

# Welcome to Essex

## An information pack for Homes for Ukraine sponsors in Essex.

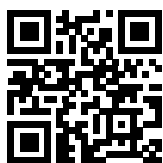
Firstly, we want to say thank you for offering your home or property as a safe place for a Ukrainian person or family.

It is a reminder of the extraordinary generosity of local people. We are sure you will provide the safety and sanctuary that those arriving from Ukraine need at this time.

This pack has been created to support you in your role as a sponsor. It has a range of information for both you and the Ukrainian national you are hosting. Translated packs will be available for those arriving from Ukraine in the coming weeks. We hope it will help you prepare for their arrival, make their transition as smooth as possible and support your whole household throughout the sponsorship.

We encourage you and your guest(s) to access any services you need.

Councillor Kevin Bentley, Leader, Essex County Council  
Councillor Andrew Baggott, Leader, Basildon Borough Council  
Councillor Graham Butland, Leader, Braintree District Council  
Councillor Chris Hossack, Leader, Brentwood Borough Council  
Councillor Andrew Sheldon, Leader, Castle Point Borough Council  
Councillor Stephen Robinson, Leader, Chelmsford City Council  
Councillor Paul Dundas, Leader, Colchester Borough Council  
Councillor Chris Whitbread, Leader, Epping Forest District Council  
Councillor Russell Perrin, Leader, Harlow District Council  
Councillor Penny Channer, Leader, Maldon District Council  
Councillor Simon Wootton, Leader, Rochford District Council  
Councillor Neil Stock OBE, Leader, Tendring District Council  
Councillor Petrina Lees, Leader, Uttlesford District Council



To view this document online,  
scan the QR code.

# Contents

Homes for Ukraine scheme

Finances and benefits

Health services

Applying for a school place and childcare

Mental health and emotional wellbeing

Getting support for a vulnerable adult

Getting support for a vulnerable child

Emergency services

Connecting with the local community

Immigration support

## Homes for Ukraine scheme

Here are some quick facts for sponsors about the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

If you haven't had them already, there will be checks (background and in-person) on you, your family and the accommodation that you will provide.

Current government guidance is that any benefits entitlements remain unchanged if you take in a Ukrainian person or people.

If you receive single person discount on your council tax, this remains unchanged if you take in a Ukrainian person or people.

Ukrainian nationals arriving under the scheme will be able to:

- live and work in the UK for up to three years
- access healthcare, benefits, employment support, education, and English language tuition

For more information about the scheme and related support, visit:

[homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk](https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk)

For frequently asked questions about the scheme, visit:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-scheme-frequently-asked-questions)

### Upon arrival

If you haven't already done so, when your guest(s) arrive, please email:

[BusinessSupport.FamilyOps@essex.gov.uk](mailto:BusinessSupport.FamilyOps@essex.gov.uk)

with the following information:

- Your name
- Your address
- Name(s) of the guest(s)
- Whether your guests include children aged 0 to 18 year old
- Date of arrival
- The name of the district, city or borough council, that covers the area you live in

In the subject line put: Homes for Ukraine Arrival Notification: [add your surname here]

This will help us to make sure safeguarding and accommodation checks, thank you payments, and support for children can be arranged.

If you do not have access to email, please phone Essex County Council on 0345 603 7627 and ask to speak to our Homes for Ukraine team.

## Finances and benefits

### Universal Credit

Ukrainian nationals can access Universal Credit as soon as they arrive in the UK. Universal Credit is a monthly payment to help with living costs.

[www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

If you have questions about how Universal Credit works you can call:

- 0800 328 5644 to speak to Universal Credit Full Service
- 0800 144 8444 to speak to Citizens Advice Help to Claim

### Other benefits

Ukrainian refugees are also eligible for:

- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit
- Personal Independence Payment
- Child Disability Living Allowance
- Carers Allowance
- Attendance Allowance

Those who meet the criteria are eligible for the contributions-based Employment and Support Allowance and Jobseekers Allowance.

Ukrainian nationals do not need to go through certain checks, such as the Habitual Residency Test, which will speed up any claims they make.

Visit [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) to find out more and apply.

### Setting up a bank account

To receive Universal Credit and other benefits, your guest will need to open a bank account. They can open a bank account by visiting any bank. They will need to have documents that show their identity, immigration status and address.

### Food banks

Food banks can provide you with free food and other essential items.

Visit Trussell Trust to find a local food bank:

[www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank](http://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank)

### Citizens Advice

You or your guest(s) can get advice on issues including benefits, employment, immigration, debt and legal advice from your local Citizens Advice. They also offer a Help to Claim scheme that can support people to apply for benefits. Telephone: 03444 111 444

Visit: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

### National Debtline

The National Debtline offers free, confidential and independent advice about debt and money problems.

Telephone: 0808 808 4000

Website: [www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

## Health services

### Registering with a GP

Ukrainian arrivals can receive emergency treatment from a GP surgery for 14 days.

After that, they will need to register with a GP at: [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps)

### Getting a prescription

Ukrainian nationals will need to visit their new GP to get a prescription. They should then take their prescription to a pharmacy or chemist to receive the medication. They may need to pay for prescription medicines.

Pharmacists can give free advice on treating minor health problems, such as colds and coughs.

Find a local pharmacy: [www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy)

### Health advice from 111

Get free health advice from the NHS by phoning 111 or visit: [www.nhs.uk/111](http://www.nhs.uk/111)  
There is an interpreter service available.

### Dentistry services

Ukrainian nationals can register with a dentist as either an NHS patient or a private patient. Find a dentist at: [www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist)

If your guest is receiving Universal Credit, they should let the practice know and register as an NHS patient. Check-ups and necessary treatments will be free.

### Maternity care and midwifery services

A GP can arrange appointments with maternity and midwifery services.

### Covid-19 vaccine

Ukrainian nationals can get the Covid-19 vaccine and boosters for free through the NHS. They will need to be registered with a GP.

Find out how to get the Covid-19 vaccine at: [www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccine)

### Health information in other languages

The NHS has collated a range of health information that is available in different languages, including Ukrainian and Russian. The topics include babies, cancer, heart health and mental health. [www.nhs.uk/about-us/health-information-in-other-languages](http://www.nhs.uk/about-us/health-information-in-other-languages)

Doctors of the World has health information in Ukrainian, including a guide on how the NHS works. [www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/translated-health-information](http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/translated-health-information)

Psychology Tools has provided free resources about trauma and stress in Ukrainian, Polish and Russian. They might help people who have experienced the war in Ukraine. [www.psychologytools.com](http://www.psychologytools.com)

# Applying for a school place and childcare

Ukrainian nationals can apply for a school place for a child as soon as they arrive. Starting school can help children settle in and make friends.

A parent can apply for a school place for their child. Alternatively, you can complete the application on the parent's behalf.

You can apply for the child to start in the new school year in September or in the middle of the school year.

The application will be considered under Essex's school admission arrangements, as all applications are. The outcome will depend on the number of places available at local schools.

Find application forms, admissions information and more about Essex schools at:  
[www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions)

For advice and guidance, telephone School Admissions on 0345 603 2200.

## Free home to school transport

Some children are eligible for home to school transport. For criteria and to apply for free school transport, visit:

[www.essex.gov.uk/school-transport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/school-transport)

## Free school meals

Children in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 automatically get free school meals.

Children in Year 3 or above may be eligible for free school meals. This includes if their parent is receiving Universal Credit.

For more information and to apply for free school meals, visit:

[www.essex.gov.uk/free-school-meals](http://www.essex.gov.uk/free-school-meals)

## Childcare

Ukrainian nationals will be able to get advice and support to find childcare from our Family Information Service.

Telephone: 0800 055 6874

Email: [fis@essex.gov.uk](mailto:fis@essex.gov.uk)

Website: [www.essex.gov.uk/fis](http://www.essex.gov.uk/fis)

# Mental health and emotional wellbeing

There is help available if you think your guest(s) need support.

It is important to speak to someone as soon as possible so they can get the support they need.

## Support for children and young people

Children and young people can get advice and support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service.

The service can help with things like low mood, anxiety, sleep problems, trauma and loss. The service may help directly or point towards more appropriate support.

Any child, young person, parent or professional can contact the service.

Telephone: 0800 953 0222 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or 0800 995 1000 (outside of these hours)

Email: [SET-CAMHS.referrals@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:SET-CAMHS.referrals@nelft.nhs.uk)

## Support for adults

Adults can get advice and support from the Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing team.

This service helps people who are experiencing mental health concerns like anxiety and depression. They provide practical advice on how to access appropriate local services.

If a mental health need is more severe, they will advise on the best next steps to ensure you get help as soon as possible.

Telephone: 0333 032 2958 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: [MH.wellbeingteam@essex.gov.uk](mailto:MH.wellbeingteam@essex.gov.uk)

Outside of these hours, call 111 and select option 2 for mental health crisis support.

## Mental health organisations

These local and national organisations also offer confidential advice, guidance and support to people struggling with their mental health.

