

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Homes PDG briefing 31 May 2022

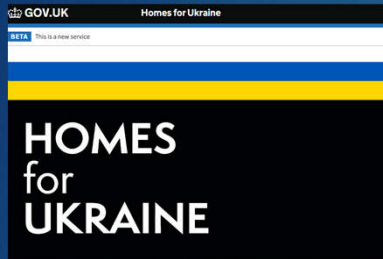
SIMON NEWCOMBE



Background

- ▶ Three Government schemes to help Ukrainians come to the UK:
 - ▶ **Homes for Ukraine Scheme** - For Ukrainians with no ties to the UK. Sponsorship by individual hosts to receive accommodation. Expects to accommodate 200k Ukrainians
 - ▶ Ukrainian Family Scheme – UK nationals with Ukraine ties supported to bring family to UK
 - ▶ Ukrainians already in the UK with a visa can extend their visa or switch to another immigration route

Background



- ▶ Role / focus of Local Authorities on the **Homes for Ukraine Scheme (HfU)**
- ▶ **HfU** is the only scheme with funding attached:
 - **£10,500 per refugee** (inc. one-off £200 subsistence payment)
 - **£350 per host** 'thank you' (rolling monthly payments max 12-mths)
 - **Additional direct schools funding** for additional students (early years – secondary)
- ▶ Whilst focus is on HfU, local refugees via other routes may need support & have same rights to benefits and statutory support. Potential surge in housing demand from all three routes.

HfU scheme roll-out

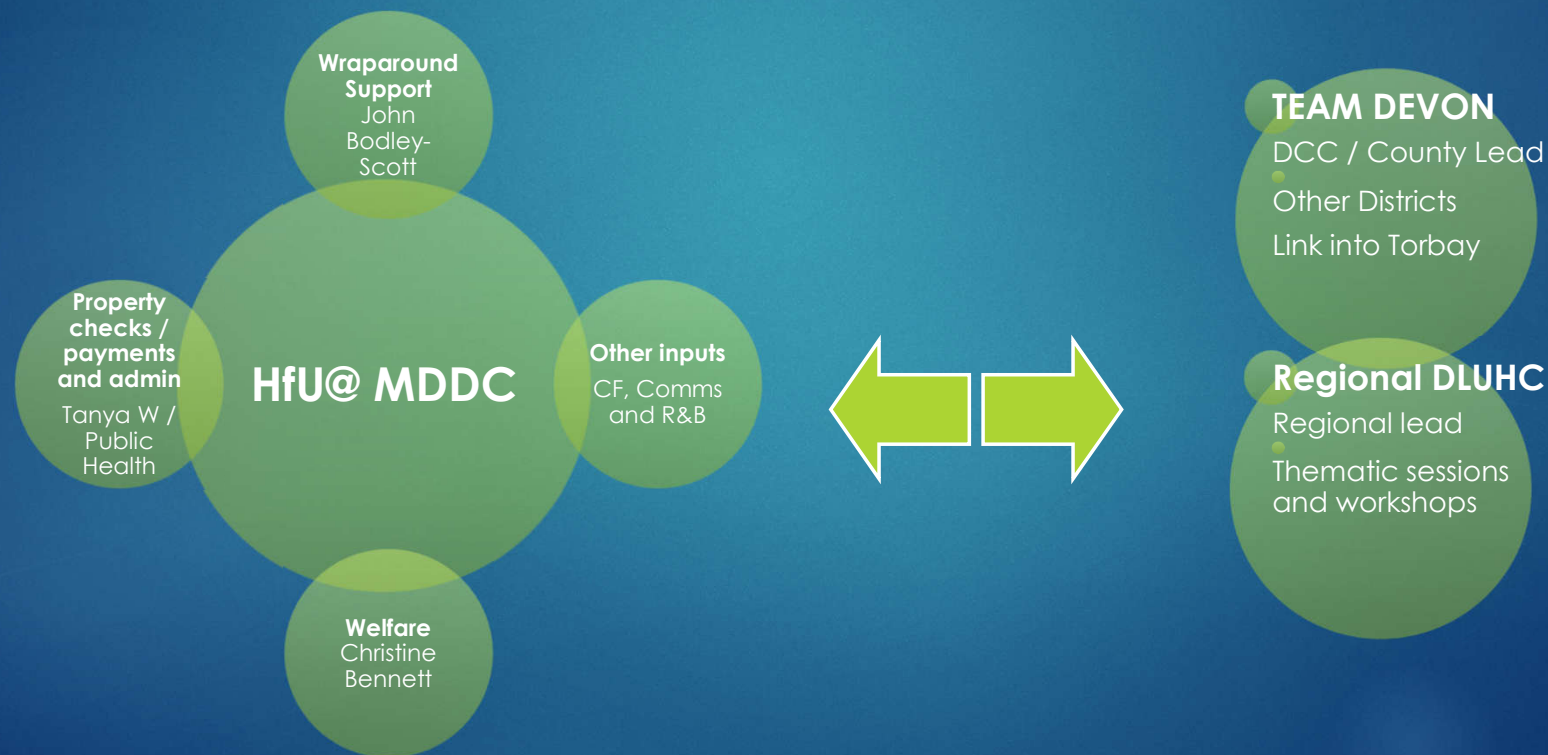
- ▶ Government invited hosts to register on national portal – open pipeline of registrations and self-arranged matches
- ▶ Live **14 March 2022** with limited notice – 12-month scheme only
- ▶ Visa required – initially 6-months, extendable to 3-years
- ▶ Min **6-month** /max **12-month host commitment**. Placements can fail anytime
- ▶ **LA's tasked with delivery** - immediate pressures and high public expectation
- ▶ **Stand-up processes at pace** - fast-moving situ/solutions found quickly across tiers. Collaborative Team Devon effort
- ▶ **Limited national guidance** – delivery in front of guidance. Subsequent updates mean adjusting approach
- ▶ Challenges with quality of national portal data

