

Homes for Ukraine Scheme Update and Proposed Use of Funding

Following the launch of the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) scheme by the government in March 2022, upper tier councils have been in receipt of a tariff fund for individual arrivals in their area of responsibility. Funding was provided as a one-off payment at the level of £10,500 per guest, falling to £5,900 for all new arrivals from 1 January 2023. For eligible minors the tariff continues at £10,500.

This funding is to support Ukrainian guests and their hosts. Oxfordshire residents have been exceptionally welcoming, with Oxfordshire's per-resident population hosting levels been amongst the highest in the country.

The overall grant funding received to date, which is based on the number of new Ukrainian arrivals on the HfU programme in Oxfordshire is £25.8m. The original tariff allocation was intended to cover two years but as the invasion continued it has been extended to support Ukrainians for up to 3 years from arrival, with the most recent arrivals funded to stay in Oxfordshire until July 2028.

The partnership supports a range of migrant groups and not just Ukrainians. The HfU grant is the main grant fund that is managed by the County Council. The other funding streams are paid direct to the District/ City councils.

Response in Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire's councils, supported by statutory services including Thames Valley Police, OxLEP and the NHS, organised a Homes for Ukraine response through the Oxfordshire Migration Partnership. Over the past year, the partnership has moved from an initial focus on basic welfare and safeguarding, to managing the transition of guests into sustainable accommodation through support for employment, skills and access to accommodation.

Working through the Migration Partnership, Oxfordshire councils - represented by their chief executives - agreed an outline allocation of tariff funding early in the scheme. The funding was apportioned based on the costs incurred by each council and for specific cross-cutting programmes led by either the county council or by one of the city and district councils, on behalf of all partners.

Formal grant agreements for the funding were allocated to the city and district councils, which was apportioned in outline before the volume of Ukrainian guests in Oxfordshire was known – the number of guests drives the tariff funding received.

The level of the funding and the number of guests in the county, meant that the conclusion of the grant agreements was a key decision. Initial allocations were agreed by [Cabinet in July 2023](#) with further allocation to be agreed by the County Council's Executive Director for Finance and Resources, in consultation with district and city Section 151 officers.

Changes since 2024

Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme: Ukrainians have an opportunity to stay a further 18 months (after their 3-year visa expires). Ukrainians have been applying for the new Ukraine Permission Extension Visas (UPE) since early February 2025 and will continue to do so for 3 years after that. Therefore, it is important that move-on funding is available over this period.

New projects: In November 2024 members of the Oxfordshire Migration Partnership members were invited apply for funding to support Ukrainians. In total 9 projects were approved for funding for 2025-26 and in principle agreement was given was to fund them for a further year to end March 2027. The total funding allocated, across two years for projects is £1,797,940.

Updated spend and allocations

Table 1 below gives a summary of the current funding position for the Homes for Ukraine budget which shows £24.6 million has been proposed for allocation to 31 March 2027 from the total grant funding of £25.8m. £1.2m grant funding remains unallocated. It is proposed that the remaining budget is allocated to 31 March 2028 to cover staffing and projects supporting successful integration.

Table 1: Homes or Ukraine budget summary – July 2025

Total funding	£25.8m
Total allocated – 31 March 2027	£24.6m (£13.4m spent as of July 2025)
Total allocated – 31 March 2028	£25.8m

Table 2 provides further detail of spend to date against the key programmes and staffing. This shows the level of funding allocated by July which includes the proposed funding to 31 March 2027 and the indicative to 31 March 2028.

Table 2: Summary of spend to data and total allocations up to July 2025 – this funding funds staff up to March 2028

Programme element - allocations	Allocation July 2023 £m	Allocation July 2024 £m	Allocation July 2025 £m
Guest payments, DBS etc.	0.6	0.6	0.6
Wraparound support	0.4	0.6	1.09
Community Liaison Officers	0.3	0.7	0.9
Rematching resources (lead authority: Oxford City Council)	0.2	0.5	0.6

Programme element - allocations	Allocation July 2023 £m	Allocation July 2024 £m	Allocation July 2025 £m
Funding allocated to County, City and Districts	5.8	8.9	10.8
Top-up payments for hosts	1.6	1.8	1.8
Bus passes	1.0	1.0	1.0
Move-on PRS, including Housing Capacity Team (lead authority: South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils)	6.0	4.9	5.0
Employment and Skills programme (lead authority: Oxfordshire County Council)	1.2	1.6	1.9
Football Inclusion Officer (Lead authority: Cherwell)		0.035	0.035
Community Grants (Lead authority: Cherwell)		0.050	0.050
Aspire Employment Project (Lead authority: OCC)		0.013	0.013
Impact Assessment (Lead authority: OCC)		0.020	0.020
Move On contingency (reallocated)		1.6	
Projects 2025-2026			0.43
Projects 2026-2027			0.43
Total allocated funding to March 2027	17.1	22.3	24.7
Total tariff funding	21	23.1	25.8
Unallocated funding to March 2027	3.9	0.8	1.1

Guest Payments, DBS checks etc.