### Inspire

Telephone: 028 9032 8474

Email: [hello@inspirewellbeing.org](mailto:hello@inspirewellbeing.org)

### Mind

Telephone: 0300 123 3393

Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

Website: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

### NHS

Telephone: 111

Website: [www.nhs.uk/mental-health](http://www.nhs.uk/mental-health)

### Peabody South East

Telephone: 0800 288 8883

Website: [www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/peabody-south-east-essex-outreach-support-service](http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/peabody-south-east-essex-outreach-support-service)

### Samaritans

Telephone: 116 123

Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)



## Getting support for a vulnerable adult

Our Adult's Social Care service aims to help vulnerable adults stay healthy, well and safe.

Adults who have fled Ukraine may be vulnerable and our services could help them.

### Contact us

If you are concerned that an adult may be at risk of harm please contact us.

During 8.45am to 5pm, Monday to Thursday and 8.45am to 4.30pm, Friday, please contact us by:

Telephone: 0345 603 7630

Textphone: 0345 758 5592

Email: [socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk](mailto:socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk)

Call 0345 606 1212 outside of the above hours to speak to our Emergency Duty Service.

### More information

Find out who can access Adult Social Care services: [www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility](http://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility)

For more adult social care and health services: [www.essex.gov.uk/topic/adult-social-care-and-health](http://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/adult-social-care-and-health)

Get help accessing health and social care services: [healthwatchessex.org.uk](http://healthwatchessex.org.uk)

Support for people with special or educational needs and disability: [www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk)





## Getting support for a vulnerable child

Fleeing the warzone in Ukraine may place particular strain on children, and it might create difficulties within family relationships.

The purpose of our Children's Social Care service is to keep children safe and well. We intervene if a child is suffering and also provide parents with help and support. This might be if a parent is too unwell to look after their child, or if their child has additional or special needs.

### **Find a children or family support service**

There are lots of local and national organisations that can provide support to families. They cover a range of needs, including bereavement and loss, mental health, social isolation, and financial concerns.

Website:  
[www.essex.gov.uk/directory-of-services](http://www.essex.gov.uk/directory-of-services)

### **Request support for more complex needs**

If you have concerns about a child's wellbeing, you or their parent/carer can make a request for intensive support.

This might include: if a child is at risk of harm or neglect; if they have significant behavioural difficulties; or if family members are involved in crime, substance misuse or domestic violence.

Website:  
[www.essex.gov.uk/request-support-from-us](http://www.essex.gov.uk/request-support-from-us)

### **If you have serious concerns about a child's welfare**

If you are worried that a child is being abused, neglected or has been abandoned, please call.

0345 603 7627 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) to speak to our Children and Families Hub.

0345 606 1212 (all other times) to speak to our Emergency Duty Service.

### **More information**

Find more advice for children, young people and families at: [www.essex.gov.uk/topic/children-young-people-and-families](http://www.essex.gov.uk/topic/children-young-people-and-families)

Read more about the issues affecting the safety and welfare of children at: [www.escb.co.uk](http://www.escb.co.uk)

# Emergency services

## **Call 999 and ask to speak to the police**

Please advise your guest(s) that in an emergency they should call 999 and speak to the police if:

- a serious offence is in progress or has just been committed
- someone is in immediate danger or harm
- property is in danger of being damaged
- a serious disruption to the public is likely

They should call 101 for non-emergencies.

Submit a crime report online at:

[www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) or use the 'Live Chat' button to speak to an online operator between 7am-11pm.



## Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

The Essex County Fire and Rescue Service is here to keep everyone safe. Here is some guidance that can help you and your guest stay safe.

### Fire safety

Fires at home are more common than you might think. To stay safe from fire, make sure to:

- have smoke alarms on every floor of your home and test them regularly
- avoid leaving cooking unattended or using chip pans and lots of hot oil
- avoid overloading electric sockets – most can take a maximum of 13 amps
- keep matches and lighters away from children
- keep clothes away from heaters and open fires
- put out and dispose of cigarettes properly
- avoid charging mobile phones, tablets or e-cigarettes overnight, or longer than the recommended charging time
- plan an escape route in the case of a fire and make sure everyone in the property knows how they can get out

We offer free home fire safety visits to any Essex resident. If you do not have working smoke alarms, or have working smoke alarms but would like more information about how to live safely and securely at home, you can book a free visit at: [www.essex-fire.gov.uk/Home\\_Fire\\_Safety](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/Home_Fire_Safety) or call 0300 303 0088.

### Water safety

If you go swimming or are near water, remember:

- only swim at the beach and other places if lifeguards are present
- even on a warm day, the water is colder than it looks which can affect your ability to swim – enter the water slowly
- don't go too far and always swim parallel to the shore
- if you get caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the shore until you are free. Call for help.
- don't swim alone – always take someone with you

If you are in trouble in water, float on your back then call for help or swim to safety.

