

**Brickhill Borough Councillors Update
April 2022
From Wendy Rider and
Charles Royden**



Supporting Ukraine

Thank you to residents who provided a mountain of clothing, sleeping bags, medical supplies and other essential for Ukraine following our appeal on social media. We were overwhelmed by the generosity and the chapel at St Mark's Church was filled with humanitarian aid which was driven direct to Ukraine following a meeting by Mayor Dave Hodgson with Bedford Borough's Ukrainian community representatives.

We have received many requests for information and ways to offer help. The following links should be helpful. As soon as we know more we will update our website

www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com

To donate money to the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain visit

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/helpukraine>

To sign the petition on Parliament's website calling on the Government to waive visas requirement for Ukrainian refugees visit

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/609530>

To offer your home to a named Ukrainian visit [https://](https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/)

homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/



*Pic Left to Right - Ukrainian Guest
Tatiana Trotsenko, Adviser Monika
Syrek and a Coordinator Zofia Brady.*

Coordinating Support for Ukrainians Refugees temporarily living in Bedford Borough

PBIC is working closely with The Harpur Trust and Bedford Borough Council to coordinate care and support for guests from Ukraine arriving in Bedford. The Harpur Trust and Bedford Borough Council are jointly funding towards this project to be delivered by PBIC which is helping Ukrainian people to settle into the local community whilst ensuring they are guided to the appropriate help and services they need and to which they are entitled.

We know that many organisations and individuals in Bedford Borough want to support people arriving from Ukraine. Therefore, PBIC is set to offer a central point of contact in Bedford Borough to help co-ordinate offers of support, avoid duplication and to make sure that the most appropriate support is provided to those who need it. To do this effectively, we will be setting up a Bedford Support for Ukrainian Guests Forum and we will be recruiting volunteers.

The Bedford Support for Ukrainian Guests Forum

To help with effective access to mainstream services, support from the voluntary & community sector and other forms of support, we will be setting up a Bedford Support for Ukrainian Guests Forum. This forum is to become a communication platform linking organisations offering help, to Ukrainian Guests arriving in the area. We are looking to work with all organisations offering various services to those arriving in Bedford from Ukraine.

We are keen to hear from organisations looking to help and encourage them to sign up to the Forum by emailing UGF@pbic.org.uk. Please include a description of the support you can offer.

Ukrainian Guest Volunteers

To enable access to various organisations from the voluntary & community sector, private and public sectors for Ukrainian Guests facing language and cultural barriers, we will recruit volunteers who will work with PBIC advisers and when appropriate escort guests to relevant services they need. For example, volunteering in this position could involve showing guests where to find the bank or the doctor's surgery, explaining how certain services work in the UK or translating for advisors delivering sessions.

If you are interested in becoming a Ukrainian Guest support and volunteer, please email UGV@pbic.org.uk. We are especially in need of those who can offer Ukrainian as a second language.

Whilst PBIC is offering a holistic support service for our Ukrainian Guests, there are some areas which we will not be covering as part of this project:

- Matching sponsors with Ukrainians prior to their arrival
- Donations sent to Ukraine and Poland for victims of the Ukrainian Crisis

However, we are looking for local organisations who will work in these areas so we could refer all enquires to them accordingly.

"The war in Ukraine is the biggest refugee and humanitarian crisis in Europe since the second world war. We applaud the people of Bedford who are helping by opening their homes to

refugees, fundraising, and offering other support. As the grant maker that is Here For Bedford, we are funding PBIC to help make that process easier for the many voluntary groups, individuals and organisations trying to help, and to provide specialist support for refugees in a language they understand. We are pleased to be working with Bedford Borough in this time of crisis."

Lucy Bardner, Community Programmes Director, The Harpur Trust

As of 1 April, Government has published the following guidance and information in relation to support for those fleeing the conflict in Ukraine:

- [Guidance for Local Authorities](#) (last updated on 30 March)
- [Guidance for Sponsors](#) (last updated on the 25 March)
- [Welcome Guide for Ukrainians arriving in the UK](#)
- [Amendment to statutory homelessness duties](#) for councils to those from Ukraine
- [Frequently asked questions document](#)

For the Homes for Ukraine scheme (last updated on 25 March)

- [Update to Adult Education Budget funding rules](#) (inclusion of Ukrainian adults)

Council Tax Rebate - Don't miss out

Households living in a property valued in Council Tax bands A to D as their main home will be eligible for a £150 Council Tax rebate. If you are currently paying your Council Tax by Direct Debit and meet the eligibility criteria, the council will pay the £150 automatically into your bank account. If you don't pay by Direct Debit you will need to complete an online form to apply for the £150 payment. You can find out more details at www.Bedford.gov.uk/counciltax

Brickhill Drive Shops

We have been asked to remind residents that all the shops are still open on Brickhill Drive despite the presence of scaffolding to make roof repairs after storm damage.

Covid Boosters

With Covid rates going up in Bedford it is important that you have your next booster and this is now available in Bedford for people over 75. There is a walk in facility for vaccinations at

Waveney Avenue Crossings

We are using ward fund to provide plans for safe pedestrian crossings on Waveney Avenue. These are especially important for children crossing to Brickhill Schools by Avon Drive roundabout and Falcon Avenue.

Pond at Rooksmead

Problems with the pump arriving from Europe have been followed by issues relating to the power feed. Cables have been replaced and we are advised the pump is now likely to be installed next week, in time for Easter.

Come and see us at our surgeries

Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 16 April 10.00am

Avon Drive Shops Saturday 30 April 10.00am

Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 14 May 10.00am

Avon Drive Shops Saturday 28 May 10.00am

Brickhill Drive Shops Saturday 11 June 10.00am

You can also speak with us or another Lib Dem Councillor
every Saturday morning 11.00am - 12 noon at Bedford Central Library

As your local councillors we will continue to work hard and keep you informed through regular deliveries of FOCUS, surgeries and our website where you can sign up for our Brickhill newsletter. www.puttingbrickhillfirst.com



Wendy Rider

23 Orwell Close

01234 303254 wendyrider41@gmail.com

Charles Royden

The Vicarage, Calder Rise,

01234 309175 charlesroyden@gmail.com