£525,800 spend July 2025 – no increase in allocation.

£200 paid to Ukrainian guests when they arrive at host accommodation in Oxfordshire. This is a one-off 'welcome' payment managed by Oxfordshire County Council. The figure also includes DBS checks on hosts.

Wraparound support for Ukrainian guests

£624,319 spend July 2025 – allocation increased to £0.86.

Support provided through a contract with a community/ voluntary sector provider to provide a range of interventions, activities and events to support Ukrainians living in Oxfordshire, as well as helping new arrivals settle in and find their bearings. The support included help to access to suitable accommodation, finding employment, supporting volunteering and training opportunities and accessing vital support/ health/ welfare services. A new one-year contract started in March 2025 which focuses on current needs, including employment, housing and wellbeing.

Community Liaison Officers (CLOs)

£468,165 spend July 2025 - allocation increased to £0.9m (resource extended to March 2027)

These officers are linked to city and district council areas and work closely with the wraparound support provided through the contract. The officers provide support for Ukrainian hosts and guests in their localities and provide an overview of community services and support. Increasingly, the CLO role is adapting to support wider needs of those settling in the county, such as those staying in asylum dispersal accommodation.

Rematching resources

£425,758 spend July 2025 - allocation increased to £0.6m (resource extended to March 2027)

Led by a team located in Oxford City Council, this partnership work enables a county-wide approach to prevent Ukrainian guests from becoming homeless by rematching them with hosts, when necessary. The rematching team continue to rematch, largely single person, households to reduce the need for Temporary Accommodation. The team has far greater focus on offering upstream bespoke housing advice to guests not yet in need of statutory homelessness support and therefore helps to prevent homelessness. The team will be scaled down to one post in 2026/2027.

Funding allocated for Administration/ discretionary costs

£6,916,687 spend July 2025 – allocation increased to £10.83 m resource extended to March 2027)

Funding for city, district and county councils to cover the costs of administering the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Administration costs include:

- Communications
- Finance/payment provision
- Customer contact centre
- Housing support
- Social care support (adults and children)

An initial payment of £500,000 was made to each district / city area with additional funding being paid according to costs and need from the unallocated funded, this was intended to cover the first two years of the scheme. Any funding remaining in the city and district's allocation has been carried over for them to continue to support staffing and administration costs in 2025/2026. Further allocations will support staffing across the system until March 2027, with an indicative allocation set for 2027/2028.

Top up for host payments

£1,1170,700 spend by July 2025 – no increase in allocation

Host payments have been £350 per month (down from £550 p/m) since April 2025. These payments are made by the government.

Bus passes for Ukrainian guests

£798,810 spend July 2025 – no additional allocation.

A 12-week free bus pass scheme was introduced for Ukrainians guests, to help them travel in Oxfordshire during their first few months in the UK. The initial scheme (introduced in June 2022) was extended by another 12 weeks, so all guests could apply for free bus passes for a period of up to 24 weeks.

Move on Private Rental Sector (PRS)

£1,954,057 spend July 2025 – allocation increased to £5.02m

The Housing Capacity Team cross-county team works to ensure the smooth transition of Ukrainian guests from their hosts into independent accommodation. Led by a team allocated in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils, this partnership work encompasses a range of activities covering:

- Staffing support
- Moving on private rental support
- Moving on guest support
- Moving on Homes for Multiple Occupancy (HMO) license application support.

Move On funding was allocated to the city and districts in the early stages of the scheme to support Ukrainian guests moving into private rental accommodation. Whilst current spend is modest from this overall allocation, the risks related to rising homelessness across all cohort groups remain. It is essential to have budget available to reduce the risk of homelessness and support Ukrainians to move into settled accommodation and prevent the use of temporary accommodation. The Migration Partnership will consider proposals to reallocate some of this funding to support wider integration activity in 2026/27.

Employment and skills programme

Spend £761,000 July 2025 (allocation increased to of £1.9m to March 2027)

Stable employment is critical for Ukrainian guests to be able to access sustainable accommodation and minimise homelessness. The programme includes training and conversion courses, courses for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and provision for 16-19 year olds. There is significant demand for ESOL amongst refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, with waiting lists reported across all local colleges. This provision is vital to support English language attainment.

District and City Council grant agreements

The additional funding allocation is set out in the Table 1 above with further funding as required by each council within the overall Homes for Ukraine envelope agreed by the Director of Finance in consultation with city and district councils s151 officers.

Initial spending was agreed in outline by Chief Executives in compliance with the funding scheme requirement to passport funding from upper tier to lower tier authorities in two tier areas, as set out above and therefore significant elements of this funding has been provided in retrospect.

Draw down of additional funding is managed via issuing of a letter that acts as an additional schedule to the existing grant agreement.

Quarterly finance reports are presented to the Oxfordshire Migration Partnership and Oxfordshire Treasurers Association to maintain oversight of the HfU funding.