

## **Homes for Ukraine in Sutton Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

- 1. Visas, Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs), arrivals and checks**
- 2. Financial support and benefits**
- 3. Childcare, schools and further education**
- 4. Adult Training and Language Lessons (ESOL)**
- 5. Health and wellbeing**
- 6. Advice and support**
- 7. Matching, sponsorship changes and housing**

### **1. Visas, BRPs, arrivals and checks**

#### **Can the council help me with delays or issues in the visa process?**

Unfortunately Sutton Council is not able to assist with the visa process as this is being run by the Home Office. The Council is not involved in processing or agreeing visas for Ukrainian nationals so all questions related to visas for Ukrainian nationals should be directed to the Home Office.

You can contact the 24/7 helpline **0808 164 8810**, If you cannot contact UK 0808 numbers, please use **0175 390 7510**, from within the UK.

You can also keep in touch with your guests directly as they should be notified by the Home Office if their visa is granted.

You can also try emailing [UKVI.UFSSheffield@fco.gov.uk](mailto:UKVI.UFSSheffield@fco.gov.uk) . Other contact routes are listed on the page linked to below.

<https://www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk>

#### **Do the DBS and accommodation checks impact the visa process?**

The visa process will not be delayed by outstanding DBS and accommodation checks. However, in the event either check is failed, the visa process may be paused while the Home Office contacts the guests about next steps.

#### **Should I notify the council when my guests arrive?**

Yes. You should notify The Council on the day your guests have arrived safely with you by contacting [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk). The council can then help them to access support (e.g. the £200 interim payment). If you receive information from your guests telling you when they are going to arrive, email [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) with these dates and we will update our records and move you further up the list to ensure your checks are carried out more quickly.

#### **My guests have decided that they do not want to come to the UK after all. What should I do?**

If a guest wishes to withdraw and not come to the UK they need to call the UKVI telephone number, +44 808 164 8810 and selecting option 2. There are translation services available. Sponsors should notify us and we will do our bit with the Home Office but the LA cannot stop the Visa process.

### **How do you apply for a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) and how long does it take?**

We recommend that your guest apply for a biometric residence as soon as possible, as there are currently delays on them being issued.

#### Biometrics collected prior to arrival in the UK

If your guest applied for a BRP outside of the UK and provided their biometric information before they arrived then their BRP should be automatically sent to them. BRPs are sent to the post office or another location selected. If the BRP does not arrive then the Home Office advises you to check with the courier of the BRP to see if it has been lost in the post and then if that does not rectify the situation to then contact the Home Office.

You can find details on how to collect a BRP if they applied from outside the UK [here](#).

If you are having issues collecting their BRP, you can report this to the Home Office [here](#).

#### Biometrics that need to be collected in the UK

If your guest/s were given permission to enter the UK but did not provide biometric information prior to arrival they should arrange this as soon as they can. The government website provides more information on how to apply and the link to the application form [here](#). To provide your biometric information you'll usually go to one of the following to give your biometric information:

- a UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services (UKVCAS) service point
- a Service and Support Centre (SSC)

There is more information on giving your personal details [here](#). The website for UKVACS is [here](#). There is a UKVCAS in Croydon which is the closest one to Sutton, you can see locations of local UKVACS [here](#).

There is information on how to collect a BRP if your guest applied from within the UK [here](#). If you do not receive a BRP within 10 days of receiving the decision letter the Home Office advises that you contact the courier first and then if it is still lost or delayed to contact the Home Office. The details of this process are on the link shared above.

#### Helpline

There is no specific helpline for Biometric Residence Permits however the UK Visa and Immigration service should be able to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Their General immigration enquiries number is: **0300 790 6268** - select option 1, then option 2  
Monday to Thursday (excluding bank holidays), 9am to 4:45pm  
Friday (excluding bank holidays), 9am to 4:30pm

**My guest may need to travel abroad and is worried they won't be able to get back into the country. Are they allowed to travel internationally?**

According to government guidance, guests are allowed to travel internationally and will be allowed back into the country. The permission to travel letter is not restricted to single entry. However, if they travel before receiving their Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), they will need to present their permission to travel letter again and receive a new Leave to Remain Outside the Rules (LOTR) stamp on arrival. It is strongly recommended by the government that guests obtain a BRP before leaving the UK.