Requirements & challenges

Immediate – short term (Day 1 and ongoing)	Short - medium term (0-3 months and ongoing)	Medium – longer term (3-12 months and ongoing?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People checks - all adults in host household require safeguarding and DBS checks – DCC• Property and needs checks - all properties require condition and safety checks and assessments against specific needs of matched Ukrainian family• Payments – one-off subsistence payments to Ukrainian guests (cash/no UK bank a/c) and rolling monthly 'thank you' payments to hosts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wraparound support – from welcome and welfare visits, to grants, mediation, specialist support, English language and small grants• Re-matching – implementing new process to rematch guests to new hosts within HfU scheme if placements fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wider support – enhanced English language for employment, access to employment• Scheme exit strategy? – what happens after 6-12 months/end of scheme?• Access to rented accommodation – new pressures/quickly within existing housing crisis – role of DHC/social and affordable/market

Local Mid Devon delivery team

- ▶ Simon Newcombe – lead / link into Team Devon & DLUHC
- ▶ To date...delivery (largely) achieved by existing staff due to pace of situation – unsustainable. Reviewing additional support & backfill from funding



Current position

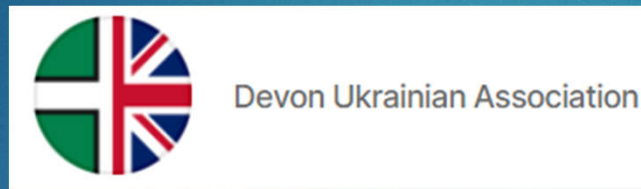
- ▶ Weekly data provided by DCC (via portal) to districts
- ▶ As of 30 May:
 - **86 host households / >165 guests matched in Mid Devon** – distributed widely across area
 - **>80 guests with visas already arrived in 36 households**
 - **Additional 8-10 new hosts/20+ guests through new matches weekly**
 - **Top 3 LA in Devon**
- ▶ DCC host DBS checks and follow-up children welfare checks/visits
- ▶ MDDC Public Health team:
 - accommodation checks and safety assessment – initial tranche of inspections complete – undertaking new visits on rolling basis (diverting resource from other statutory work)
 - administering payments – systems fully live - £200 per Refugee on arrival via Post Office Payout system to bridge the gap until UC in place - £350 per month in arrears to hosts