If someone else is in trouble in water, **call 999 immediately**. Throw them something that floats so they can hold onto it.

### Road safety

To drive in England, your guest(s) need a valid driver's license and valid insurance. The vehicle should be taxed and roadworthy. Remember Ukrainian nationals will be used to driving on the right side of the road.

To stay safe on the road:

- don't drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- don't use a mobile phone while driving
- stay within the speed limit
- wear your seatbelt and make sure passengers do too
- call 999 if you are involved in a collision and it is an emergency
- download the What3Words app so emergency services can find you



## Connecting with the local community

### **The Essex Wellbeing Service**

The Essex Wellbeing Service (EWS) helps people connect with support services and local communities.

The EWS offers a translation service that could help you communicate with your guest(s). They also have a befriending service which can help Ukrainians meet people and make friends.

The EWS can also help with emotional wellbeing, mental health and physical health.

Telephone: 0300 303 9988 (8am to 7pm, Monday to Friday; 10am to 2pm Saturday)

### **‘Essex is United for Ukraine’ Facebook group**

‘Essex is United for Ukraine’ is a Facebook group for people who want to support sponsors, Ukrainian people and other individuals who have been impacted by the war.

Join the group to connect with local people who are United for Ukraine.

[www.facebook.com/groups/eiuforukraine](https://www.facebook.com/groups/eiuforukraine)

### **Transport and travel links**

Visit Essex Highways for information about public transport, cycling and walking routes in Essex.

[www.essexhighways.org/getting-around](https://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around)

# Immigration support

## **Migrant Help UK**

Migrant Help UK provides advice and support to asylum seekers, refugees and victims of modern slavery and trafficking.

Telephone: 0808 801 0503

Email: [info@migranthehelpuk.org](mailto:info@migranthehelpuk.org)

Website: [www.migranthehelpuk.org](http://www.migranthehelpuk.org)

## **Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline**

This helpline provides information and remediation support to people who have suffered labour exploitation and labour abuse.

Telephone: 08000 121700

## **British Red Cross**

British Red Cross supports refugees, providing emergency provisions for those facing severe hardship to giving orientation support and friendly advice to the most vulnerable.

Telephone: 0808 196 3651

Email: [info@britishredcross.org.uk](mailto:info@britishredcross.org.uk)

## **Refugee Council**

Refugee Council provides support and advice to refugees and asylum seekers.

Telephone: 0207 346 6700

Website: [www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

## **The Salvation Army**

The Salvation Army provides support and advice to refugees and asylum seekers and specialist support to victims of modern slavery.

Telephone: 0800 808 3733

Website: [www.salvationarmy.org.uk](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk)

# Colchester

## Support for Ukrainian people and sponsors in Colchester

### Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Migrant Agency

In Colchester, the Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Migrant Agency is a voluntary organisation which supports refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants who are making a new life here.

They can assist you or your sponsored person with school applications, doctors' visits, signposting, transport, job applications, English lessons, sourcing furniture, finding toys, access to cultural food banks and more.

They can put Ukrainians in touch with local befrienders to help them meet people and make friends. They also run a programme of sessions in computing, crafts, gardening and many other activities.

- Telephone: 01206 638454
- Email: [enquiries@refugeeactioncolchester.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@refugeeactioncolchester.org.uk)
- Website: [refugeeactioncolchester.org.uk](http://refugeeactioncolchester.org.uk)

### The ALB Ukraine Donation Hub

The ALB Ukraine Donation Hub is providing clothes, toys and other goods free of charge to Ukrainian refugees. They are also able to point you towards other relevant organisations who can help.

They also have a mini-bus available if you are hosting large families who need get to appointments or travel from the airport.

- Email: [hello@antilooroll.co.uk](mailto:hello@antilooroll.co.uk)
- Website: [antilooroll.co.uk](http://antilooroll.co.uk)
- Address: Abbey Fields Medical Centre, Ypres Road, Colchester CO2 7UW

### Community 360

Community 360 is the umbrella body for the local voluntary sector in Colchester. They offer a range of services to support the local community.

- Telephone: 01206 505250
- Email: [information@community360.org.uk](mailto:information@community360.org.uk)
- Website: [community360.org.uk](http://community360.org.uk)

### Outhouse East

Outhouse East is a Colchester-based organisation that provides opportunities for LGBT+ people in Essex. Their services include counselling, social events and support groups.