### **What will happen with my guest's benefits if they travel abroad?**

The [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) guidance for continuing to claim benefits while abroad (which applies to Ukrainian guests the same as British citizens) is as follows:

You can continue receiving Universal Credit for up to a month if at the start of the absence you don't plan to be away for more than one month. It may be extended up to two months if the absence is caused by the death of your partner, child or close relative who is with you. You should inform the Job Centre if you plan to be away for more than a month.

The same applies for Child Benefits up to 8 weeks, and Disability Benefits for up to 13 weeks (or 26 weeks if it's for medical treatment - proofs will be required).

Please also let us know on [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) about any plans to go abroad.

### **My guest is an unaccompanied minor (under 18). Are any additional measures required?**

Unaccompanied minors are permitted under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Any existing applications (pre 15th July) are now being processed. Special Guidance has been released from the government [here](#).

As a sponsor to someone coming from Ukraine aged under 18 who is travelling to the UK and not travelling with or intending to join a parent or legal guardian, you would need to commit to provide accommodation and support, either:

- until they left the UK
- for up to 3 years (the length of their visa)
- until they turned 18 years of age (and sponsorship has lasted for a minimum of 6 months) – whichever is soonest

Please note that, unlike with adults and families, visas will not be released until all checks and conditions have been met and signed of by Sutton Council. If you would like further advice, please contact us at [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk)

### **What is the difference between the Home Office checks and the Local Authority checks?**

Prior to the guest's arrival in the UK, visa and security checks will be made for both the guest and sponsor by the Home Office. Sponsors and all adults in sponsors' households will also be subject to initial Police National Computer (PNC), criminal records and Warnings Index checks by the Home Office. Local authorities are responsible for the DBS, accommodation and safe and well checks. For further information, see the government's [Guidance for Councils](#)

### **Does everyone in my household need a DBS check?**

Yes, all people living or regularly present in the household aged 16 or over will need to have a DBS check and the council will carry out these checks. If you are expecting any children (under 18) in the group, all normal residents will need to have an Enhanced DBS check. However, this does not apply if the child guest is related to the host sponsor, then only a basic DBS check will be required. Our staff will check this with you when we contact you to start the process. We are only able to accept an existing check if you have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list check and have signed up for the [DBS update service](#). Otherwise, you will still need to complete another DBS check.

### **How do I arrange my DBS / accommodation / safe and well check?**

You will be contacted directly by the teams carrying out the checks. If you become aware of arrival dates for your guests, please do let us know at [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) and we can move you further up the list to be seen.

### **Why are Kingston Council processing my DBS check when I live in Sutton?**

As Sutton council has a shared HR service with Kingston, officers from Kingston council are supporting us with this work.

### **What is the DBS process and how do I know when my DBS check/s are completed?**

After the initial video call with Council staff to check your ID, you and other members of your household aged 16+ will need to follow the link in the email sent to you to fill out your information on the DBS website and submit your application. You will know this has been completed successfully when you have received a certificate/s in the post (typically within 14 working days of submitting). If you need extra help to fill out the DBS forms on the website please contact [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk)

### **Do I need to send you my DBS certificate once it is sent to me?**

No. The council will know that you have passed your DBS by the time you receive a certificate.

### **Do the DBS and accommodation checks need to happen before the guests arrive?**

The Council will attempt to carry out both the DBS and Accommodation checks before guests arrive but this will not always be possible. The Council are trying to check all sponsors as quickly as we can and are prioritising those hosting guests with imminent arrival dates.

### **When we applied there were different rules around room sharing for guests, now that the government guidance has changed are we still allowed to be hosts?**

The accommodation checks are being carried out by The Council and our Partners. We are using the government guidance as a starting point, but The Council does have some discretion over the checks. For example, we want to ensure that you and your guests are not living in an overcrowded situation, but we will use a common sense approach so you will not automatically be disqualified from hosting for things which can be easily addressed. To keep on top of any changes to government policy follow [this link](#) and sign up to receive updates by email.

**I have just had a regular annual boiler check not a landlord check with the certificate, is this OK?**

We are not expecting that you will have the same measures in place as a private landlord, and we can accept an annual boiler service check as evidence that your boiler is safe. If you have not had your boiler safety checked, simply set up an annual boiler check. The Council does have discretion in the accommodation checks and we want to work with you to make sure your guests are safe and comfortable.

