

Homes for Ukraine Housing Strategy and Sourcing Private Rented Accommodation



Date: September 2025

Introduction

This document explains the housing options available to those who arrived on the Homes for Ukraine scheme. It covers:

- the support available to hosts and guests who want to remain on the H4U sponsorship scheme
- how H4U sponsor arrangements could be turned into a formal lodger/licence agreement
- the options for moving to independent accommodation (Private Rented, Local Authority Housing Fund properties for Ukrainians (LAHF) and also social housing)
- the financial support that is available to H4U guests to support a move to independent accommodation.

Family Visa Scheme: Whilst this document is not aimed at those who arrived on the Family Visa Scheme there are sections that are relevant (including all references to how to search for private rented properties and the LAHF property scheme – as those on the Family Visa Scheme are eligible to apply for a LAHF property).

Government Changes to the Ukraine schemes

On 19th February 2024, the UK Government announced changes to the Ukrainian schemes. People who have leave to remain in the UK under one of the UK's Ukraine Schemes will be able to apply for further leave to remain under a new Ukraine Permission Extension scheme (UPE) up to 3 months before their leave to remain expires, to remain in the UK for up to an additional 18 months.

The Ukraine Family Scheme closed to new applicants on 19 February 2024. This means that new applications to come to the UK can only be made under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. All applications under the Family Scheme that were received before the closure of the scheme should be decided under the previous rules for that scheme.

The Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme will continue to function, but new applicants will be granted 18 months leave to remain (rather than 3 years leave to remain).

Amended criteria for sponsors under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme mean that, unless there is a successful challenge, for applications submitted after 3pm on 19 February 2024, **sponsors must have British or Irish citizenship, settled status or indefinite leave to remain in the UK.** See Guest eligibility, application process and checks: Homes for Ukraine – GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-visa-under-the-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme#overview>

On the 5th September this year, it was announced that individuals on the Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme will be able to apply for a second extension of two additional years. It has not clear yet as to what the process will be to apply for this additional visa extension.

Housing Strategy for Ukrainians arriving on the Homes for Ukraine scheme

1. As accommodation is in short supply, we encourage Ukrainian guests to stay with their sponsor/host if possible. The Resettlement Team are available to support sponsors/hosts and guests.
2. If it is not possible to stay on, please be aware a rematch to another host is very unlikely as we have so few sponsors available now.
3. Guests are therefore encouraged to look for another host themselves using the government approved providers <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-a-sponsor-using-recognised-providers-homes-for-ukraine>, or by using their own local contacts.
4. If it is not possible to find a new host, they should look for independent accommodation (e.g. private rented accommodation, a LAHF property for Ukrainians or social housing).
5. If no accommodation can be found and the household becomes homeless, you may be offered emergency accommodation via the Housing Options Team (please note this could be out of the Bath and NE Somerset area).

Key points

1. Bath and NE Somerset Council is paying £500 per month to hosts who are accommodating guests who are within their **first year** in the UK. After the guest has been in the UK for 12 months, the host payment reduces to £350 per month. This is more generous than the government payment, which only pays £350 per month regardless of how long the guest has been in the UK.
2. Host payments can now be paid for the duration of a guest's leave to remain in the UK under the H4U scheme and the UPE scheme. It is not clear at this point if a host payment will be payable for hosting
3. The Government also says hosts 'may ask guests to pay a reasonable and proportionate contribution (according to use) for water, gas and electricity consumed or supplied to the accommodation or to any shared facilities' (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/homes-for-ukraine-sponsor-guidance>).
4. There is the opportunity to convert the host arrangement into a lodger agreement. The Resettlement Team can offer a template contract if required. If hosts have more than one person staying with them, they could receive a higher amount than the host payment.
5. To continue to receive host payments when the guest's original Leave to Remain ends, hosts have to confirm their guest has **applied** for UPE, and also **reclaim** the host payment by emailing H4U@bathnes.gov.uk. BANES can continue to pay host payments for 6 months with just a record that the UPE application has been made but after 6 months, H4U need confirmation that UPE has actually been **granted** or host payments cannot continue.
6. When a guest has been in the UK for over 12 months, the host payment reduces to £350. The host payment is also £350 per month if a guest is on a Ukraine Permission Extension visa.
7. Once any adult in a household living in their own accommodation is on a UPE visa, the 50% discount for Council Tax will cease i.e. to receive the 50% Council Tax

discount **every adult** in the house has to still be an original H4U visa. If there is only one adult in the house over 18 years old on UPE however, the 25% single person discount can be claimed.

