



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

PARISH UPDATE ON THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE

Opportunities for prayer and information on hosting refugees

Friday 18 March 2022

The war in Ukraine is in its third week, with more than 3 million people believed to have fled the region as refugees. Parish Holy Hours and prayers for peace continue, with the Diocese receiving emails and telephone calls from people across our community hoping to provide practical support, and possible housing, to Ukrainian refugees.

Opportunities for Prayer

On Friday 25 March, the Feast of the Annunciation, Pope Francis will consecrate Ukraine and Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, calling on the intercession of Our Blessed Mother for peace. This will be an important day for us all, Bishop Richard will celebrate a Holy Hour for Peace at Arundel Cathedral at 6pm, with parishes across our Diocese invited to join the Holy Father through prayers for peace and Holy Hours within their own respective churches. There will be a specific prayer for peace in Ukraine during the Solemn Intercessions at the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord on Good Friday and parishes are encouraged to facilitate times for prayer on Good Friday evening.

Offering your property or home

The situation in Ukraine is changing daily, with Bishop Richard and our diocesan central office teams actively engaged with partner organisations to discover and signpost the safest and most effective steps people, families, and parishes can undertake to help our Ukrainian brothers and sisters. Those wishing to donate financially are encouraged to give to CAFOD's Ukraine Appeal.

To date the UK Government has announced two initiatives to support Ukrainian refugees arriving in the UK – a **Ukraine Family Scheme Visa** for relatives of Ukrainian people already

living here, and a broader **Homes for Ukraine** scheme for people and families able to host refugees in their homes and properties.

Volunteers who sign up to Homes for Ukraine need to commit to being a sponsor for at least six months. Sponsors will not be able to charge rent but will be able to receive a tax-free payment of £350 a month from the UK Government. Sponsors will need to be vetted and registered with their Local Authority, with people arriving from Ukraine also passing security checks.

Things to consider

There are a number of things to consider if you are thinking about hosting a person or family from Ukraine:

- Potential sponsors should examine the impact that offering a room in their home for a minimum of six months could have on their life, and what it might take to support an individual or family.
- We recommend that potential hosts research the support that people fleeing the conflict might need and explore what is available in their area, perhaps building connections and support locally before offering to be a sponsor.
- We strongly suggest households applying to host through the Homes for Ukraine scheme contact a local refugee action group and/or a charity that works with refugees and asylum seekers.
- CSAN recommends the charity Reset for those wishing to be matched as a host with a refugee person or family from Ukraine - Reset already works with the Home Office on community sponsorship of refugees. You can register to be matched with a Ukrainian refugee on [Reset's website](#).

A further announcement on plans for churches and other charities to resettle refugees over the longer term through a new Humanitarian Sponsorship scheme is awaited, with the Diocese also exploring the possibility of housing our refugee brothers and sisters in suitable empty presbyteries.

Can you speak English and Ukrainian?

The Diocese is working closely with Bishop Kenneth Nowakowski, the Ukrainian Eparchial Bishop of the Holy Family Eparchy in London and is compiling a list of people across our Diocese able to speak English and Ukrainian, who are willing to volunteer their time to help

people arriving in Sussex and Surrey. Ukrainian speakers are asked to contact Laura Maydew-Gale in our Communications Office with:

- Their full name
- Level of fluency i.e. beginner/intermediate/advanced
- Town (to enable us to match people with arrivals in their area)
- Capacity to volunteer i.e. one/two/three + hours per week

Please send these details to E: communications@abdiocese.org.uk

Someone from Ukraine might contact your parish

Parish offices are obviously very busy places. The situation in Ukraine is evolving quickly with programmes of help and government guidelines changing frequently.

If someone from Ukraine contacts the parish office and you are unsure how to help them, be as welcoming as possible and get contact details - the person's name, current town, and telephone number/email address. These can be passed to our Communications Office in the short term so that the person can be contacted with further help and advice as, and when, we know more.

Additional Information

Further news and developments will be shared in the News section of the diocesan website: <https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/diocese/news> and in our weekly E-Bulletin. If you don't receive the E-Bulletin and would like to sign up, please click on this link: <http://eepurl.com/gD9riD>.

- The Diocese continues to promote **CAFOD's Ukraine Appeal** to parishes and people wishing to give financially. You can give to CAFOD's Appeal here: <https://cafod.org.uk/Give>
- You can access **Reset's website** here: <https://www.homesforukraine.org.uk> with the site also available in Ukrainian.
- You can find out more about the Government's **Homes for Ukraine** initiative here: <https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk>
- To find out about the **Family Scheme Visa** click on this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa>