



Community Board Highlight Report: June 2022

The council has been deeply moved by the plight of people in Ukraine. We have committed to working with the Government to welcome many families to make new lives in Buckinghamshire over the coming months, and years. Community Boards are uniquely placed to understand a local perspective and work with partners to enable a warm welcome and explore local solutions. This highlight report aims to keep community boards up to date with developments and escalations and we aim to send one out every other month

Programme update

	Sponsors	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries Arrived
Buckinghamshire (as of 1 June)	552	1427	743

We have formed a local strategic partnership to be in the best possible position across the whole of Buckinghamshire to co-ordinate a strong response. We have representatives from across the community, education, health, safeguarding and other services all aligned to provide the best support to any arrivals.

Buckinghamshire mobilised swiftly. Learning from the pandemic and other resettlement work, a small team across the council helped shape a response with safeguarding at its heart, speedy local checks and wrap around support. Now in our second month the team are working to ensure Buckinghamshire is providing an exemplar response. The benefits of working in a unitary council have been evident as checks are being completed at record speed with cross council support to solve problems.

The council does not have information on individual visa status, and we are aware of a national backlog. Local checks do not hold up visas being approved. We are informed when a new visa is processed which triggers contact to a sponsor (resident hosting a guest) to start housing and safeguarding checks. One of the 150 staff volunteer Sponsor Liaison Officers then undertake regular welfare checks. Staff across the Health and Fire Service have also volunteered as our Sponsor Liaison Officers.

Feedback has been very positive about these critical roles that help understand how people are, sign posting to relevant services, distribute welcome packs or offers such as cash support. The team have gathered significant information and are encouraging links with community groups. Their insight and escalations help to steer the Partnership Board subgroup work.

Leading high street toy retailer The Entertainer donated sixty £20 toy vouchers. With a head office based in Amersham it hopes the donation will encourage other local businesses to pledge their support and make any donations they can. Any pledges should be sent to the Ukraine Support mailbox UkraineSupport@buckinghamshire.gov.uk



Local charity, Community Impact Bucks, have been funded to provide infrastructure support to community groups, stand up the Volunteer Matching Service and interpreters. Check out their webpage

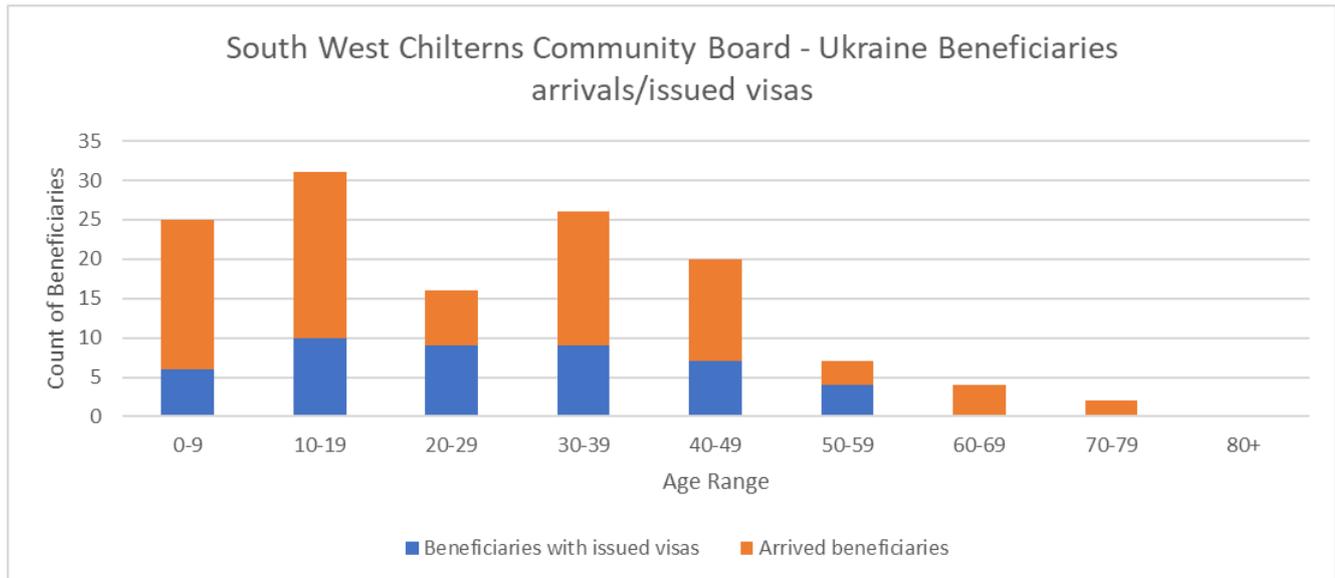
[Community Support for Ukrainian refugees](#)





What's happening in your local area

	Sponsors	Beneficiaries	Beneficiaries Arrived
South West Chilterns	58	150	85



On 12 May Dominic Barnes chaired the first locality members briefing. This area was chosen as South West Chilterns has the highest number of sponsors in Buckinghamshire, predominantly in Marlow and Frieth, closely followed by North West Chilterns. As well as local members, also in attendance was the headteacher Great Marlow School, Town Council Clerk, Primary Care Network and Marlow Ukraine Collective. A chance to hear more from Partnership Board chairs, share experiences and explore plans to support our guests from Ukraine. Contact Makyla Devlin, Senior Community Board Manager, to access the recording.

Thank you to The Marlow Ukraine Collective, a fantastic community group of volunteers coordinating local support, resources and advice for sponsors and Ukrainian guests. Their [website](#) and Facebook page share excellent resources and information, promote events and local opportunities, coordinate donations, and provide a platform for employers to promote local job opportunities.



Key dates coming up:

- The Marlow Ukraine Collective are hosting a Welcome to Marlow Event on 18 June at Longridge Activity Centre 12 - 4pm.
- The Marlow Ukraine Collective provide English lessons every Monday evening 6.45pm - 8pm at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School at three levels, primary, secondary and adult. Details and registration on the Marlow Collective website [Learning English - Ukraine Collective](#)
- Popular Ukrainian Socials at The Ark Café in Marlow (Marlow Methodist Church), Tuesdays 2pm
- Marlow Library weekly drop-in sessions for Ukrainian guests and hosts. Also provides opportunity to sign up at local GP. Tuesdays 2pm.
- Wycombe Mind is hosting a social support group for Ukrainian refugees starting on 1 June from 1pm-3pm, in High Wycombe but open to SW Chilterns.

Key messages

Unaccompanied minors - Updated guidance states children under 18 must be applying as part of a family unit which includes their parent or legal guardian. Applications that have already been submitted by sponsors to host an unaccompanied child will be deferred however sponsors are unlikely to be notified directly.

Finding guests - The council is not responsible for matching. The government have issued a list of voluntary sector organisations running schemes which help match people coming from Ukraine with sponsors in the UK, as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. These official groups can be found [here](#).

Cash on arrival and Universal Credit – Guests are eligible for benefits and access to public services as well as receiving £200 cash on arrival. We understand some guests are concerned about repayment of this funding. Please support community messaging that is not funding which needs to be paid back.

Any gaps - Coffee mornings are a great way for guests to connect with one another and learn more about their area. Please encourage promotion on [Bucks Online Directory](#) so everyone has a go-to source of information about what activities are out there.

Safety first - sometimes guests' personal data is being shared on social media which risks safeguarding. Please remind people to be careful about sharing personal information.

Language - top tip from digital team is to view webpages in Chrome as you can change the language of the site. Please remember that the two languages most commonly used are Ukrainian and Russian



helpinghand
for Ukraine

School applications - There is a lot of interest from sponsors to register guests at local grammar schools. Sponsors are recommended to check the Buckinghamshire Council [website](#) to see if they need to apply directly to the school or if they can use the in-year transfer application form for grammar school admission.

Pledging support – Please remind people about the [Ukraine Crisis Fund](#), working with our partners Heart of Bucks, this funding allows people to donate money that will directly help people who've fled their homes and arrived here in Buckinghamshire.

Business - Please spread the word of dedicated webpages with information for businesses who are able to provide employment or other support services for refugees: bbf.uk.com/support-for-refugees

Employment - Encourage guests seeking employment to look at dedicated webpages of useful information for refugees who are looking to train or seek employment
<https://bucksskillshub.org/pages/support-for-refugees>.