8. Demand for accommodation is high so housing is expensive in Bath and NE Somerset
9. There are long waits for social housing (waits are likely to be many years rather than months)
10. There is very high demand for private rented accommodation as Bath has 2 universities. Demand is particularly high in Bath
11. We offer guests on the Homes for Ukraine scheme financial support to rent a tenancy for the first 12 months. This is set out on page 4 and includes the landlord incentives (including the Empty Property Offer on page 7) for renting to Homes for Ukraine scheme households. **Note: The monthly top up funding is only available for the first 12 months of the tenancy and if a property is affordable.**
12. **In exceptional circumstances**, financial support may also be available if a household has to secure a second private rented tenancy as they have been served notice to quit from their first.
13. Bath and NE Somerset council have purchased 20 properties for Ukrainians to privately rent. These are Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) properties. They are currently all tenanted, but guests can still register so if a property does become available to relet, they will receive the details and can express an interest to be considered for it (**please note however, only 1 property has become re-available to rent in the last 2 years**). An application form can be obtained by emailing LAHF@bathnes.gov.uk. Ukrainian eligible schemes are Ukraine Extension Scheme, Homes for Ukraine and the Family Visa Scheme.

What to do if you have to leave your host accommodation:

1. Email H4U@bathnes.gov.uk as soon as possible, letting us know the date you have to leave
2. Register for the LAHF Ukrainian property scheme if you have not already done so – (see Appendix 1) email LAHF@bathnes.gov.uk for the application form
3. Make an appointment with the Housing Options Team by calling 01225 396296 or emailing HousingOptionsAdviceTeam@bathnes.gov.uk
4. Arrange to go to a Private Rented advice session (see page 5 of this document)
5. Register for social housing by visiting the Homesearch web page www.homesearchbathnes.org.uk but remember that there are already 1000s on the waiting list.

**Financial assistance with private rented accommodation (top up for 12 months only) –
Post 01/04/24**

Bedroom Need	Local Housing Allowance (pcm) Bath and NE Somerset	Golden Hello/Top Up (pcm paid as a lump sum)	Total
Shared accommodation rate (for single adult under the age of 35)	£540	£100	£640
1 Bedroom	£815	£150	£965
2 Bedroom	£980	£250	£1,230
3 Bedroom	£1,200	£300	£1,500
4 Bedroom	£1,945	£300	£2,245

Please note Keynsham is in the Bristol area so the local housing allowances are those shown on page 7.

If it is not possible to stay with your host/sponsor

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the Housing element of Universal Credit that can be claimed to help with accommodation costs (column 1).

The amount is determined by the bedroom need of a household. To find out what you are eligible for, you can use: <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/BedRoomCalculator.aspx>

If you are working, you may not be entitled to the full LHA but you can use the Entitled to calculator to find out what you are entitled to: <https://www.entitledto.co.uk/>

The Resettlement Team can also pay an additional top up to the LHA **based on your bedroom need**. This is payable to households irrespective of whether they are working or not (column 2).

If you are not working, you should only look for properties advertised at the total of the LHA plus the additional top up (column 3).

If you are working, the Resettlement Team will need to see your income and expenditure before offering the top up so we know the tenancy is affordable and sustainable for you. This is the same if you want to rent a property that is larger than your actual household bedroom need.

Please note, if the Resettlement Team decide the property is unaffordable to you at the time of trying to secure a tenancy, you are unlikely to receive the 12 month top up and payment of the rent in advance. This is because the team can only provide financial assistance to those who can confidently manage their rent and living expenses.

Please also note that if you have been out of the BANES area for more than 6 months when you are trying to secure a tenancy, the same financial assistance may not be available to you.

The LHA and the Resettlement Team top up are separate financial payments and are not related to each other.

If a household arrived on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, they are eligible for a 50% Council Tax discount if all other adult members of the household also have Homes for Ukraine visas. Once one person in the household is on an UPE visa, the discount will cease. However, if they are the **only** adult aged over 18 in the household they will be able to claim the 25% single person discount.

Those on low incomes who need help paying their Council Tax can also claim <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-council-tax-support>.

Help to find/access private rented accommodation

1. You must search for accommodation yourselves
2. Some landlords will take pets, others won't. You may be asked to take out contents insurance for any damage a pet could cause to the property.
3. Private rented sessions for advice are on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Tuesday: 9.30 to 12.00 by appointment ONLY in the Housing, Welfare and Support office in Manvers Street, Bath, BA1 1JQ. To book an appointment call 01225 394013 or email Anne.Fitzpatrick@bathnes.gov.uk

Thursdays Drop in 9.30 to 12.00 and 1.30 to 4.00 in Keynsham library.

