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**Local Update April 2022**

**Ukraine**

As well as donations and volunteering, we know many have generously offered to share your homes with refugees. If you're considering this, please join the national [**Homes for Ukraine**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyMjA0MDEuNTU3OTc3ODEiLCJ1cmwiOiJodHRwczovL3d3dy5nb3YudWsvcmVnaXN0ZXItaW50ZXJlc3QtaG9tZXMtdWtyYWluZSJ9.sTYg4lkjzEx1izvXhazPKih4m7sysoA0_8uwah3L0H4/s/1125787080/br/129011578657-l) scheme. It's the best way to ensure refugees get the official help and support they need.

East Sussex County Council is working with all local authorities, emergency services, NHS and voluntary groups in the county. We're already getting in touch with hosts and their guests to organise support and carry out safety checks. Everyone sharing their home will need to prove identity and provide information for background screening checks (known as DBS checks).County may also check their own records in this process.

All this is to ensure everyone, guests and hosts, are protected from any risks including possible exploitation.

We'll do all we can to support our Ukrainian guests and help them settle into our communities.

This is a fast-changing situation but you'll find the latest information on the East Sussex County Council website website which we're keeping updated.

The Government has extended a welcome to Ukrainian refugees and Local Authorities have been made responsible for supporting the process which effectively involved 4 areas of work:

* Home check - suitable and safe for guests
* Provide a DBS / enhanced check for all adults in homes
* Provided wrap-around support
* Step in if things don't work out.

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS)will undertake a Home Safety Visit (HSV). This work has been fully endorsed by the cross County team coordinating our local response. The entire cost of undertaking these visits will be met through the grant made by the Government to Local Authorities.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has issued guidance regarding the content of the home audit which very much aligns with the ESFRS home safety model. ESFRS will receive details of the host families from the Local Authorities and community safety staff will make contact to undertake a visit. Some Ukrainian guests are arriving imminently and we will prioritise these visits.

The Fire and Rescue Service has been working with UK charity FIRE AID and International Development (FIRE AID), and the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) to donate more than 5,000 items of fire and rescue equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) To Ukraine. In total, eighteen fire engines, thermal imaging cameras, generators, lighting, hoses, rescue equipment, and thousands of sets of PPE are among the items being donated. Every fire service across the UK has stepped in to support these efforts. East Sussex Fire and Rescue has donated various items of firefighting equipment including portable emergency lighting, hoses and rescue equipment.

Much of the equipment has now been received by the Polish State Fire Service and is being transferred to Ukraine.

The equipment will be used to support firefighters, emergency services and volunteers who are often using old or worn equipment. They are dealing daily with fires and other emergencies to protect lives, people and property.

**Wealden Council Leader to step down.**

Councillor Bob Standley has announced he is stepping down as Leader of the Authority in May.

Councillor Standley has represented Frant and Wadhurst since 2004 and has been Council Leader since 2010.

He has shown great leadership and vision in that time.

A new Conservative Group Leader will be elected in April .

Best wishes

Roy Galley

April 7th 2022.

**Your local Councillors.**

**Roy Galley.** [**cllr.roy.galley@eastsussex.gov.uk**](mailto:cllr.roy.galley@eastsussex.gov.uk)

[**cllr.roy.galley@wealden.gov.uk**](mailto:cllr.roy.galley@wealden.gov.uk)

**01825 713018**

**Peter Roundell.** [**cllr.peter.roundell@wealden.gov.uk**](mailto:cllr.peter.roundell@wealden.gov.uk)

**01825 722030**

**Toby Illingworth cllr.toby.illingworth @wealden.gov.u**