**I am a childminder who is considering sponsoring. Do my guests need checks?**

There is an existing legal requirement for specific checks on persons who are aged 16 and over living on premises where childminding takes place, which would include anyone coming from Ukraine. However, documents from Ukraine to check criminal records are currently unavailable, and as such are unlikely to be approved. This is likely to result in either the guests having to move out of the sponsor's home early or the sponsor stopping their childminding. Therefore, unless you can discuss your arrangement with your guest family prior to agreeing a match, the Department of Education recommends that childminders do not become sponsors.

If childminding takes places outside of the premises (e.g. in a separate annex), then checks are not required.

**Can my guest bring their pet?**

Yes. However, until the vaccination status of the pet is known, and therefore the disease risk they pose to humans and other animals, pets must be quarantined.

Guests travelling with pets should contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency before arrival at [pettravel@apha.gov.uk](mailto:pettravel@apha.gov.uk) or should call +44 3000 200 301 and select option 2 to find out what to do.

**2. Financial support and benefits**

**What do my guests need to do before and after arriving in the UK?**

Gov.uk provides [this overview](#) of what Ukrainian guests should do before and after arriving to the UK, and what happens at the UK border. Once you email us at [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) to let us know your guests have arrived, we will send you over other useful post-arrival information, such as our Helpful Contacts in Sutton list.

**What documents are needed to open a bank account? Does my guest need a biometric residence permit?**

Documentation needed will differ across banks. Government guidance [here](#) provides a list of links to bank account providers. Each bank will explain what identification they require.

With Natwest and HSBC, you can open an account for your guest with:

1. a passport **or** an ID card (e.g. a driving licence) **and**
2. a visa stamped and valid for 6 months, **or** a letter from the council, **or** a biometric residence permit.

Therefore, a biometric residence permit (BRP) is not necessary in all cases.

### **How can I access a letter from The Council which provides proof of address to help get a bank account set up for my guest/s?**

Please contact [welfarereform@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:welfarereform@sutton.gov.uk)

### **How do guests on the Homes for Ukraine scheme get a £200 interim payment?**

When your guest arrives, please let us know at [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk). Your guest/s will need a UK bank account to receive the £200 payment. If your guests need help or support setting up a bank account please contact [welfarereform@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:welfarereform@sutton.gov.uk). Once they have a UK bank account, please support your guest/s to out fill out [this form](#) for the payment to be made to them.

### **How do my guests access emergency funds, if they have not been able to open a bank account?**

Please contact the welfare support team at [welfarereform@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:welfarereform@sutton.gov.uk) who will be able to assist your guest in the event that they are unable to open a bank account or there are delays to them opening an account and they are in urgent need of the £200 payment.

### **Will guests be entitled to benefits?**

All adult guests will get the personal element of universal credit which is about £380 per month. There are other elements that they may be entitled to based on their circumstances. All guests are also entitled to receive £200 as an interim payment from The Council to help them until they have access to benefits.

### **What help is there for people to access benefits?**

If you need extra help or support to help your guests acces benefits please contact Citizens Advice Sutton;

- Phone: 075071 88 321
- In person: at their regular drop in under the Central Library, St Nicholas Way, SM1 1EA (9am - 3pm Tuesday to Friday, 10am-2pm Saturday)

Email: [ukrainesupport@citizensadvicesutton.org.uk](mailto:ukrainesupport@citizensadvicesutton.org.uk)

### **Is it possible to get an advance for benefits?**

From the date the claim was submitted, the first regular Universal Credit payment is usually paid 5 weeks later. This is made up of a one month assessment period and up to 7 days for the payment to reach their account. Once identification has been verified and a National Insurance number added to a claim, if required the claimant can apply for an advance to support them until they receive their first payment. This can be requested over the phone or

online. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will advise the claimant on the request via the guest's Universal Credit account or preferred method of contact when they can apply for an advance.

Claimants can request an advance of up to 100% of their estimated Universal Credit entitlement. Claimants will be asked over what period of time they wish to spread their advance recovery, up to 24 months. A claimant who chooses 24 months will receive the same amount of entitlement during that time, just divided into 25 payments rather than 24.

Once agreed advance payments will generally take 3-4 days to be paid into the claimants account. If a claimant has an urgent need, they may be able to receive a same day payment (this option is not available on weekends and public holidays).

**My guest is a student. Can they apply for Universal Credit? If not, how do they support themselves financially?**

While part-time students are able to access Universal Credit, unfortunately, full-time students are not (with some exceptions). This is because accessing Universal Credit requires individuals to be available for work, which is not possible if you are in full-time education. Please see the government website for expectations to this, in which full-time students can access Universal Credit, which includes if they are disabled or have a child:  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-and-students>

There are other ways in which students can access funds if they are in full-time education. For Ukrainians studying at British Universities, the government has stated that they are eligible for the same financial support as home students. Therefore, they are eligible for a student loan, and will pay domestic (rather than international) student fees. Please also contact the university your guest is attending, as several universities are providing financial support for Ukrainian refugees, such as bursaries and reduced fees/costs. There are also various scholarships and bursaries for refugees students via Student Action for Refugees (<https://star-network.org.uk/access-to-university/scholarships/>) and Hope for the Young (<https://hopefortheyoung.org.uk/grants-and-advocacy/>)

If you have any questions or concerns about urgent financial support for Ukrainian students, please get in touch with us at [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk).

**My guest is retired and has a small pension. Will they be entitled for universal credit?**

Yes. For the first six months, any pension income wont be taken into account and guests will be able to receive benefits. After six months the Department for Work and Pensions will start taking the pension income into account which could reduce the monthly payments.

**My guest has additional income. Will they still be entitled to universal credit?**

For the first six months, additional income wont be taken into account for Ukrainains. Then after that the DWP will let them know what they are entitled to.

**What are the timescales for accessing child benefits?**

Anyone coming to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme or Homes for Ukraine scheme is entitled to claim Child Benefit immediately, rather than having to wait for the usual 3-month qualifying period.

People who wish to claim should complete a CH2 Child Benefit claim form (below) and submit this by post to the Child Benefit office. The address is included on the form.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-benefit-claim-form-ch2>

They should provide an original birth certificate and the passport or travel document used to enter the UK. Where this documentation is not immediately available, people are advised to include a note in their claim and someone from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) will be in touch to discuss further.

### **How does my guest access child benefit without a national insurance number?**

Although you are asked to provide a national insurance number when applying for child benefit, it is not actually required. The easiest way to apply for child benefit is online:

<https://www.gov.uk/child-benefit/how-to-claim>

However, you can also call the child benefit helpline:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/child-benefit>

Telephone:  
0300 200 3100

Outside UK:  
+44 161 210 3086

### **What are the entitlements for those under the Ukraine Family Scheme?**

Unfortunately, according to government guidance, people arriving under the Family Scheme are not entitled to the interim £200 payment or the £350 payment for sponsors. However, as with the Homes for Ukraine scheme, Family scheme guests have leave to remain up to 3 years and are entitled to benefits. The information below may also be helpful;

If you came to the UK under the Ukraine Family Visa Scheme Sutton Council and are in need of financial support, Sutton Council can provide access to supermarket vouchers.

To claim the supermarket vouchers please;

- Email [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) attaching either photos or scanned copies of;
  - Passport/s visa stamp
  - Letter from UK Border Force or Home Office

You will then be provided with a short electronic form to fill in to claim the vouchers, and they will be sent to you via email. Only one voucher will be issued per address.



Emails will be responded to Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm. For urgent help outside of office hours and on weekends please contact **020 8770 5000**.

**If I want to receive the £350 monthly “thank you” payment, how do I get it?**

In line with government guidance, payments will be made in arrears after your guest/s have arrived and all the necessary checks have been completed (including a visit to you and your guest/s known as a ‘safe and well’ check). We appreciate your patience in this matter. Please notify us as soon as your guests have arrived so we can schedule a visit. You will also need to ensure you have submitted your DBS application.

**Will the £350 be backdated to the date my guest/s arrived?**

We can confirm that the payments will be backdated so you will receive a payment for each month your guests are with you. However, payments cannot be released until all three checks have been passed and payments will be made in arrears.

**What is the £350 payment meant to be covering?**

The £350 payment is to assist with the costs to sponsors in housing guests such as, utilities increase etc.

**I receive social care. Will the £350 be taken into account during my adult social care financial assessment?**

The £350 payment will be disregarded when councils consider income as part of an adult social care financial assessment.

**Can we still receive the £350 payments after the initial six months?**

According to current guidance you can receive the £350 payments for up to 12 months. The Council will support you to continue the sponsorship arrangement for as long as you and your guest/s wish to.

**If a single person is taking in a family will they lose the single person council tax discount?**

No you will not lose the single person discount and we have already informed our colleagues in the council tax department of this.

**What will happen with regards to council tax if my guest family are in my second or third home?**

There will be a 50% discount for empty or second homes that are used to house Ukrainians on the scheme.

**How is a national insurance number allocated?**

A national insurance number is allocated on a Biometric Residence Permit. It is also allocated upon receipt of Universal Credit. However, as accessing Universal Credit is likely to take several weeks, we recommend that the guest applies for a National Insurance Number before



applying for Universal Credit. The different systems link up so that they will not be allocated a National Insurance Number twice.

### **What are the steps to take for Ukrainian guests to apply for a job and how can we support this?**

Sponsors just need to make sure the visa is in place which it should be, check the right documents from the Home Office. You should also make sure the guests get a national insurance number and bank account set up. These are the practical steps so they are ready when they begin applying for jobs. The Job Centre can support your guests to seek work when they are ready please call 0800 169 0190. There are regular job fairs which include volunteering opportunities and training run by charities.

### **Is there any way to provide financial assistance for my guests' journey from another country to the UK?**

Across Europe there are a number of transport operators offering free onward travel to Ukrainian refugees. The EU website has a list of free travel options and helpful organisations for all EU countries on their website [here](#). Also, available in Ukrainian and Russian on their website:

[Інформація про національні органи та варіанти безкоштовного проїзду](#)   
[Информация об органах государственной власти и возможности бесплатного передвижения](#) 

**Trains:** [Eurostar](#) are offering a free ticket from any Eurostar station to London St. Pancras International. If you have a valid visa to enter the UK, along with your Ukrainian passport, speak to a member of the Eurostar team at Eurostar stations, and they will issue a ticket for travel to London. It is important to arrive with the necessary visa documents, as these will be checked by the UK Border Force during the check-in process. The UK government is regularly reviewing the criteria for Ukrainian refugees to enter the UK, so please [check the UK government website](#) for the latest information.

**Flights:** Wizz Air are offering some free and low cost flights across Europe for Ukrainian refugees, if you use [this link](#) and enter your Ukrainian passport number it should show you what flights are available. They also FAQs on how their scheme works [here](#).

**UK travel:** Most public transport operators across England, Scotland and Wales are offering free onward travel if your final destination is outside London. The offer is valid across all National Rail train operators, light rail services and the majority of bus and coach services. To qualify, you will need to show your Ukrainian passport and your ticket to the UK, and you will have 48 hours from arrival in the UK to complete your journey. There is a journey planner [here](#). You will also be able to travel free across London using London Underground, Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and London bus and tram services so you can reach your destination as quickly as possible. Transport for London are offering free travel across all buses and tubes for 48 hours after Ukrainian refugees enter the UK to allow them to reach their destination outside of London. There are direct trains to Sutton station from St Pancras International.

### **I am worried about the rise in the cost of living. What support is available?**

Please see Sutton Council's webpage on [the cost of living](#) for information, advice and support.

### **3. Childcare, schools and further education**

#### **What childcare is available for parents who want to work?**

On the council website you can search for available local childcare [here](#). You can also contact the Sutton Family Information Service for more information and help by email: [familyinfo@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@sutton.gov.uk) or call 020 8770 6000. There is a range of financial support available for childcare for working parents (including free childcare entitlements for 2 -4 year-olds) depending on circumstances that they could be eligible for. There is more information on each of the schemes on the [government website](#). Please use the [childcare calculator](#) to fill in your specific circumstances and see what support you may be eligible for.

#### **What clubs and activities are available for children?**

For clubs, activities, and advice for children, please see the [Family Services Directory](#).

The Family Information Service can be contacted via phone (020 8770 6000) or by completing their [Online Enquiry Form](#)

You can also contact schools to ask about what extra curricular activities are available.

#### **What is there in terms of support for a 16 year old? Would they get benefits?**

There are benefits for 16 year olds but it's more complex if they are in full time education. It will be looked at on an individual basis. The Job Centre Plus in Wallington has a designated officer who deals with this who will be able to answer any questions. You can contact the JobCentre Plus in Wallington by phone on: 0800 169 0190.


