



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

**Felicity Buchan MP**

*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State*  
**Department for Levelling Up, Housing  
and Communities**

2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Clare Adamson MSP  
Convener, Constitution, Europe, External Affairs  
and Culture Committee

*By email only*

9 May 2023

Dear Clare,

Thank you for your letter of 27 February detailing the concerns raised during the Committee's recent evidence sessions.

I am grateful for the valuable support that the Scottish Government, local councils and sponsors throughout Scotland continue to provide to our Ukrainian guests. Over 118,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine scheme so far, with almost 24,000 being welcomed in Scotland, which would not have been possible without their support.

**Funding for Local Authorities**

I appreciate the Committee's concerns regarding the Year 1 funding for Local Authorities. Owing to wider pressures on the public finances, the Government made the tough decision to reduce the Local Authority tariff to £5,900 per person. In determining the reduction, we accounted for the fact that many of the start-up costs for Local Authorities administering the scheme will have already been incurred and that we now know that a proportion of guests have returned to Ukraine during their first year. Additionally, some Ukrainian guests are moving into their own accommodation and out of sponsorship during the first year, which should reduce the costs incurred by Local Authorities.

Our funding decisions will ensure that we are able to protect this important route to safety for Ukrainian people into its second year, in a sustainable way.

The £150m funding for Local Authorities recently announced will help support Ukrainian guests move into their own homes and reduce the risk of homelessness. Local Authorities are best placed to understand the support needed in their local communities. We are working to provide clarity on the allocation of this fund as soon as possible.

On the education tariff specifically, the Department for Education has agreed that any funding not spent by the Scottish Government in 2022-23 can be carried over to the 2023-24 financial year.

Funding for education in subsequent years will continue to be provided to the Scottish Government in the normal way.

## **Thank-you payment for hosts**

As you note, all sponsors will receive an increased ‘thank you’ payment of £500 a month for guests who have been in the UK for over a year. The ‘thank you’ payments were initially going to end after the first year of a guest’s arrival in the UK, so Local Authorities should already be tracking guests reaching the 12-month mark to avoid over-paying.

‘Thank you’ payments will also be extended from 12 months to two years, so that guests who may not yet be ready to move into independent accommodation can stay in sponsorship for longer, provided their sponsor is willing to extend arrangements.

This should provide certainty to sponsors if they wish to continue sponsoring and is also in recognition of their ongoing support amidst rising cost-of-living pressures.

Since the scheme’s launch, the Government has committed to provide £1.1 billion to Local Authorities through a tariff for each arrival in their area to be spent on support to guests and sponsors. Some Local Authorities are using this funding to uprate ‘thank you’ payments and this is a measure we support.

It is of course open to the Scottish Government and Local Authorities in Scotland to provide additional support to sponsors and guests, and to up rate ‘thank you’ payments.

## **Other issues**

### Employment

I recognise the importance of supporting Ukrainians into employment, as it enables them to become self-sufficient and independent in the UK. Jobcentres should be providing access to a work coach to help them identify suitable employment, alongside training through the Sector-Based Workplace Academy Programme including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training, as well as support through Plan for Jobs. I have asked my officials to raise the points you have highlighted with the Department for Work and Pensions.

We are also working across government to identify new ways to help Ukrainians access employment and continue to review and develop plans to support guests to access economic opportunities, informed by engagement with other Government departments, the Devolved Governments, Local Authorities, Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, sponsors, and guests. This includes engaging employers through round table discussions, particularly where there are sectors with skills gaps.

The UK National Information Centre (<https://www.enic.org.uk/>) is responsible for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills and can help make sure that certificates attained in Ukraine are converted to a UK equivalent.

The UK Government is also engaging with the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications (<https://cpq.ecctis.com/>) to clarify and promote the process for working in a professionally regulated role in the UK. This will help Ukrainians to keep up employment in their chosen professions or industries and make the most of the opportunities their skills and knowledge offer whilst they are living in the UK.

### Car registration

I am aware of the concerns around Ukrainian guests’ ability to use their vehicles in the UK including the requirement to re-register their vehicles after six months. The requirement to register vehicles applies to Ukrainian vehicles as for other foreign vehicles. However, in recognition of the unique nature of Ukrainians’ stay in the UK, the Department of Transport

has made provision with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and the Vehicle Certification Agency to allow some flexible modifications to be made to vehicles in certain circumstances where an IVA is required for registration, such as beam deflector stickers.

Given the temporary nature of residence in the UK, Ukrainians should keep all necessary paperwork and original licence plates when registering their vehicle. In consultation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, we understand that Ukrainian vehicles that have the correct paperwork and relevant number plates will be able to be immediately used in Ukraine on return to the country.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Felicity Buchan".

**Felicity Buchan MP**  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State to the  
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities