**Ten steps to settling into life in the UK**

1. **Get a UK Mobile Number** – collect SIM card from the Hub or pop into any mobile phone shops in Tunbridge Wells and ask for a free SIM for a Ukrainian Refugee. This will give you a UK mobile number which you need for a bank account. Most mobile phone companies offer free calls in UK, unlimited data and free calls to Ukraine for 30 days (some offer this for longer). After the initial free period, you will need to set up a ‘Pay As You Go’ contract or monthly contract to maintain the mobile number that the SIM gave you.
2. **Set up a Bank Account** – most banks are offering simple bank accounts to Ukrainian Refugees. NatWest have a good one and are very lenient on documentation required to open the account. But you do need a UK mobile number to open the account. You will need to complete a form and take Passports with Visa stamps a branch to open an account. The nearest branch is at Tunbridge Wells. Download an application form <https://www.natwest.com/ukraine-refugees.html#apply>. It will take 7-10 days for the account to be opened and bank cards to be sent.
3. **Contact Council for immediate cash support of £200 per person** – Email ukraine@eastsussex.gov.uk. You need to tell them - Guest names, dates of birth, lead sponsor name, address guest is staying, email address of the guest. This will need to be verified by East Sussex County Council in the first instance. ESCC will then ask Wealden to issue the cash/voucher when the guest is verified.
4. **Call the Red Cross** – they are offering cash based cards or grocery vouchers to refugees in need. Call 0808 196 3651 option 1 within 14 days of arrival. You need to give them names of the refugees, DOB, host address and date of arrival in the UK. They are also able to supply SIM cards if necessary. The cards are valued at £50 per refugee.
5. **Register any children for school places with East Sussex County Council -** <https://eyeeonline.eastsussex.gov.uk/synergy/Parents/default.aspx>.

(This can be done before your guests arrive in the UK)

1. **Apply for an NI number** – this is quick and easy - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>. The number takes about 5-7 days to be sent by post.
2. **Complete a new patient registration form** **for local GP** – this needs to be collected from the local practice and completed by all guests. Hosts will also need to write/email a letter explaining that the guests are staying with them on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and confirm their address. A separate form needs to be completed for every person.
3. **Complete a Universal Credit application** - <https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit>. It is easier to do this with a UK bank account but it can be done without. You also need to input an NI number. Once completed, payments should start within 5-6 weeks. Get this application in and then it can be adjusted if the guest secures work – their employer will be able to log in and indicated how many hours and at what pay they have worked each month so that UC payments can be adjusted accordingly.
4. **Complete Child Benefit Claim -** <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1064678/CH2_Child_Benefit_Claim_Form_English.pdf>

Mayfacs couldn’t get the online form to work so I printed out a copy. I also had to phone the helpline for advice on a couple of the questions –

**Q18**Are you subject to immigration control now or have you been at any time in the last 6 months?  ANSWER YES

**Q23** What is your marital or civil partnership status?  Tick SINGLE if partner is staying in Ukraine (even if married as they can't do anything with the information on partners in Ukraine)

**DECLARATION** - if they don't want to send their child’s Birth certificate (HMRC understand some might be concerned about sending off original documentation given what has happened to them), they do not have to. Leave this section blank and they will contact you for proof of identity.

**ADD A COVERING LETTER TO THE APPLICATION SAYING THAT THE APPLICANT IS ON THE HOMES FOR UKRAINE SCHEME AND THEY ARE TRYING TO FAST TRACK THESE APPLICATIONS.**

1. **Apply for a Biometric Residence Permit** - <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>. This is important if your guests wish to extend their stay beyond 6 months and if they wish to travel in and out of the UK.

***As a Host, don’t forget to inform your Mortgage Company and your Home Insurance provider that you are hosting a Ukrainian family on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.***