#### **What is the process for applying for schools for children?**

Please see below for local advice on primary school and secondary school, including advice for Years 12 and 13, applications:

<https://www.sutton.gov.uk/-/school-applications-for-ukraine-nationals-arrivals>

Government education guidance for Ukrainians:

[How do families arriving from Ukraine apply for a school place and childcare?](#) 

[Як родинам, що приїжджають з України, подавати заяви на отримання місць у школі та допомоги з оплати послуг з догляду за дитиною?](#) 

#### **Are we allowed to state preferences in applying for schools and how are places allocated?**

You are allowed to state up to 6 preferences on the [application form](#) for an in-year school place. Schools must follow their admissions policy when allocating places. Where a school is full, should you apply for a place at that school you will be added to that school's waiting list. It is at the schools discretion whether to offer additional places, and where there is a waiting list these will be offered from that waiting list in the order of their admissions criteria. School admission policies can be found on the individual school's website. Links to school websites can be found [here](#). You can check the availability of places on our school vacancy checker [here](#).

### **How does my child access free school meals?**

We recommend that you fill out [this form](#) to apply for free school meals and also approach the school directly. To be eligible for free school meals families should be receiving eligible benefits, which include universal credit and support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. As applying for a national insurance number and universal credit can take several weeks, we understand that you might not have received these yet. If this is the case please tick 'Support under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999' and just copy the example national insurance number (AA123456C) when you fill out this form.

For more information, see <https://www.sutton.gov.uk/-/free-school-meals-and-pupil-premium>

In the meantime, we suggest you also contact the school to inform them that you would like your child/children to have free school meals, and that you are in the process of applying for them through the council as well, but that this might take some time.

### **Why are there no vacancies for secondary school places shown on the Sutton Council website?**

Secondary schools admit in bulk a few times a year, so do not tend to note vacancies aside from those times. So there may still be places available. We recommend applying for your preferred school regardless. If that school does not have any places, we can support your application:

Email [suttonadmissions@cognus.org.uk](mailto:suttonadmissions@cognus.org.uk) or log a call at 020 8770 5000.

### **Can we apply for schools in other boroughs?**

You are not confined to applying to schools in the borough you live in. You can make applications with more than one local authority, our neighbouring local authority website links are below:

[Kingston](#)

[Croydon](#)

[Merton](#)

[Surrey](#)

### **What language support is available for children who do not speak English?**

All schools have additional funding for English language support. Once a child is enrolled in a school, the school will assess the need of the child and provide assistance accordingly.

### **How long is a typical wait to hear back about school places?**

The wait time depends if the school has a vacancy or not. It usually takes our admissions team 2-3 days to process your application, and usually takes schools 10-15 days to respond. Please note that there will be additional delays over the May half term.

### **Can we request that the child attends a lower year group at school?**

You can request for a lower year group and the school will assess whether this is appropriate for the child (usually depending on their educational needs).

### **Is there financial support available for transport to get to school?**

Assistance with transport is available, subject to an assessment of the needs of the young person, and also what kind of transport they are taking.

Information can be found on:

<https://www.sutton.gov.uk/-/help-with-travelling-to-school>

<https://www.cognus.org.uk/services-for-families/travel-assistance-transport/>

We suggest that you contact Cognus directly about this, as they will be able to best advise specific cases:

Email [assistedtravelteam@cognus.org.uk](mailto:assistedtravelteam@cognus.org.uk) or contact one of the team below on 020 8323 0460.

### **One of my guests is a child with Special Educational Needs / a disability. What support is available?**

All schools have the funding to support children with Special Education Needs / a disability to a certain level. An education psychologist will have an initial session with the child to assess their level of need, and whether they would be best placed in mainstream school or a specialist setting.

Please contact Sutton information and advice service, who can provide advice on SEND children. They will also arrange interpreters when needed:

<https://www.sias.co.uk/>

See also PlayWise for support before they get into school:

<https://playwise.org.uk/>

Your GP will also be able to link children up with Learning Disability Services.