4. Bath Welcomes Refugees may be able to help with the search **if your sponsor/host** is not able to. Please email the Resettlement team in the first instance and we can make a referral for you H4U@bathnes.gov.uk
5. The Resettlement Team will pay rent in advance (usually 4 weeks) **and** pay the top up rent in a lump sum at the start of the tenancy if the property rent is above the LHA (subject to affordability and suitability)
6. The Resettlement Team cannot act as guarantors to secure a property
7. You can apply for a Homefinder interest free loan for the deposit if do not have your own funds
8. You should register for the LAHF property scheme and apply for any suitable LAHF properties (LAHF@bathnes.gov.uk)

Increase the chances of securing private rented accommodation by:

1. Showing landlords and letting agents the letter from Resettlement Team stating what will be paid by the scheme (see copy on page 13 of this document)
2. Showing the letter from Resettlement Team about Ukraine Permission Extension scheme (see copy on page 14 of this document)
3. Working/being in employment
4. Providing a reference from sponsor/host
5. Providing a reference from employer
6. Arranging a guarantor (an individual who legally promises to cover a tenant's rent and other responsibilities if the tenant fails to do so)

7. Being flexible and realistic with accommodation choices – including the location and type of accommodation you will consider

Support with furnishings

1. The Resettlement Team may be able to provide a move in grant for up to £500. You will need to make an application, which will be means tested. Pay slips and bank statements will be requested. Contact details: H4U@bathnes.gov.uk in the first instance.
2. Bath Welcomes Refugees has a small supply of furniture – please contact: H4U@bathnes.gov.uk in the first instance and we can refer you.
3. The Genesis Trust has a furniture store: <https://genesistrust.org.uk/>
4. The Keynsham Reuse shop, World's End Lane BS31 1TW, can be used to purchase items at very low prices but **collection and storage until move in day must be organised by the household themselves.** <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/keynsham-reuse-shop>

Looking for accommodation out of the Bath and NE Somerset area (N.B Keynsham is in Bristol)

It is possible to look out of area and rent can be less expensive, but the Local Housing Allowance may also be less. Use <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/> or the table below to see other Local Authority rates but note the H4U top up rent will be paid at the rate shown above.

Bedroom need	Bristol (including Keynsham)	Mendip	Gloucester	West Wiltshire
Shared accommodation rate (for single adult under the age of 35)	£511.33	£405.00	£406.33	£450.00
1 bedroom	£900.00	£600.00	£550.00	£595.00
2 bedrooms	£1095.00	£775.00	£725.00	£725.00
3 bedrooms	£1300.00	£975.00	£850.00	£900.00
4 bedrooms	£1850.00	£1350.00	£1200.00	£1200.00

Other schemes

We are aware there are other Local Authorities offering different schemes, but our focus is on preventing guests becoming homeless.

Can you offer accommodation to Ukrainian guests?

We are always looking for more long term (minimum 6 months) and short term hosts that are willing to host for a short period only in emergency situations for Ukrainian guests who are already here in Bath and NE Somerset.

Hosts are paid £350 per month (if they pass the necessary DBS and accommodation checks). Ukrainian guests can become a host to other Ukrainians who are already here in the UK. To be eligible to host, you need to be over 18, without a criminal record and able to offer accommodation for a minimum of 6 months. Permission from the host's landlord will be needed, and the accommodation must have sufficient space.

We are also looking for rental accommodation – so if you are a landlord and wish to rent your property to a Ukrainian or other refugee, please contact us.

We have different financial incentive schemes for landlords – including a 'top up' lump sum paid at the start of the tenancy. Also, if your property has been empty for some time, you may be eligible for an Empty Property grant and additional H4U grant to bring it up to the required standard.

Empty property offer

Empty Property H4U Landlord Leasing Scheme offers further funding to incentivise landlords to house Ukrainian refugees. Owners of empty properties, as defined by the Empty Residential Property Policy, will be offered access to the leasing scheme by the Empty Property Officer.

Between £500-£1000 (depending upon property size) can be awarded as a grant alongside the £500 Empty Property Small Works Grant. The H4U element of the combined grant is dependent on the property being let to a Ukrainian family for a minimum of 12 months.

