

## **Support for Ukrainian refugees – the role of village halls 17 March 2022**

Village halls play a key role at the centre of their community providing a safe space to bring everyone together. Many have community resilience plans and are familiar with offering a support centre and very temporary living accommodation for localised crises such as flooding. In addition, COVID-19 has demonstrated that halls have been valued as centres for vaccination and food distribution.

ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) believes that village halls are well placed to welcome and support Ukrainian refugees that are being hosted in the local community; the role fulfils the charitable purposes of hall charities. Refugees can be invited to take part in social activities e.g., those already taking place, and some arranged specifically for them, be offered training where the hall provides appropriate courses, given access to digital facilities, and any other activities that will provide support and aid integration. The hall can provide space for refugee families to get together and feel less isolated from each other. We would not expect village halls to provide living accommodation.

When considering actively supporting activities for refugees the committee must:

- involve the whole community,
- make sure that appropriate vetting and safeguarding practices and procedures are in place,
- engage with local district and borough councils with the aim of creating a co-ordinated approach and avoiding duplication of services that are being offered elsewhere,
- make themselves aware of local charities, organisations, and support groups such as [NACCOM](#) so that the best possible support can be provided for the refugees and the hall committee,
- refer to guidance from the [Charity Commission](#) .

Households wishing to provide living accommodation should register here:  
<https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/>

Village hall committees that require advice and guidance can contact their local ACRE Network member. Contact details can be found [here](#)