### **The child I am hosting would be in Year 12? Is it worth them entering mid-year or should they wait until September in order to start their A level course from the beginning?**

You and the guest family should consider what would be best for that child, whether to join immediately or settle in and wait until September. They are not statutory school age so schools do not have to admit them mid-year but they can be admitted based on equivalent GCSE grades. There is more information on further education on our website [here](#).

### **Would refugees enrolled in sixth form or college be entitled to any bursaries?**

There are bursaries available for 16 to 19 year olds. Please use the government website for guidance and eligibility on the [16-19 Bursary Fund](#).

Bursaries are usually administered through schools so check with the school they are enrolled in and you can also go through the schools to apply for free school meals if eligible.

**What entitlement do 16 and 17 years olds guests have to further education and training?  
Will they have to pay?**

As all guests with a BRP have leave to remain in the UK for 3 years and they will have the same entitlement to free education and training as any other UK resident.

**Will guests have access to funding for university?**

Those who are staying in the UK as part of either the Homes for Ukraine or the Family scheme are eligible for the same finances as home students. This means that students will pay Home student fees (as opposed to International fees), and are eligible for student finance (i.e. student loans). See [here](#) for further information. Guests and sponsors should also check with individual universities if they have any scholarships or funding available for Ukrainian refugees. [Student Action for Refugees](#) also provides various bursaries and scholarships.

**4. Adult Training and Language Lessons**

**How can my adult guests access learning or training courses?**

Guests who are 19 years and over who have signed up with Job Centre Plus will be entitled to a range of free courses as part of the support to get into employment. This will include appropriate level ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses.

For those who are employed, or are unable to seek employment, there is other funding available for ESOL courses at Sutton College. If you do approach the college to enrol on one of these courses please ensure that you have the appropriate paperwork ready to show the college your eligibility.

**5. Health and wellbeing**

**Will guests need ID or proof of address to register with a GP?**

No they will not need an ID or proof of address to register with GP so they can do that straightaway. To find your nearest GP surgery with vacancies, please go [here](#).

**We have been informed that the guests we are hosting are disabled. What should we do next?**

Guests can access services that can support them with their disability and you should ensure they register with a GP as soon as the guests arrive. The GP will do an assessment and link them to any health services they require.

**For dentists, as they are more tricky to get a place, are there any special provisions for Ukrainian refugees?**

There are no special arrangements for refugees to access dentistry. It is the same process as any other resident in the UK. Call local dentists and see if any are accepting new NHS patients.

## **What mental health support is on offer for my guests?**

For lower-level support, adults can self refer to Sutton Uplift:

<https://suttonuplift.co.uk/>

The Mental Health Foundation provides information and advice about mental health, including accessing support:

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work>

For children, Off The Record can provide free and confidential counselling, for those aged 3-25. Off The Record also have interpreters available:

<https://www.talkofftherecord.org/sutton/>

We also recommend registering your guests with, and arranging an appointment with, your local GP to discuss mental health problems. Your GP can refer them onto mental health services, including children's mental health services.

Thrive London is also providing help and support to those who are supporting guests who may have gone through trauma. Your health and wellbeing is important too! Please see this [leaflet](#) and this [website](#).

All NHS services have access to interpreters.

## **How do I / how does my guest access Sutton Uplift?**

To access Sutton Uplift you can self refer online through:

Their website - <https://www.suttonuplift.co.uk/>

Over the phone - 0800 032 1411 / 0203 513 4044 (Mon - Fri 9am-6pm)

In person - at Sutton Uplift, 1st Floor Jubilee Health Centre, East Building, 6 Stanley Park Road, Wallington, Surrey, SM6 0EX

Your GP or other professional can also refer you through our website using our professionals referral form.

## **How long are the wait times to access mental health services?**

The length of the wait time depends on the pathway. For Sutton Uplift, initial referrals are usually processed in a week, and then assessments booked within two weeks. Wait times for treatment following this vary. For group therapies, it can be in a week. Access to online resources and guided self help is equally faster. For more complex therapies it can be a couple of months.

## **What if I have further questions about local health services or support?**

Please email [sutton.primarycare@swlondon.nhs.uk](mailto:sutton.primarycare@swlondon.nhs.uk)

## **6. Advice, support and community groups/networking**

### **Could you provide your direct contact number?**

We don't have a dedicated phone line at present as a number of different teams in the council are supporting sponsors and guests. However, if you let us know what you need support with via email at [ukrainereponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukrainereponse@sutton.gov.uk) (e.g. benefits, school places, DBS etc), we can make sure we put you in touch with the right team.