All offers of hosting and rental accommodation should be made to H4U@bathnes.gov.uk

Finding a Home in the Private Rented Sector

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Social Housing in Bath and North East Somerset is in very short supply and there is an extremely high demand for the limited number of housing association properties that become available. If you are no longer able to stay with your current sponsor/host, finding accommodation independently in the private rented sector may be your best or only available housing option.

The first private rented option for Ukrainian guests, is the **Local Authority Housing Fund** scheme. The council has purchased 20 properties to let to Ukrainians, at rents that are more affordable than the market rent. You must register, and then you can bid on any suitable properties that are advertised. Email LAHF@bathnes.gov.uk

Where to Find Properties

- Rent Direct from a Landlord
- Social media and online local forums
- www.openrent.co.uk
- Newspapers and local noticeboards
- Word of mouth (friends and family)
- Letting Agents
- www.rightmove.co.uk
- www.zoopla.co.uk
- www.spareroom.co.uk

It is ***essential to register and also check sites daily*** if possible, as new adverts are constantly being added and properties get snapped up quickly.

Housing Discrimination

A 'No DSS' policy is when an agent or landlord refuses to rent to people who receive Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Disability Benefits or Tax Credits. This includes:

- Refusing a viewing for an affordable property
- Advertising properties with 'No DSS' or 'No Benefits'

Mortgage and Insurance Restrictions

Some landlords have a mortgage or insurance policy which does not allow them to rent to people who receive benefits.

Renting with Pets

Many landlords won't allow pets because of the associated risks. Top tips for renting with pets are available on the DogsTrust scheme: www.letswithpets.org.uk

Found a Property – What Next?

It's important to prepare for referencing. Calculate your Income: work out your total income, including employment and benefit entitlement on www.entitledto.co.uk

A guarantor may be asked for but the Homes for Ukraine Landlord or Letting Agent letter (included in this pack) may be good enough to secure a property. If a guarantor is required they usually need to be a UK resident and employed, and they sign a contract agreeing to pay the rent if you can't, or to cover damage to a property.

Holding Deposit: Some landlords or agents ask for a deposit while they carry pre-tenancy checks. The deposit cannot be more than 1 week's rent for the property you apply for.

Securing a Place

When looking for private accommodation, it is often first-come first-served, so contact landlords as soon as you see the vacancy.

Viewing a property, even a cheap bedsit, is similar to an interview for both parties, the better impression you can give to the landlord the more likely you are to be offered the property.

If your relationship with your sponsor/host is good, ask them for a reference to show how well you have treated their property. The Resettlement Team can also provide a letter (included in this pack) which outlines the financial support you are able to get from the Council.

Proof of Identity: an agent or landlord is legally required to view and photocopy a valid ID, such as a Ukrainian passport or Biometric Residency Permit. A share code may also be required to prove the right to rent and an agent or landlord can also do an online check. Information about the Right to Rent Check is available on the government's website.

Deposit

Security Deposit: Maximum 5 weeks rent, or 6 weeks for annual rents more than £50,000.

It is important that you know how you will raise this before you meet a landlord. You can apply for a Homefinder interest free loan to borrow the deposit. Contact the Resettlement Team by emailing H4U@bathnes.gov.uk for the application form.

The Resettlement Team will also need to see the income and expenditure form to be satisfied the property is affordable and the tenancy sustainable before agreeing to pay the top up.

Paying Your Rent: Housing Benefit/Universal Credit

If you are on benefits, or a low income, you may be eligible for housing benefit/Universal Credit to help you pay your rent. Housing benefit/Universal Credit is worked out using the "Local Housing Allowance" based on your household, the area the property is in, the income and savings the tenant has.

If you are under 35 and single you will probably only be entitled to a limited amount of housing benefit. This is called the single room rent allowance and the maximum is £540 per month.

If you are over 35 and sharing you may be entitled to the 1 bedroom rate if you're claiming housing costs under Universal Credit.

Visit this link to apply for Universal Credit [www.gov.uk/apply-universal credit](https://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit)

If you are over 70, you will need to make a claim for Housing Benefit
<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-housing-benefit>

Financial assistance with private rented accommodation (top up guaranteed for 12 months only)

Bedroom Need	Local Housing Allowance (pcm)* Bath and NE Somerset (excluding Keynsham)	Golden Hello/Top Up (pcm paid as a lump sum)	Total
Shared accommodation rate (for single adult under the age of 35)	£540	£100	£640
1 Bedroom	£815.00	£150	£965.00
2 Bedroom	£980	£250	£1,230
3 Bedroom	£1,200	£300	£1,500
4 Bedroom	£1,945	£300	£2,245

The Resettlement Team will also pay rent in advance (usually 4 weeks), the agency fees **and** the top up rent in a lump sum at the start of the tenancy. A supporting letter to landlords can be found after the useful contacts and website details below.

The Local Housing Allowance rates are different in areas outside of Bath and NE Somerset and the rates are shown in the table below.

Bedroom need	Bristol (and including Keynsham)	Mendip	Gloucester	West Wiltshire
Shared accommodation rate (for single adult under the age of 35)	£511.33	£405.00	£406.33	£450.00
1 bedroom	£900.00	£600.00	£550.00	£595.00
2 bedrooms	£1095.00	£775.00	£725.00	£725.00
3 bedrooms	£1300.00	£975.00	£850.00	£900.00
4 bedrooms	£1850.00	£1350.00	£1200.00	£1200.00

Useful contact and website details

- **Homes for Ukraine email:** H4U@bathnes.gov.uk
- **Housing Advice Team email:** HousingOptions_AdviceTeam@bathnes.gov.uk
- **Housing Advice Team telephone number:** 01225 396296
- **Local Authority Housing Fund properties** LAHF@bathnes.gov.uk
- **Welfare Support Team:** Welfare_Support@BATHNES.GOV.UK Telephone number: 01225 477277
- **Bath and North East Somerset Council:**

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/local-housing-allowance-lha>

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-housing-benefit>

- **Bath Welcomes Refugees**

<https://www.bathwelcomesrefugees.org.uk/>

Dear Landlord/Letting Agent

We are writing to you from the B&NES 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. We have welcomed many Ukrainian families to our area who have found sanctuary here after fleeing the war.

When the initial sponsorship period ends, families may need to find rental accommodation. One of our Ukrainian families is very interested in renting a property from you.

The council recognises the challenges of securing private rented accommodation for our Ukrainian guests so is offering a number of financial incentives to landlords:

1. Depending upon the property size, location and condition, we can offer landlords a 'top up' of rent, which can range from £100 - £300 above the Local Housing Allowance depending upon property size. For example, a 2 bedroom property in Bath, the LHA rate is £980 – so we could offer £250 that would top this up to approximately £1,230 per month. This top up is paid in advance in a lump sum direct to the landlord at the start of the tenancy
2. We gift our Ukrainian families the amount for the rent in advance (usually 4 weeks), and also arrange for a loan of the deposit so the big costs at the outset are taken care of. This is also paid direct to the landlord.
3. We help our Ukrainian guests to furnish their accommodation if needed.
4. We support our Ukrainian guests to make sure they are set up well to manage their new tenancy – with direct debits, etc arranged, and ongoing support available. We also check the tenancy is affordable and sustainable for them.

As well as these financial incentives, the landlord would also know that they had personally helped a Ukrainian family at this time of need. We know that this is a really important factor for many of us, who have watched the appalling war unfolding and wondered 'what can I do to help?'

I hope that you are able to consider this if you are the landlord, or pass this onto the landlord. We are also available to discuss any elements of this if need be. Please email us at H4U@bathnes.gov.uk

With best wishes,



September 2025

Dear Landlord/Letting Agent,

We are writing to you about the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme. We have welcomed many Ukrainian families to our area who have found sanctuary here after fleeing the war.

On 18 February 2024, the UK government announced the launch of the Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme.

This means a Ukrainian national, or the family member of a Ukrainian national, living in the UK with existing permission to stay in the UK on one of the Ukraine schemes, are eligible to apply for an extension to continue living in the UK for a further 18 months.

The full details of this scheme can be found on the government website at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-to-the-ukraine-permission-extension-scheme>.

Unfortunately, Ukrainians are only able to apply for their 18 month visa extension 28 days before their current visa expires. Therefore, it may appear that they do not have the right to rent a property for 12 months or extend their current tenancy after their current visa expires.

However, Under Section 3c of the Immigration Act 1971, anyone who applies on time for an extension of their visa or leave to remain in the UK **retains their legal status when their current visa expires**. This means their legal status, as well as their rights to work, rent, access benefits, and so forth under the Ukraine Schemes, will continue while their applications for the UPE is processed <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-to-the-ukraine-permission-extension-scheme#after-you-have-applied>

We hope that you will be able to take the information above into account when assessing right to rent of prospective Ukrainian tenants.

With best wishes,



Louise Murphy
Louise Murphy
Resettlement Manager, B&NES Council