Current position – wraparound support

- ▶ **Collaborative web page** advice + guidance for guests / sponsors
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/supporting-ukraine/>
- ▶ Focus on local support via **voluntary sector commissioning** (varies by district)
- ▶ Part of £10.5k per head funding used to pay for commissioning. Agreed at Team Devon all districts consider:
 - Focus on **self-resilience and capacity** over time
 - **Developing support offers** for guests and hosts
 - **Welcome visit** and further visits (depending on agreement term - 6 months initially)
 - Providing **single point of contact** for all and **signposting to all services**
 - **Case management**
 - **Social Networking** and **Ukraine community groups** – links / events / drop-in cafes / hubs
 - **Specialist support** – access to UC, housing advice and employment law
 - **ESOL English Language lessons** (DCC co-ord)
- ▶ Reviewing potential **enhanced English language, mediation, community transport** support, **employment access**, local DWP arrangements, **small flexible grants** for essential items and **leisure** offer

What have we commissioned?

- ▶ MDDC have already commissioned CHAT and CAB locally



- ▶ CHAT hosting dedicated worker from Devon Ukrainian Association for welcome visits and case management
- ▶ CAB extending services into bespoke HfU offer (dedicated hours/contact) for specialist benefit, housing and employment advice
- ▶ Dedicated MDDC email refugeehelp@middevon.gov.uk

Why support matters?

- ▶ Investment now = dividends later and reduced risks
- ▶ Retain placements & reduce impact if breakdown
- ▶ Re-matching facilitation
- ▶ UK and local community integration with safety net / social networks
- ▶ Resilience & independence – hosting and after
(practical skills / gaining + sustaining employment and housing)
- ▶ Widest access to statutory services
- ▶ Families with young children - particular needs
- ▶ Specialist tailored advice / advocacy (hosts and guests)
- ▶ Mediation – difficult placements
- ▶ Emotional support & well-being - unique refugee group / vulnerability
- ▶ Transport / mobility

Funding

- ▶ 12-month national commitment only
- ▶ Districts will apply to Government directly for recovery of monthly host payments
- ▶ Separate £10.5k per head payment into top tier (DCC). Team Devon £ partnership agreement to share:
 - **60% districts** – direct costs & local commissioning
 - **15% county** – direct costs & Devon-wide commissioning
 - **25% all tiers/LAs** – pooled **contingency**
- ▶ Team Devon agreement with CEs/Leaders for sign-off
- ▶ On current projections: 60% for Mid Devon circa £1m (assumptions)

Funding – costs

► Direct needs & costs identified so far:



Statutory support & re-matching

- ▶ Statutory rights same as UK residents (while visa valid)
- ▶ Access to statutory services by 'business as usual' procedures – need to navigate the same systems as UK residents
 - Health – GPs, dentists, access to essential meds
 - Education – school places, special needs etc.
 - Benefits/DWP – UC, other benefits and employment
 - Household Support Fund
 - Homelessness – if hosting arrangements breakdown are regarded as statutorily homeless (LA duty)
- ▶ Re-matching – critical new part of HfU scheme, just gone live nationally with local rollout. Identify / conduct pre-checks on a pool of reserve hosts

Housing and other risks

- ▶ Placements fails / end of scheme – **homeless duty** like any other presentation with no locality test – exceptional demand?
- ▶ **Cost of temporary accommodation** (£ outstrip scheme funds?)
- ▶ **Pressure on existing teams and services** – scheme delivery, ongoing checks, inspections/payments, commissioning and management, increasing caseload
- ▶ **Private sector housing market /social housing** – what housing crisis?
- ▶ National **exit strategy** after scheme ends?
- ▶ Need to prepare for a **surge in housing demand** originating from all schemes – hundreds of people/dozens of families?
- ▶ **Vulnerability of individuals** – trauma, ‘free-market’ matching process, exploitation, modern slavery and safeguarding

Questions?...

