

Supporting Ukrainians

Many households in the Horsham area have succeeded in hosting refugees from Ukraine, and Ukrainians are still arriving.

HRSG has been working closely with other local groups such as Horsham Churches Together to provide information and help for both the visitors and their hosts.

HRSG has been among those offering regular drop-ins, or pop-up cafes-cum-advice/chat sessions. They've proved extremely popular both as a social meeting place and a source of information; our catchment area seems to be growing.

Volunteers are endeavouring to help everyone navigate the UK system, but the amount of help and knowledge needed has once again highlighted the woeful lack of official assistance.

The wonderful WSCC Refugee Resettlement Team are doing their best, but they are under-resourced and it's clear the official system for helping Ukrainian refugees is not working as well as it might. This is one of several issues we recently raised with local MP Jeremy Quin, who visited one of the sessions.

But what happens next?

Many of us working with Ukrainian refugees have been wondering what happens after the initial six-month period. Many refugees were hoping to go home as soon as possible but the sad fact is that things are still very uncertain.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme has very little information about what happens next and none of us wants to see refugees becoming homeless, to which end a member of our volunteer team is taking an interesting idea to her local MP.

Our supporters can help by raising these

questions in writing to local MPs to keep it on the agenda. WSCC are compiling a database of hosts who can take on refugees for a secondary placement if their first breaks down or comes to an end after six months. If you feel able to help, please add your name to the database at <https://www.gov.uk/register-interest-homes-ukraine>



Blowing our own trumpet: HRSG's Joanna, Jane and Sue receiving a Trustees Award from HDC during the Jubilee celebrations.

Photo courtesy of Sue Randell

Welcoming Syrians

Calling the WI, the PTA and anyone else who hears us!

While the Syrian families love Horsham and feel very safe here, they are often very shy and still anxious about potential discrimination on ethnic and religious grounds. It takes a long time to get used to how things operate in a new country - especially where authority and employment are concerned - and they find it all quite daunting.

We would love to find natural ways for the families to integrate. Ideas welcome! For example, if you or your connections are involved with schools attended by refugee children, could you invite their parents to become involved with PTA or social events? Are you in a mums-and-toddlers group you could invite them to?

Two of the Syrian mums and one Afghan mum speak fluent English - could they give your WI branch a talk about their culture, their country or their cooking (which they are very proud of)? Could you invite them to join? They do need encouragement as they worry that they are not welcome, so please reach out if you can, or discuss ideas with us.

Officially we now support eight Syrian families, as the first two have been here five years so are no longer part of the VPR scheme, though they remain very much part of the HRSG family.

can drive but can't afford a car; some are struggling to get to grips with the UK driving test, especially the theory part when language is a problem. Public transport is rare and expensive... so we get lots of **requests for bicycles**.

HRSG's public liability insurance stipulates that donated bikes must be properly checked and serviced before they are distributed. Donors can help by taking bikes to Halfords, who will often service bikes free of charge if they are for refugees, or to Mike the Bike in Slinfold, with whom we work closely.

If you have bikes to donate please email: donations@horshamrefugeesupportgroup.co.uk

Furniture donations

HRSG can only take donations we have specifically requested, as we don't have the resources to collect, sort or store items. If you have furniture you'd like to donate at other times, please contact the new Refugease Vintage Emporium (which may take other items too) or Horsham Matters.

As with some of the other charities for whom we occasionally put out requests, such as Migrant Help, we are not connected with them although we'll always try to help out. If you need to contact other charities please try to do so directly rather than through us, as we're drowning in admin.

Thanks!

Homes for Afghans

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 Refugee Resettlement Team would love to hear from you. [Click here to visit their web page](#).



Safe Passage now has a small, dedicated Ukraine Response Team in Poland. Initially running for four months, they are helping vulnerable refugees, especially unaccompanied children, to access routes to safety. The charity is also fighting the government's plans to deport unaccompanied child refugees to Rwanda. To find out more about their work and how you can help, visit safepassage.org.uk.

Two wheels good...

Transport is one of the biggest hurdles to living in this area. Work isn't always local and school placements can be quite far afield. Many refugees

Thank you for your support