### **How do my guests access the local Facebook group for Ukrainians?**

The Refugee and Migrant Network Sutton is working with Ukrainians in Sutton who have set up a facebook group. To join, please contact [natalya.sem@icloud.com](mailto:natalya.sem@icloud.com)

### **How do I access the sponsor's Whatsapp group?**

To join the sponsors' Whatsapp group, please email your mobile number to [razia@communityactionsutton.org.uk](mailto:razia@communityactionsutton.org.uk)

### **What if things are not working out after my guests arrive?**

There are a number of local organisations who can help to support you if you feel things are not going well with your guests. What is most important is that you let us know as early as possible when things aren't going well by contacting [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) (or **020 8770 5000** if out of office hours) so we can put support in place for you and your guests.

### **What if it is no longer possible for my guests to stay with me?**

Please contact us at [ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:ukraineresponse@sutton.gov.uk) as soon as possible if you feel that your guests may no longer be able to stay with you. However, if this is an emergency, or it is out of office hours (e.g. evenings and weekends) then you can telephone **020 8770 5000** and our duty emergency teams can assist.

### **Does the council provide free sim cards for Ukrainians guests?**

The Council does not provide free sim cards, however a number of national mobile networks are offering free sim cards, including [three](#).

### **Can I access free sports facilities?**

Everyone Active is offering free membership offer for Ukrainian refugees:  
<https://www.everyoneactive.com/promotion/ukrainian-refugee-free-membership/>

## **7. Matching, sponsorship changes and housing**

**I am being approached by Ukrainians abroad for other Sutton sponsors. Is there a list we can give them?**



Unfortunately, the Council cannot help to match people outside the UK with Sutton sponsors as this is being done by central government. On 6th May the government published a list of voluntary and community sector organisations running schemes which help match people coming from Ukraine with sponsors in the UK. You can view the list with links to the organisations' websites [here](#). We would recommend these as the safest routes for matching.

**I know someone who wants to be a sponsor, how can they be matched with a refugee from Ukraine?**

On 6th May the government published a list of voluntary and community sector organisations running schemes which help match people wishing to sponsor in the UK with Ukrainians who wish to come to the UK. You can view the list with links to the organisations' websites [here](#).

**If I can no longer accommodate my guests after they arrive can the council place them with another Sutton Sponsor?**

Unfortunately The Council is not currently able to place refugees with new hosts, until the host has registered their interest and completed all the necessary checks. If your guests do want to move in with another person, we will not prevent this from happening. However, in line with guidance we have received from The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, this would be considered a 'private arrangement' (outside the remit of the scheme). The new host would only be able to receive the £350 monthly payment if they are registered as a host with the council and after all the necessary checks have been passed.

**What happens after the initial 6 months? Or 12 months if my guest stays longer?**

Although sponsors were only asked to commit to six months initially, The Council will support your guests to stay with you beyond this if you are both happy with this arrangement and we can provide monthly £350 payments to sponsors for up to 12 months to help you support your guest/s. .

Once your guests are settled in with you and are set up with benefits and/or employment if they are ready for this, we would encourage you to have open and honest discussions about whether they would like to stay with you beyond six months (if you are both open to this) or whether they would prefer to find their own place or join up with local friends or relatives to live together. It is important to start planning for this early to avoid any assumptions on either side and prevent the need for emergency accommodation wherever possible.

If you decide together that your guest will not stay with you, then please get in touch with our housing advice provider Encompass on **020 8770 5000**. You and your guests will then get support to understand their housing options and make a plan which best suits their needs.

Detailed guidance has been published by the government for sponsors and guests explaining the options available 4 to 6 months into the sponsorship arrangement. Please see these pages for further information:

- [Guidance for sponsors](#)
- [Guidance for guests](#)

**Can my guest be matched with a new sponsor, if they will not be staying with me past the 6 month period and want a new host?**

**Yes.** As per the government guidance, finding another host is also available as an option for those who are not ready to leave sponsorship and move into their own alternative accommodation, but can't stay with their current host, following the end of their initial stay. In these circumstances, guests can source an alternative host who would be willing to take them for a further rematch, either directly themselves or through a third party.