Crickhowell supports Ukraine

Meeting at Henderson Hall on 10th November 11am-12 midday.
In attendance panel consisting of Rhiannon Davies (volunteer), Fay Jones MP, Greg Langridge-Thomas Powys CC, County Councillor Matthew Dorrance, Nigel Brinn Powys CC and Catherine Watts, Powys tHB.

Audience of hosts and Ukrainian guests and others

Introduced by Rhiannon who indicated that this was a follow on to a meeting held in July to try and answer the questions posed then for hosts and guests. At that time, these questions were mainly about employment and how Ukrainian qualifications could be taken into full account, ways to incentivise employers to take on Ukrainians, employment opportunities for women, the future of the sponsorship scheme and accommodation issues.

Fay Jones apologised that she’d not been able to make much progress with answers but welcomed the large panel which showed the support and resolve to help Ukrainians. She said she felt that the government was committed to long term support if necessary and when the 3 year visa ended people would likely be able to apply for indefinite leave to remain.

Igor, aided by Liudmyla, spoke for other Ukrainians. He said the last meeting was mainly about work with the feeling that the immigration of Ukrainians was a short-term issue, but now the issue was about the likely long term planning and help with accommodation.

In discussion it was agreed that the biggest issue now was about accommodation and what happens next. With the rise in fuel and electricity costs the monthly payment to hosts is inadequate and is not based upon the numbers of guests but is the same for 1 guest or 10. Some councils have agreed an increase already and most will continue the payments to hosts for at least 12 months.

Host Graeme Dickenson mentioned the difficulty for Ukrainians in obtaining rental accommodation and passing the necessary checks and finding deposits etc. He said that some councils will guarantee to pay utilities and rent. People know that they may have to move from hosts but how and where?

Can the council support private landlords to host or offer tenancies? How can hosts be encouraged to continue?

Would it be cheaper to extend the goodwill payments than to find hotels or hostels for people that become homeless?

Greg Langridge-Thomas There is a plan going to the council suggesting increased goodwill payments and there will be an announcement shortly. The rise will be from £350pm to £500pm and this will be for up to 12 months hosting.

It is important that the council behaves in an equitable manner towards all people that need accommodation. But the council can help with funding the first month’s rent and bond and with basic white goods and help to move and assist/support landlords in overcoming any barriers. They recognise that they are moving from an emergency response and now need longer-term planning. He has only been in this post since September with a responsibility for Ukrainian resettlement. The initial focus had been on people in Welcome Centres and hotels but recruitment has started to appoint case workers for each host and guest arrangement to help find the best longer term options.

Liudmyla said that most people would prefer separate accommodation but that there did not seem to be much available.

Rev Rich Wootten mentioned that a family needs to find new accommodation as their host is unable to continue but ideally they would like to stay near the older children’s school in Crickhowell.
Neil James has recently started hosting and emphasised that most people are not hosting for the money but with rising costs more money was needed. Can council advocate to the Senedd for the needs of rural areas with higher costs?

Matthew Dorrance. Confirmed that they would look carefully at what could be done and hopes that the additional support by a caseworker for hosts would help. They need to know what help is needed, how people can be encouraged to host and maybe the council can support fuel costs.

New hosts, Graham and Lynn Butt mentioned that they had been waiting for a guest since March and had found their guest via Facebook. They suggested chasing anyone who had offered to host to see if they were still able to do so. And to make the DBS and safety checks timely and easy.

Nigel Brinn indicated Powys had more host offers than anywhere outside of Cardiff but this also brought challenges as the hosting may be temporary. His portfolio covers Afghan and Syrian resettlement and Asylum dispersal and he must manage all in an equitable manner. Also, within Powys generally there were nearly 5000 people on the waiting list for housing as well as people in B&B. He hoped that with a bigger team to help with Ukrainian resettlement that things would improve.

Andrew Wakely. He was a landlord previously and the rental property topped up his pension. He could not afford to continue on the current rate for long but an increase especially if some additional payment could be linked to the numbers accommodated would be very welcome. He thought the 2 main issues were what happens when hosts living in the same space need their home back and how to provide rental property at an affordable price to guests and hosts.