In addition, Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust are running weekly virtual webinars on MS Teams, every Tuesday at 10am www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/ukraine

Further information

Email: ukrainesupport@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Or visit our [‘Helping Hand for Ukraine’](#) pages on the Buckinghamshire Council website

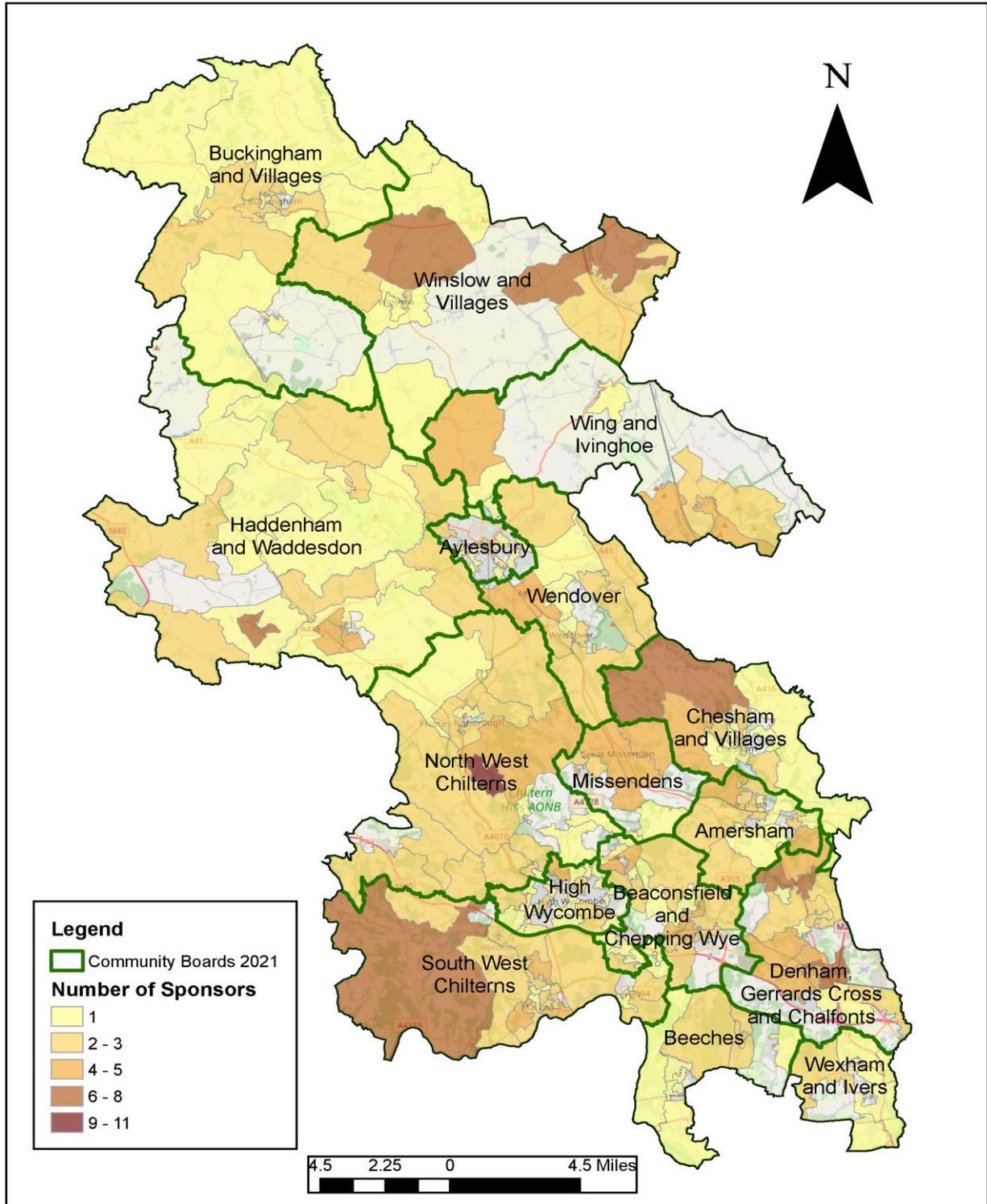


Community Board
South West
Chilterns



Homes for Ukraine - Buckinghamshire Sponsor Location (by LSOA)

Update Date: 10/05/2022



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