-face support, with volunteers befriending, helping with English and providing learning support for the children. That said, the Zoom lessons have become a regular feature, especially where schoolwork is concerned. We've also resumed the regular adult ESOL support group and the standard is getting higher all the time.

We've been largely stymied in our attempts to run socials over the past year, either by official lockdowns or because too many people had covid (even when restrictions were lifted). However, last October half term brought a visit from the fabulous Flying Seagull Project - raucous, riotous



fun and games which we all loved, even if we came out with ringing ears. As you can see from the photos, the chance to have a go after the show was a hit with all ages!



Within the next two weeks, MPs have a chance to vote for Alf Dubs' amendment. More than 2million refugees are fleeing their homes in Ukraine to seek safety. Many want to reach the UK to be with their families here but have found their way blocked by a cruel system.

Use this link to [email your MP now](#) to let them know they must fix family reunion and let refugees reunite.

Thank you for your support