

Annex – C

Homes for Ukraine funding: to report updated spending and additional allocations

Following the launch of the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) scheme by the UK 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 to date (based on the number of arrivals) for the HfU programme in Oxfordshire is £23.1m. The original tariff allocation was intended to cover two years, but as the war in the Ukraine continued, the Oxfordshire Migration Partnership committed more funding to the end of March 2025 - this was approved by Cabinet in March 2024.

This paper sets out the funding allocations as of July 2024 – including the proposed allocations for 2025/6 and 2026/7. Cabinet is requested to approve the allocations for 2025/26 and note the indicative allocations for 2026/7.

This funding allocation is primarily to ensure sufficient staffing remains in place to deliver against the delivery plan that drives forward the work of the partnership.

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 allocations to March 2025 noted in the [March 2024 BMMR report to Cabinet](#). Further allocations will be agreed by the County Council's Executive Director for Finance and Resources, in consultation with district and city Section 151 officers.

Updated spend and allocations

Table 1 below gives a summary of the current funding position for the Homes for Ukraine budget which shows £22.3 million has been proposed for allocation to 31 March 2027 from the total budget of £23.1m, leaving £0.8m of the unallocated funding remaining.

The total funding required for the additional allocations over the next two years is £3.6m: £1.9m for 2025/6 and £1.7m for 2026/7.

To fund this, the unallocated budget of £2.8m has been boosted to £4.3m by reallocating £1.5m on Move On contingency funding to it. The proposals would leave £0.8m of unallocated funding remaining.

Table 1: Homes or Ukraine budget summary – July 2024

Total budget	£23.1m
<i>Total allocated - 31 March 2025</i>	£20.3m
<i>Unallocated budget - 31 March 2025</i>	£2.8m
<i>Reallocation of Move On Contingency to unallocated budget</i>	<i>£1.5m</i>
<i>Total unallocated budget</i>	£4.3m
Total allocated – 31 March 2027	£22.3m (£10.5m spent as of July 2024)
Remaining unallocated budget	£0.8m

Table 2 below provides further detail of allocations to date against the key programme elements – it includes the funding allocation proposed for 2025/6, and the indicative funding for 2026/7.

Table 2: Summary of allocations to date and spend (see details below)

Programme element - allocations	Allocation July 2023 £m	Allocation Jan 2024 £m	Proposed allocation – as of July 2024 £m
Guest payments, DBS etc.	0.6	0.6	0.6
Wraparound support	0.4	0.6	0.6
Community Liaison Officers	0.3	0.5	0.7

Rematching resources (lead authority: Oxford City Council)	0.2	0.4	0.5
Funding allocated to County, City and Districts	5.8	7.4	8.9
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	6.2	4.9
Employment and Skills programme (lead authority: Oxfordshire County Council)	1.2	1.6	1.6
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
Total allocated funding	16.9	20.2	22.3
Unallocated funding	4.1	2.8	0.8
Total tariff funding	21.0	23.0	23.1

Guest Payments, DBS checks etc.

£561,576 spend July 2024 – 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

£425,495 spend July 2024 – no increase in allocation

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 2024 which focuses on signposting to existing services, as well as providing additional health and wellbeing and trauma support.

Community Liaison Officers (CLOs)

£468,165 spend July 2024 - allocation increased to £0.7m (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

£291,537 spend July 2024 - allocation increased to £0.6m (resource extended to March 2026)

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.

In the last year the team contacted hosts about long term hosting intentions and support needs of their guests. In the coming months the team will work with the Rehousing cell to build on this work and reach out to all hosts who are currently due to have 'Thank you' payments end next financial year.

It is anticipated that the rematching will not be needed beyond March 2026 therefore funding for this team has been allocated to March 2026 only. The situation regarding demand for this service will be closely monitored.

Funding allocated for Administration/ discretionary costs

£5,961,763 spend July 2024 – allocation increased to £0.9m 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 2024/2025. Further allocations will support staffing across the system until March 2026, with an indicative allocation set for 2026/2027.

Top up for host payments

£1,498,850 spend by July 2024 – no increase in allocation

On-going, additional payment made to hosts as a 'top up' over and above Government agreed payments. Each sponsor (host) in Oxfordshire receives £550 per month.

Government 'standard' payments are £350 a month during the first 12 months of guest's stay, increasing to £500 once the guest has been in the UK for 12 months, for a duration of a further 24 months.

System partners have agreed that the locally funded host payment top-ups will continue at least until March 2025 with eligibility in-line with the national scheme.

Bus passes for Ukrainian guests

£769,835 spend July 2024 – 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. The free bus pass scheme has ended, with individual requests being considered on a case-by-case basis.

Move on Private Rental Sector (PRS)

£816,532 spend July 2024 – total allocation is £4.9m (no additional allocation)

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.

Whilst current spend is very low there are significant risks related to rising homelessness across all cohort groups and therefore it is essential to have the budget available to reduce the risk of homelessness and support Ukrainians to move into settled accommodation and prevent the use of temporary accommodation.

In June 2024 the Migration Leads agreed to allocate the funding held as Move On contingency (£1.8 m) to the total unallocated pot of funding. This would enable staffing costs in the county, city and districts to be supported by the grant until March 2027 whilst providing a £0.8 m remaining unallocated budget. This funding will be used to for further programmes that support the integration of new arrivals in Oxfordshire.

Move on: Guest Support (£0.5 m allocation- no additional allocation)

In June 2024 the Migration Leads agreed that this funding should be distributed to the city and districts as per Table 3 below. It is expected that this funding will be utilised to help guests still to be housed in private rented accommodation. It will be distributed via the grant agreements in place and spend will be monitored each quarter with any surplus clawed back.

Table 3: Distribution of Move on Guest Support funding

	No. of guests still to be housed	£500 per group
Cherwell	154	£ 77,000
Oxford City	156	£ 78,000
South Oxfordshire	214	£ 107,000
Vale of White Horse	169	£ 84,500
West Oxfordshire	148	£ 74,000
Total	841	£ 420,500

Employment and skills programme (*allocation of £1.6m to March 2026*)

Stable employment is critical for Ukrainian guests to be able to access sustainable accommodation and minimise homelessness. The programme includes employment support, training and conversion courses, courses for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and work based ESOL (WBESOL).

The spend reported in the last update to Cabinet at £464,800 was incorrect, this was the committed spend for the current financial year. The actual spend to date currently is £191,000, showing a significant underspend. Delays with the procurement of contracts have slowed delivery. Significant progress has been made in recent months in terms of the recruitment of ESOL tutors, securing employment support provision and identifying a provider to deliver the ESOL learning app. It is expected that there will be a large increase in spend to the end of the financial year, with underspend being moved into 2025/2026 delivery. There is significant demand for ESOL amongst refugees, migrants and asylum seekers. It is therefore likely that provision could be scaled up as we build up a better local evidence base to understand the demand for these services.

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 Executive's 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.

Additional funding was secured for 2024-25 via the city and district councils' wider asylum resettlement funds to finance the adaptation of HfU services to support other refugees and asylum seekers in the county, as requested by chief executives. For 2024-25, it was agreed that 20% (£13,326.67 from each district) of the staff costs for the central system support teams - the Programme Management Team based in the County Council, and the Housing Capacity Team based at South & Vale District Councils – will be financed using this resettlement funding. The future of this funding is currently being confirmed by government.