

## County Councillor Andy Graham Woodstock Division March 2022 Bulletin

### Ukrainian Refugee Update

#### **The County updated position as of 25<sup>th</sup> March is as follows:**

**Phase one** is where individuals in the UK sponsor name guests to come and live with them in their home. This is the only official housing scheme currently operational and the only route for Ukrainians to enter the UK is through [a visa process](#) administered by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the Home Office. It is this system, and only this system, that will trigger requests to local authorities for support.

Our involvement, and that of all councils, is therefore limited to the timing of that activation and to those individuals successfully registering through that route. We have just started to receive data about matched sponsors in the county with Ukrainian individuals and families and will be able to share a little more information about this next week.

The joint system-wide team across Oxfordshire, including district and city councils and health partners, has been organising how we will deliver the practical tasks and support that hosts, and families will need. This includes initial checks and visits to sponsors' homes, benefits advice and payments and finding school and early years placements.

The DLUHC is developing a sponsor support pack and a welcome pack for arriving refugees that will help to signpost people, including advice about accessing universal credit and job support. **We will supplement that with a local support pack as well as providing clear information and signposting online. The [county council's website](#) will be used as the central host for this information. Working groups from our joint team are looking at what translation and interpretation support is available – the UKHSA has already [translated COVID-19 vaccination information](#).**

The government has also begun to strengthen and expand its [frequently asked questions](#) for sponsors and individuals applying to the scheme.

While we are waiting for more detailed guidance for:

**Phase two** – where the scheme will be expanded to enable organisations and community groups to sponsor multiple guests – we have been working with prospective community hosts and the voluntary sector to understand their issues and needs. This is helping to develop our thinking and plans for how we can help address community action when the time is right.

**More detail will be available by 1<sup>st</sup> April and sent to you directly**

## **Woodstock**

Organised and attended with the Mayor of Woodstock, District and Town councillors and residents from the town and surrounding villages a standing in solidarity with the Ukrainian people event outside the town hall and broadcast by BBC South and Radio Oxford. Nearly 100 people attended, at short notice with speakers to respect and appreciate the loss and suffering endured in Ukraine and to encourage the offers of temporary accommodation from our communities.

Since the event, 14 offers were received to the dedicated email service provided by WODC and subsequently offer community sponsorship groups have met in Tackley and other parts of the county division.

Cars parking on the A44 is causing/creating a potential pedestrian safety problem and double yellow lines are being considered in the area close to the Black Prince. This will be review by the Woodstock traffic Advisory Group in April.

## **Wootton**

Latest of the villages to register for the 30 mph to 20 mph speed reduction scheme. Attended several meetings to support the parish council in finding a new clerk and other local issues. The parish council has a full complement of 7 councillors.

## **Bladon**

Site visits to investigate proposal for parking restrictions and or better lining and sign improvements with parish councillors and other measures to ensure access for emergency and other service vehicles. Parish council to determine a comprehensive plan to be then agreed by OCC.

## **Tackley**

Rousham Road repairs to be carried out in April.

Meetings with OCC officers and Network Rail have taken place to prioritise the railway crossing plan. Next meeting to be held with OCC, Network Rail and Tackley Parish in May to determine solution for footway/bridleway access.

## **Combe**

Plan finalised and consulted upon and OCC to schedule the works in 22/23 once approved by Cabinet

## **The Bartons**

1<sup>st</sup> stage of the scheme submitted, costed and OCC to schedule the works in 22/23

Set up Home to school Transport Working Group of 4/5 councillors set to meet on April 7<sup>th</sup> to start revising policy and timetabling potential changes.

### **Sandford St Martins**

Drainage work agreed to be done at Sanford House before pipework to the drains can commence. Ongoing

30 to 20 mph reducing speed limit through out the village passed resolution

### **Stonesfield**

Attended useful and positive meeting with village shop manager and owner and spoke of the need to carry repairs to the parking bays and some drainage clearance. A plan will now be needed to be agreed by all parties.