



## **SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE**

Many parishes have been asking *Caritas Plymouth* and *CAFOD Plymouth* what we can do to help the people of Ukraine. Caritas Plymouth's mission is to focus on our local community and we are working closely with our sister and Caritas agency CAFOD, (the official humanitarian international development agency for the Catholic Church in England and Wales). The situation is changing very rapidly but we would like to offer some initial suggestions about how our community can help.

### **Prayer**

Bishop Mark has urged everyone to pray for the people of Ukraine and others affected by this conflict and to use the [armour of prayer and fasting for Ukraine](#). CAFOD has created a [prayer for Ukraine](#).

### **Donations**

CAFOD is a member of Caritas Internationalis. They have launched a fundraising campaign and will ensure donations reach those on the ground. To make a donation to support those affected by the conflict please visit [Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal | CAFOD](#)

People's generosity in wanting to respond to the situation in Ukraine is remarkable. This generosity is best expressed through donations of money rather than goods. Caritas agencies in Poland and Slovakia already have warehouses of supplies and find it difficult to receive in kind donations, and this is also the case in Ukraine. They have all confirmed financial support is the most helpful form of donation. This enables them to focus on assessing what is needed and gives them the resources to do this most efficiently.

Caritas Plymouth is unable to provide advice about delivery of goods to Ukraine or neighbouring countries which have been donated in the UK.

### **Housing for Ukrainians in the UK**

Many people are kindly offering space in their homes for Ukrainians fleeing conflict. There is a new bespoke scheme 'Homes for Ukraine' which offers a route for those who want to come to the UK who have someone here willing to provide them with a home. Sponsors should provide accommodation for as long as they are able, but there is a minimum expectation of 6 months. The scheme will open on Friday 18 March for visa applications from Ukrainians and immediate family members who already have named people wishing to sponsor them.

If you don't have a personal contact, you can still register as a host. A matching portal has been created and is accepting registrations for refugees to be matched with potential sponsors. The link is here: <https://www.homesforukraine.org.uk/>.

Caritas Plymouth cannot offer support to individual parishioners who may wish to host. We can only provide support to Parish groups. However we will be putting up to date guidance



on our website when it is received <https://www.plymouth-diocese.org.uk/ukrainecrisis/> and hope that this is helpful. If there is any information parishes would like, please let us know.

If you are considering hosting as an individual, we would encourage you to consider carefully what you are being asked to do, and whether this is something that you can commit to. We recommend that any host ensures that they have researched the support that people may need and what is available in their area.

### **Community Sponsorship**

Caritas Plymouth is already a lead sponsor for parish groups wishing to come together to sponsor a Syrian refugee family to resettle in the UK, providing help and support for up to two years. We will be looking at opportunities to expand this work to support parish groups who may wish to welcome a Ukrainian family into their community. If a parish group is looking to sponsor a family, please get in touch with [caritas@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:caritas@prcdtr.org.uk).

If a parish wishes to use an empty property, we would ask the parish to also consider what volunteer support is available to help the family to settle in the local area. It will be very difficult for someone without friends or family to settle in a community without a network of volunteer support.

Some parishes and groups have offered to accommodate larger numbers of people requiring emergency accommodation. We are not aware of any need for emergency accommodation in Church Halls but will keep a register of all offers in case they are needed.

### **Safeguarding**

We need to bear in mind the importance of safeguarding any Ukrainians and our own volunteers and community members. We need to ensure that safeguards are in place for those hosting and for those being hosted. All parish groups welcoming people are required to undertake safeguarding and other training and volunteers will need to have DBS checks.

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