

The header banner features a blue top half and a yellow bottom half, mimicking the Ukrainian flag. A faint sunburst graphic is visible in the background on the right side. The word 'SUFFOLK' is written in white, bold, uppercase letters on the blue background.

**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 9th April 2025. You can read previous editions of the Suffolk Ukraine Bulletin on our website. [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 in Suffolk

---

The header banner features a blue top half and a yellow bottom half, mimicking the Ukrainian flag. A faint sunburst graphic is visible in the background on the right side. The word 'NATIONAL' is written in white, bold, uppercase letters on the blue background.

**NATIONAL**

**UPDATES**

## **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 your current visa, UPES or immigration status, they should contact, [GOV.UK website](#), [UKVI](#) or a registered [immigration adviser](#).

### **Guests with Homes for Ukraine Permission**

The government has published additional guidance on UPES for Homes for Ukraine visa permission holders here [Homes for Ukraine: Ukraine Permission Extension scheme - guidance for guests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

### **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](#)

### **E-Visa Roll out**

The Government is urging all those across the UK who use a physical immigration document to take immediate action to transition to an e-Visa, as part of plans to digitise the UK border and immigration system.

If you have Homes for Ukraine guests, please ensure they are progressing their application to move to an e-visa’

E-visa will need to be in place if guests wish to apply for a Ukraine Permission Extension scheme visa when they are eligible.

All visa holders who live in the UK and use a physical immigration document, such as a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), to prove their rights are urged to take action now at [Get access to your eVisa: Overview - Online immigration status \(eVisa\) - GOV.UK](#)

Video’s explaining what needs to be done and how can be accessed here [Online](#)

immigration status (eVisa): help videos - [Online immigration status \(eVisa\): help videos - GOV.UK](#)

Ukrainian guests are asked to retain their BRP – as this will help with a smooth customer experience to apply for the Visa Extension Scheme.

### **eVisa Help and Support**

Help is available for those who need support to transition from using physical immigration documents to eVisas:

- The Resolution Centre, where support can be accessed through a webchat function at [Online immigration status \(eVisa\) - GOV.UK](#)
- Anyone who does not have internet access or does not have access to a device like a computer, laptop or smart phone, can get help through the Assisted Digital service, with details also at [www.gov.uk/eVisa](http://www.gov.uk/eVisa).
- Charities and voluntary organisations across the UK are also able to provide free help and information to vulnerable people who need to create a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account and access their eVisa. Full details of this support is available here - [eVisa: community support for vulnerable people - GOV.UK](#)



### **Seasonal Winter 'Thank you' payment.**

Suffolk County Council is offering a one-off additional payment of £330 to all hosts who are accommodating Ukrainian guests during the month of January 2025, in recognition of the additional financial pressures faced during our coldest months.

You do not need to make a claim for this payment. An email was sent to eligible hosts in January 2025 advising they will receive the payments and giving the option to opt out if they choose.

This payment will be made in February to those hosting Ukrainian guests during January 2025 and is in addition to the monthly payment already paid to active hosts on this scheme.

If you have any questions about this payment please email, [refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk).

### **Thank You Payments Update**

Following the recent updates from central government, where it was announced that all 'thank you' payments will be paid at a flat rate of £350, we are pleased to provide the following update:

Hosts whose guest/s remain on their existing homes for Ukraine visa

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.

Suffolk County Council will uplift with an additional £150 per month once hosts have been hosting their guest(s) for at least 6 months - £375 + £150 making a total monthly payment of £525. Sponsors/ hosts will be asked to opt-in to the additional payment as part of the thank you payment claims.

If sponsors/ hosts do not opt-in to receive the uplift, they will receive the standard payment rate for the duration of the hosting period (payments will not be increased when guest has been in the UK for 12 months)

As per new guidance issued by central government, all existing sponsors/ hosts will be asked to complete a new thank you payment claim during April 2025 for payments to be made from May 2025, which will cover the month of April.

A claim will be required for each individual accommodation where guests are being hosted (i.e. We cannot accept a single claim from a sponsor/ host to cover multiple accommodations/set of guests).

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.

### **Independent Living Payment**

Suffolk County Council is offering a one-off Independent Living Payment (ILP) of £2,000 to Homes for Ukraine guests and 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](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk)

---

## **Support for Ukrainian Refugees and their hosts**

### **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: 13th February 2025

Time: 6:30 pm. – 8:30 pm

To register email [training@resetuk.org](mailto: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: 27th February 2025

Time: 6:30pm - 8:30pm

To register email [training@resetuk.org](mailto:training@resetuk.org)

---



Presented by the  
Money Advice Service

**Anglia Care Trust**  
Support • Advice • Action

# BUDGETING WORKSHOP

**Tips and Tricks on how to budget and  
save yourself some money.**

**WHO?** For anyone who can benefit from budgeting advice

**WHAT?** A budgeting workshop to increase your income and help you budget better

**WHERE?** Teams

**WHEN?** Every month, please contact us for the next available



Please scan the QR code to look at available dates and to register your interest!

Budgeting Workshop held monthly.  
Please contact Anglia Care Trust for dates and times  
Phone: 01473 622888  
Email: [admin@angliacaretrust.org.uk](mailto:admin@angliacaretrust.org.uk)

---

### **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: 10:00 am -12:00 pm

---

### **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](mailto:office@suffolkrefugee.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](mailto: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](mailto: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](https://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](mailto:RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk)

Professionals can make a referral via our website [helpline.barnardos.org.uk](http://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](mailto: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

## Upcoming events

## Ukrainian Vigil



# Ipswich Vigil for Ukraine

*Lament. Solidarity. Prayer. Unity. On the third anniversary of the full-scale invasion.*

## 23-24 February 2025

### • Sunday 23 February 2025

- 14.45 Meet on the Town Hall steps (Cornhill, IP1 1DH)
  - *Please bring a flag, a candle, a cake and a coat with you if possible!*
- 15.00 Parade from the Town Hall to Ipswich Minster (Tower St, IP1 3BE)
- 15.30 'Evensong' vigil, led by Ipswich Minster and Choir
- 16.30 Tea, cake and informal Ukrainian gathering at the Minster

### • Monday 24 February 2025

- 16.00-19.00 Ukrainian Wellbeing Café ('On the Huh' Cafe, 3A St Peter's St, IP1 1XF)
  - *You are welcome to drop-in or to stay, simply for a coffee and a chat.*

*Message Alan (07834 693144) for more details*



## 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.

---

### **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](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk) using 'Event' in the subject line.

---



**Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme Visa and arrival data as of 17<sup>th</sup> 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
Babergh	311	255	234
East Suffolk	638	553	493
Ipswich	405	279	234
Mid Suffolk	402	332	299
West Suffolk	634	488	423

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 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)

Upper Tier Local Authority	Number of Visa applications	Number of Visas issued	Number of arrivals in the UK by sponsor location
Suffolk	2390	1907	1683
Cambridgeshire	3435	2907	2556
Essex	3858	3162	2768
Norfolk	2628	2110	1842

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](mailto:refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk) and we will endeavour to respond as soon as possible.



**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](mailto: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.](#)