



## Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

**Lord Harrington**  
**Minister for Refugees**  
**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Fry Building**  
**2 Marsham Street**  
**London**  
**SW1P 4DF**

19 April 2022

Dear Richard,

### **Support for Ukrainian Refugees: Follow Up**

Thank you for your appearance before the Committee on 30 March and for the further information provided in your subsequent letter dated 8 April. In light of the evidence given by the Prime Minister before the Liaison Committee on 30 March, I write to follow up on a number of areas with regards to support being provided for Ukrainian refugees.

### **Funding**

Local authorities will have to fulfil their statutory duties to support Ukrainian refugees; this is true for all refugees, regardless of their route from Ukraine. In our session on 30 March, you outlined the use for the £10,500 funding per refugee under the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, which includes "homelessness assistance" and "community integration". No funding is available for local authorities supporting refugees arriving on the family scheme. The Local Government Association informed us that 44 refugees from the family scheme had already presented themselves to councils as homeless. In front of the Liaison Committee, the Prime Minister agreed councils would have to use their resources to help those under the family scheme and committed to looking at extra funding for them.

1. Could you outline the difference in support for refugees you envisage local authorities provide on each scheme and why there is currently no funding for the family scheme? Are community integration and homelessness assistance not considered a responsibility for local authorities supporting refugees under the family scheme?
2. What provisions are in place to ensure refugees from the family scheme receive adequate accommodation and support, should family members not have the means to support their relatives?

### **Data Sharing**

The Local Government Association informed us that local authorities are only receiving data on Ukrainians on the sponsorship scheme. As of the 30 March, they had not received any data on sponsors on the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, nor people arriving on the family scheme or any other routes. At the Liaison Committee session on 30 March, the Prime Minister committed to sharing data with councils



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on sponsors volunteering their homes. The department's newly published guidance states councils will receive the necessary sponsor data.

3. What type of data about sponsors can councils obtain and is this accessible to councils now? The latest guidance states councils will be given access to live data for expected arrivals - how will councils obtain this data and when?
4. The family scheme is open to Ukrainians with family members in the UK, however these family members have no obligation to provide housing. Are there plans to match refugees whose families do not have suitable accommodation with sponsors from the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme? If not, why not?

### Matching refugees with potential hosts

Phase One of the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme allows individual sponsors to open their homes to Ukrainian refugees. The Government has indicated that further expansion of the scheme will include organisations and community groups sponsoring guests.

5. When will the later phases of the scheme launch and how will they work? What will the role of organisations as sponsors be?
6. Your letter described a funded pilot for a digital matching tool taking place over the past fortnight. What was the outcome of this pilot? What are the Government's next steps?

### Longer term considerations for supporting refugees in the UK

We recognise that owing to the critical situation in Ukraine, the Government has focused on getting refugees to the UK. Nevertheless, we heard from the Local Government Association that the UK needs a longer-term strategy to support current and future refugees; they described the current system as "at breaking point". You wrote to us that as of 24 March, 12,391 Afghan refugees were in temporary accommodation.

7. What plans is the Government making for how Ukrainian refugees transition after their stay in their sponsors' accommodation comes to an end?
8. What consideration is being given to community cohesion in areas that may end up with significant Ukrainian and Russian populations? Or areas with significant populations of Ukrainian and Afghan refugees, who may have had very different experiences of being a refugee in this country?
9. What plans are being considered to design a joined-up approach to offering a home to a refugee? Has consideration been given to expand the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, or create a



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similar scheme, for sponsors to offer accommodation to other refugees currently in temporary accommodation?

I would like to reiterate the Committee's gratitude for the timely information you continue to provide on this matter. I understand that given the evolving nature of the emergency, guidance will be under constant review, however we would welcome your response by 26 April.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Betts'.

**Clive Betts MP**

**Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee**