

Can I go on holiday while I'm hosting? Do I have to live in the property I offer?

Yes, you can go on holiday! How long you're happy to leave your home for is up to you and your guests - though we suggest it shouldn't be for months at a time. Be clear with the refugee(s) you're hosting on how long you'll be away, where they can find support in that time and any expectations you have of them in your house while you're gone. We recommend speaking to your neighbours, church and/or community groups to form a network of support that can be accessed while you're away.

If you're away for several months at a time, you may want to consider offering [non-accommodation support](#) instead.

We recommend you only offer accommodation you live in, and do so with [no formal agreements in place](#) (i.e. the refugee(s) are your guests). If you do wish to offer accommodation that you don't live in, however, it will need to be documented properly with a formal agreement.

Can I be part of the scheme if I've already matched with a refugee or refugee family?

If you've already matched with a refugee or refugee family, the process of bringing them over can be started straight away through the government's [Homes for Ukraine scheme](#). Go for it!

You can still access [support through the diocese and Citizens UK](#). Register your interest as a host and mention on the form that you're already matched with a family. We can then connect you to local helpers and churches to provide wider support during your time as a host.

You may also find these resources valuable:

- [Guidance on filling in the Homes for Ukraine visa application](#), including what information is required;
- [A guide for guests and sponsors](#) in English and Ukrainian from Opora;
- A list of [questions asked in the visa application](#);
- [Ukrainian Sponsorship Pathway resources](#), including forms in Ukrainian.

What safeguarding measures are in place?

Refugees will be subject to VISA approvals and checks before being moved, and hosts will undergo DBS and home safety checks by local authorities within a month of refugees moving in.

We will be doing our own checks and we'll let you know more about that soon. We'll also make sure you are aware of any safeguarding red flags that you should be looking out for, and our safeguarding team are always on hand.

The guidance is that all adults in the household need DBS checks. If you have older children or other adults who live in your home some of the time, they may also need checks done. We'll let you know when we know more.

What costs are involved?

Citizens UK have committed to transporting refugees from Ukraine, so sponsors do not need to contribute financially to this.

You will receive £350 per month as a host to cover living expenses. You are not obligated to feed any refugees you host - though you are of course most welcome to! We will be able to connect hosts with other local support as needed, which may include things like providing food and toiletries, buying school uniforms etc.

Refugees will receive £200 when they first arrive and are eligible for benefits payments straight away - although these tend to take five weeks to kick in.

If you live alone and receive a single-person discount on your council tax, you may need to check in with your local council about whether this can be retained. West Berkshire have confirmed hosting a refugee will not impact your discount, and we expect other areas to follow suit.

Do I have to live in the Diocese of Oxford or attend church to take part?

You don't have to live in the diocese, we're happy to have you on the scheme if you attend a church in the diocese or have links here. Through these, you'll have access to additional support and resources no matter where you live.

If you live and attend church in a different diocese, you may like to check in with them and see what support they can offer at a local level.

You're also very welcome if you don't attend church - we're grateful for all your help and will still be able to connect you with local resources and helpers.

Why have I not heard anything about matching yet? Can you give me an updated timeline?

Thank you for your patience. Setting up the matching process has taken longer than hoped, but Citizens UK have been working hard to create trustworthy partnerships with organisations working with refugees on the ground. Setting these up and then

creating the gateway for refugees to refer themselves through has taken time. The good news is that our first few referrals have come through and matching is beginning.

Unfortunately, we're unable to provide a specific timeline, as it depends on several factors - connecting with refugees, finding an appropriate host match, and getting visa applications completed and approved. The government are aware some applicants have been waiting for nearly 3 weeks for their application to be processed. They are working to resolve this and speed up the processing of applications.

How will you choose a host to match with a refugee family/individual? Will I definitely get a match?

We are manually matching hosts and refugees and will do our best to make the most appropriate match based on number of individuals in a refugee family/group and number of host rooms available, and refugee preferences for location etc.

Because we want matches to happen as quickly as possible, we are contacting 2/3 potential hosts at once before confirming a match.

When a match is made, we will set up a Zoom call between you and the refugees (with a translator if needed) to meet each other and see whether it looks like the match will work. After this Zoom call, if either party is uncomfortable, we can cancel the match, and connect the refugee family/individual to a new host.

We are so grateful for everyone who has generously offered up their home, but we, unfortunately, cannot guarantee that you will host a refugee family/individual – it will depend on the number and type of referrals we get through. What we can say is that it looks like an increasing number of referrals will be coming through Citizens UK in the next few days. Having you on the list of potential hosts is hugely helpful - a larger list of potential hosts increases the chance of us matching a refugee family/individual appropriately based on their needs.

There are many other ways to support refugees below.

How can I help while I'm waiting for a match?

There are many other ways to support refugees and other groups in need of support from communities in the UK. It would be wonderful to direct people to other opportunities. Some examples of this are...

Hosting opportunities:

- [Sanctuary Hosting](#): offer temporary accommodation for refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants - all single adults
- [Depaul, Nightstop](#): host single young people experiencing homelessness - mostly around MK currently
- [Hope at Home](#): host a survivor of modern-day slavery or human trafficking
- [Community Sponsorship](#): build a community group to welcome and support a refugee family in their own home

Other opportunities

- Read up about the context for refugees and asylum seekers in the UK (Nationality and Borders Bill; Rwandan deportations) and talk to your MP about these issues
- Help your church become part of the [Welcome Church network](#)
- Help your church [support people leaving prison](#)
- [Join with Citizen's UK's Settle Our Status campaign](#): Asking the gov to create a process for enabling people to settle their status - currently 1.2mill people living in the UK are without immigration documents, meaning many of our neighbours can't work, access benefits, report crimes to the police, marry their loved ones, or access basic services including most of the NHS.
- Look out for opportunities in the local community to volunteer to support other vulnerable groups (those experiencing domestic violence, survivors of modern-day slavery, those living in fuel or food poverty etc). Find opportunities through your local church, or [through networks like Do It](#)
- Become a 'philanthropic landlord' by making houses you own available for refused asylum seekers to rent at a discounted amount, or for those receiving housing benefit (often not enough to cover market rate rent)

What if I can't offer help straight away?

If you can't offer accommodation until later in the year, stay in touch with us. It may be that there is still a need a few months down the line, or you may be able to offer alternative accommodation if for whatever reason refugees need to move from their current host.

I have contacts in Ukraine but can't host them myself. How can they find a sponsor?

The [Ukrainian Sponsorship Pathway](#) can help Ukrainians find a sponsor through Citizens UK, our partner in the resettlement scheme. They also have some helpful resources - like copies of relevant forms in Ukrainian - to help refugees through the process.