

Cllr Jilly Jordan update March 2022

Ukraine Update

The updated 'Homes for Ukraine' visa scheme opened on Friday 18 March for visa applications from Ukrainians who have named people in the UK willing to sponsor them. This scheme allows Ukrainian refugees to find safety in the UK through sponsorship from the public. Details of the visa scheme are available at [Apply for a visa under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme \(Homes for Ukraine\)](#)

Key elements include the following:

- The visa application can be completed by either the Ukrainian refugee or the sponsors but will need to include details of both.
- The sponsor will then be contacted by the Council who will carry out a basic check of the suitability of the home and also undertake a safeguarding check.
- Accommodation should be safe, warm and provide adequate access to bathroom and kitchen facilities. No rent should be charged, and it should be offered for at least six months.
- Once the visa is granted, the refugees are free to travel to join their sponsor.
- Everyone who is matched will also have to do a DBS check which the Council will organise.
- There will be a 'thank you' payment of £350 per month which will be paid by the Council to households taking in refugees once the appropriate checks have been completed. Payments will be made monthly in arrears.
- The Council will receive £10,500 per refugee, per year to ensure the support and services can be provided locally. The Council will support the sponsors in welcoming the refugees and ensuring that they are able to access services such as health, education and benefits as quickly as possible.

This is separate from the UK Family Scheme which is designed to enable Ukrainian applicants to join their family members in the UK [Apply for a Ukraine Family Scheme visa](#)

In addition, people wanting to be sponsors who do not know anyone personally fleeing Ukraine can also record their interest in being a sponsor. To register an interest in being a

sponsor please visit [Homes for Ukraine – Homes for Ukraine – Local Sponsorship Scheme for Ukraine](#).

The Council has also formed a local strategic partnership so we can be in the best possible position across the whole of Buckinghamshire to co-ordinate a strong response to whatever scenario presents. It means we have representatives from accommodation, education, health, safeguarding and other services all aligned to support any arrivals as best we can.



Of course, most people will not be in a position to open their homes to a Ukrainian family but still want to help in the best way they can. As I said last time, we've launched the council's own '[Helping Hand for Ukraine](#)' programme as another means of providing support for any arrivals into Buckinghamshire. For now, the best way to help is to make monetary donations via the main Disasters Emergency Committee Fund, details of which are on the Helping Hand page – while the situation is so grave and chaotic in Ukraine and the surrounding countries this is the best way to get help and items channelled to where they're needed most.

As ever, the support and solidarity being shown in communities across Buckinghamshire in response to this dreadful situation is heartening and I thank you for all you are doing in the various ways you're helping.

Converting of first refuse vehicle to electric

Buckinghamshire Council has been awarded more than half a million pounds to upcycle its first refuse collection vehicle to electric. It marks the start of the Council's programme to convert its fleet to electric, resulting in zero exhaust emissions.

The £578,000 funding, which was announced this week, is from the Government's Air Quality Grant, which helps councils to develop and implement measures to reduce the impact of dirty air on people's health.

The grant will cover the cost of upcycling the first vehicle as well as providing a blueprint for the future conversion programme. The funds will also be used to pay for performance trials, spare parts and specialist equipment for maintaining the vehicle. It all paves the way for more vehicle conversions to follow in the future.

Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council, said:

"This is a landmark moment in our quest to make our vehicle fleet more environmentally friendly, a key strand to our overall Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy. This funding means that not only can we convert our first refuse vehicle to electric power, which is incredibly exciting, it also means we will be able to create a blueprint for future conversions, helping us to overcome the cost barrier of the electrification of the rest of our fleet. We will also be able to share information about the project with other organisations to promote and accelerate the electrification of heavier weight class vehicles."

"The project will improve air quality and carbon emissions in Aylesbury and other areas the electric refuse vehicle travels through, and it will have a big impact on reducing the natural resources usually required to remove and replace old vehicles."

"This is one part of our climate change and air quality strategy which is working towards a goal of net zero carbon in Buckinghamshire by 2050 and working to improve air quality in the county."

The upcycled 10-year-old Dennis Eagle 26 tonne refuse collection vehicle will travel 412 miles a week in the north of Aylesbury, including through three air quality management areas. These are areas which have exceeded the air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide so the use of an electric refuse vehicle in these areas will also promote and contribute towards improving air quality. As a result of using the electric refuse vehicle, over 10 tonnes of greenhouse gas, 69 kg of oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and half a kilo of particulate matter emissions will be saved per year.

Air pollution is the single biggest environmental risk to public health. As part of the same government funding scheme Buckinghamshire Council has also been awarded a grant to purchase and trial low-cost monitoring sensors which will be part of clean air campaigns throughout the year.

Planning

Next scheduled meeting is on March 28thth. Please forward any further issues on planning to me asap.