

Highland Council's Current Position:

Homes for Ukraine

- The Council receive daily updates on from SG which they share with the Environmental Health Team who carry out property checks and the Revenue & Customer Service Team who process the enhanced disclosures for hosts.
- To date, Highland Council has been informed of 85 properties across Highland registered under the HFU scheme who have matched with 240 guests approximately. Many guests are still waiting for their visas to be issued and this can prove challenging for them and their hosts.
- Most property checks have been carried out to date by Environmental Health Officers. Other projects have been put on hold so priority can be given to these inspections. Property checks have been satisfactory and meet the 'tolerable standard' with some recommendations for smoke alarms/heat alarms to be fitted.
- Disclosure checks have started to be carried out for hosts and all residents living in a property over the age of 16.
- The administration of the £200 one-off payment to guests is underway and the £350 optional 'thank you' monthly payment to hosts has been set-up through the Council website.

Scottish Super Sponsorship scheme

- The total Expressions of Interest received from SG of hosts offering their properties under this scheme is very high across all areas of Highland.
- The property and disclosure checks have commenced, and extra staffing is being put in place to support this work.
- The number of people matching out with the SSS scheme is increasing daily and the lack of from SG on how this is proving very challenging.
- The lack of funding instructions from SG prevents the Council from planning ahead for this resettlement scheme.

Contingency hotel in Aviemore

- Highland Council agreed to support a contingency hotel in Aviemore for Displaced Ukrainian People (UDPs) arriving to Scotland and the first arrivals were welcomed on 8th June 2022.
- 50 rooms were offered at the hotel and the majority of these have now been filled. Arrivals are advised daily through the Welcome Hubs in Edinburgh and communication re UDPs due to hotels can be very last minute, putting pressure on Highland Council staff as well as the staff in the hotel.
- Most arrivals are keen to work and Highland Council staff have been busy supporting them to apply for bank accounts and get access to UK sim cards. Some do not have their biometric cards (BRPs) and arranging appointments can be challenging. Lack of guidance from Scottish Government is slowing down this process.
- We are working with NHS and the third sector to support UDPs while they are in the hotels and ensure all their needs are met.