Greg LT mentioned that Housing Justice Cymru will provide respite for hosts for up to 30 days Airbnb. He is planning a fortnightly newsletter for hosts. He is also considering a regular forum to discuss issues- eg Universal credit, LA credits and need to check with Department of Work and Pensions.

Nikolai said that they had thought they were in need of a short term solution but now realised that they needed to build a new life. How could his Ukrainian qualifications be recognised? He valued the free English lessons but said learning was a struggle. Manual work was feasible but something more like his old job would be preferable. Money and work were important but having a home was priority.

Fay. Response awaited from Department of Education about the qualifications.

Liudmyla: a number of Ukrainians were English teachers before and could their skills be used in schools and colleges? And how to balance pension credits with work.

For Igor: could his skills as an architect and building engineer be used to rebuild empty properties and provide housing.

Matthew D: Many empty properties being looked at but it would take time [ and money] to make them habitable. Levies could possibly be raised upon empty properties, Look at keeping a register of skills.

Greg LT: Careers Wales can access translation of qualifications via UK ENIC.[National Information Centre for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills.] He has a need for a full time [ possibly spread over several people] interpreter to work with the caseworkers. The caseworkers may be able to help matching hosts and work.

In summing up it was agreed that a lot had been talked about and the council and MP had listened and will act. There are 292 Ukrainians in Powys with 33 in hotels and 87 potential hosts awaiting matches. This has been a learning experience but NOW is the time for action.

Rhiannon thanked everyone for coming and the hosts for doing such a remarkable job.
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Iryna: she has an old car and needs something newer for her husband to be able to act as a carer. Car registration was mentioned recently and details are on our website Ukrainian section.

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BRINGING A CAR TO WALES

This information is for Ukrainians who are in Wales under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

If you have brought a vehicle to Wales, and it is taxed and registered in your home country, you do not need to:

- Declare the vehicles to customs, or
- Pay any customs duty, or import VAT on the vehicle.

This allowed under the ‘Temporary Admission (TA)’ procedure.

Under TA, imported goods or belongings must not be altered (but can be repaired). and must be re-exported within a set time (normally 6 months).

But, Ukrainians who are in Wales for more than 6 months can apply for an extension.

To do this you must email ntis@hmrc.gov.uk.

Send them a copy of your BRP (Biometric Residence Permit), or any other evidence of your permission to remain in the Wales.

They will grant an extension up to 3 years.

(The C110 is an optional form which provides evidence that your vehicle 'temporary import' status. You can show this if you are stopped on public roads by the police or a customs official.)

Привезення автомобіля до Уельсу:

Ця інформація для українців, які перебувають в Уельсі під Будинки для України схема.

Якщо ви привезли транспортний засіб до Уельсу, який оподатковується та зареєстрований у вашій країні, вам не потрібно:

- Задекларувати транспортні засоби на митниці
- Сплатити будь-яке митне мито, або імпорт ПДВ на транспортному засобі.

Це дозволено згідно з правилом «Тимчасовий вхід» (ТА).

Відповідно до ТА, імпортувані товари або речі не повинні бути змінені (але можуть бути відремонтовані та повинні бути повторно експортувані протягом встановленого часу (зазвичай 6 місяців).

Але українці, які перебувають в Уельсі більше 6 місяців, можуть подати заявку на продовження.

Для цього необхідно:

Електронна пошта ntis@hmrc.gov.uk. Надішліть їм копію свого BRP (біометричного дозволу на проживання) або будь-який інший доказ вашого дозволу залишатися в Уельсі.
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Дадуть продовження до 3 років.

( C110 це необов’язкова форма, яка надає підтвердження того, що ваш автомобіль має статус «тимчасового ввезення». Ви можете показати це, якщо вас зупинить на дорогах загального користування поліція чи митник.)

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Dental issues

1. Anyone experiencing severe dental pain etc should ring NHS 111

2. Any child of a refugee/refugee child can access their local Community Dental Service in Powys - there are 4 clinics

3. Any refugee adult who cannot get a NHS dentist can call the Powys Dental Helpline and they should be allocated a dentist (details below)
   01686 252 808