



Guide for Hosts Welcoming Guests from Ukraine.

Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network (EERN) provides support to guests and hosts who are part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme in partnership with Epsom & Ewell Borough Council. This guide provides a brief overview of some tips for hosts who are new to the scheme.

The first few days

For the first few days it is important to get a balance between making guests feel welcomed and making them so busy that they feel overwhelmed. Please be aware of their need for some personal space and time to absorb all that is happening to them. They will most likely be tired and hungry when they arrive and may want to shower and rest. For the first few days they may want to rest and just absorb the enormity of the situation so please don't plan lots of activities in the first few days. Guests who have left family members behind will be anxious to keep in touch with them so please hook them up to wifi and ways to communicate as soon as possible.

A few things to bear in mind :

- Please respect your guest's privacy and understand that they will feel very grateful to you so understand they may say yes to things that they may not be comfortable with. Respect their need for their own space and privacy.
- Start as you mean to go on. Maybe ask them to eat with on the first night and then show them how they can make their own food and explain the best times to work around you. You can make it clear that they are welcome to join you sometimes, but it is not expected. It may be a strain on everyone if you are cooking for them every night!
- Don't ask about their experiences and background, let them share with you when and if they are ready.
- Try not to have the news channels on the TV as this may be distressing for them.
- Outline some basic house rules in the first few days to try and help avoid conflict ahead. Things like noise levels late at night or cooking at times that may clash with your own family meals.
- Help the family familiarise with the local area so that they can go out on their own without you, it allows them some independence and time to themselves.

Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network is part of Good Company (Surrey) Reg Charity Number 1197493

www.epsomrefugeenetwork.org

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Epsom & Ewell Refugee Network

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- Try not to overwhelm them with “stuff” when they first arrive but make them aware that you are happy to help them source things they need. If you need financial support with this, then please do contact us.
- Communications will be very important to guests so that they can keep in touch with family members back home. Please hook them up to your wifi and we suggest helping them get a UK sim card. If you need help with laptops we have some refurbished ones.
- How do you feel about smokers in the house? If your guest family do smoke it is good to be clear on which areas you are happy for them to smoke from the outset.

Most importantly ask for help! Don't think you need to do everything for your guests, there is advice below about other agencies they can call and it's good for your guests to action as much as they can themselves. We are seeing new hosts trying to do too much and burning themselves out - please don't fall in to this trap. We are here with volunteers ready to help. EERN employs a Host Supervisor whose role is specifically to support hosts as part of the Homes for Ukraine scheme – please email eern@goodcompany.org.uk to be put in touch with our Host Supervisor and find out how we can support.

Support for Ukrainians

EERN employs a Ukrainian Support Worker and a Host Supervisor, both of whom will regularly visit hosts and guests in their home to provide ongoing support.

EERN also has a Help Desk open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 2pm. Ukrainians can visit us at Global House, KT18 5AD, during these times to receive guidance and support on a range of issues including:

- Receiving £200 welcome payment from Council
- Setting up a bank account
- Registering for Universal Credit
- Enrolling children in schools
- Finding employment
- Understanding and navigating local systems
- English lessons
- Connecting with others to build their social circle

Please share our details with your guests when they arrive so we can support as soon as possible.

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