- Telephone: 01206 871394
- Email: [info@theouthouse.org.uk](mailto:info@theouthouse.org.uk)
- Website: [theouthouse.org.uk](http://theouthouse.org.uk)

# Religious organisations and places of worship

Colchester is a diverse community made up of people of many religious faiths and none. Here are a selection of places of worship:

## **St Johns Rumanian Orthodox Church**

Telephone: 07745 298266

Email: [frandrew\\_anglorus@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:frandrew_anglorus@yahoo.co.uk)

Website: [saintjohnsorthodoxchurch.com](http://saintjohnsorthodoxchurch.com)

Address: Military Road, Colchester,  
Essex CO1 2AN

## **St. James the Great Anglo Catholic Church**

Telephone: 01206 860419

Email: [officestjamescolchester@btinternet.com](mailto:officestjamescolchester@btinternet.com)

Website: [stjamesthegreat.wordpress.com](http://stjamesthegreat.wordpress.com)

## **The Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood**

Find a local Roman Catholic Church at:

[directory.cbcew.org.uk](http://directory.cbcew.org.uk)

## **The Church of England Diocese of Chelmsford**

Find a local Anglican (Church of England) church at: [achurchnearyou.com](http://achurchnearyou.com)

## **Colchester Mosque**

Website: [colchestermosque.co.uk](http://colchestermosque.co.uk)

Address: 2-3 Priory St, Colchester CO1 2PY

## **Colchester and District Jewish Community**

Website: [cdjc.org.uk](http://cdjc.org.uk)

## Additional information and contacts

### Leisure Facilities

Colchester is home to a wide range of outdoor and indoor activities to suit all ages and tastes. Whether you're looking to relax, or burn off some energy, get competitive, or simply have some fun, Colchester has it all covered, including plenty of opportunities to explore our countryside and coastline for free.

Website: [visitcolchester.com/things-to-do/sport-and-leisure](https://visitcolchester.com/things-to-do/sport-and-leisure)

### Active Essex

Active Essex hold clubs that are government funded for primary and secondary aged children (5-16 year olds) who are eligible for benefits based free school meals, as well as those from low income working families who would benefit from this support. They are also able to extend this support to children and young people who may be vulnerable to inactivity or social isolation, on a case by case basis, please speak to the club provider to discuss if this is an option.

Website: [activeessex.org/children-young-people/essex-activate/bookings/north-essex-activate-bookings](https://activeessex.org/children-young-people/essex-activate/bookings/north-essex-activate-bookings)

### Good Gym Colchester

Every week in Colchester Good Gym work out by helping local community projects and run back all within 90 minutes.

Website: [goodgym.org/colchester](https://goodgym.org/colchester)

### Libraries

The main library in Colchester can be found at:  
Trinity Square  
Colchester  
CO1 1JB  
Email: [colchester.library@essex.gov.uk](mailto:colchester.library@essex.gov.uk)

It's more than just books there, so, be sure to check out the range of services on offer.

### Finding a new home later

When it is time for you to find your own home, you can find a wealth of information on how to go about it here: [cbhomes.org.uk/find-a-home/renting-privately](https://cbhomes.org.uk/find-a-home/renting-privately)

In the unlikely event that things don't work out with your arrivals from Ukraine, there is information on being re-housed here: [cbhomes.org.uk/find-a-home/homelessness](https://cbhomes.org.uk/find-a-home/homelessness)



## **Useful contact numbers**

### **CALM Centre Counselling and Life Management**

Telephone: 01279 411330

Website: [calmcentre.co.uk](http://calmcentre.co.uk)

### **Citizens Advice Colchester**

Telephone: 0808 278 7853

Email: [advice@colchestercab.org.uk](mailto:advice@colchestercab.org.uk)

Website:

[citizensadvice.org.uk/local/colchester](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/local/colchester)

Address: 28 Middleborough, Colchester,  
Essex, CO1 1TG

### **Colchester Borough Council**

Telephone: 01206 282965

Email: [communities@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:communities@colchester.gov.uk)

Website: [colchester.gov.uk](http://colchester.gov.uk)

### **Colchester Foodbank**

Telephone: 01206 621998

Email: [info@colchester.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@colchester.foodbank.org.uk)

Website: [colchester.foodbank.org.uk](http://colchester.foodbank.org.uk)

### **Colchester Hospital**

Telephone: 01206 747 474

Website: [esneft.nhs.uk](http://esneft.nhs.uk)

Address: Turner Road, Colchester,  
Essex, CO4 5JL

### **Colchester Registry Office**

Telephone: 0345 603 7632

Address: Colchester Library,  
21 Trinity Square, Colchester,  
Essex, CO1 1JB