



Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Hertfordshire

Referral Pathways and Key Information Booklet for Professionals and Volunteers

V5: Issued April 2025

This document has been updated in April 2025, after this time, it will no longer be maintained. For up to date information, please visit our website:

[Asylum seekers and refugees | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Updates for version 5 include:

- Information about the transition to eVisas
- Updated information regarding NRPF
- Updated information regarding employability project
- Updated local services directory (some new services and amended details)
- Updated information for the support of Hong Kong BN(O)s



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SECTION ONE: REFERRAL PATHWAYS

Hertfordshire County Council's Work

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) administers Hertfordshire's Homes for Ukraine scheme, coordinates partnership working and liaises with Central Government departments and Clearsprings Ready Homes on behalf of the wider partnership, and funds and supports Voluntary, Community, Faith, and Social Enterprise sector (VCSFE) partners.

Contacting HCC

Queries about supporting refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, in accommodation and in the community - asylumsupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk. Queries about the Homes for Ukraine scheme - h4ukraine@hertfordshire.gov.uk

The [Ukraine support in Hertfordshire | Hertfordshire County Council](#) website has a significant amount of useful information for guests, hosts, professionals and volunteers, including a range of guidance sheets. Whilst these were written for the Ukrainian cohort, some of the information may also be useful when working with other groups.

Funding Requests

HCC will consider funding VCFSE organisations for projects that will achieve some or all of the following aims:

- Empower residents, building self-sufficiency, resilience, and confidence to live independent and fulfilling lives.
- Support and encourage integration into local and wider communities.
- Prepare families for transition away from current living arrangements such as moving on from a host sponsor or a hotel.
- Support mental health and wellbeing.

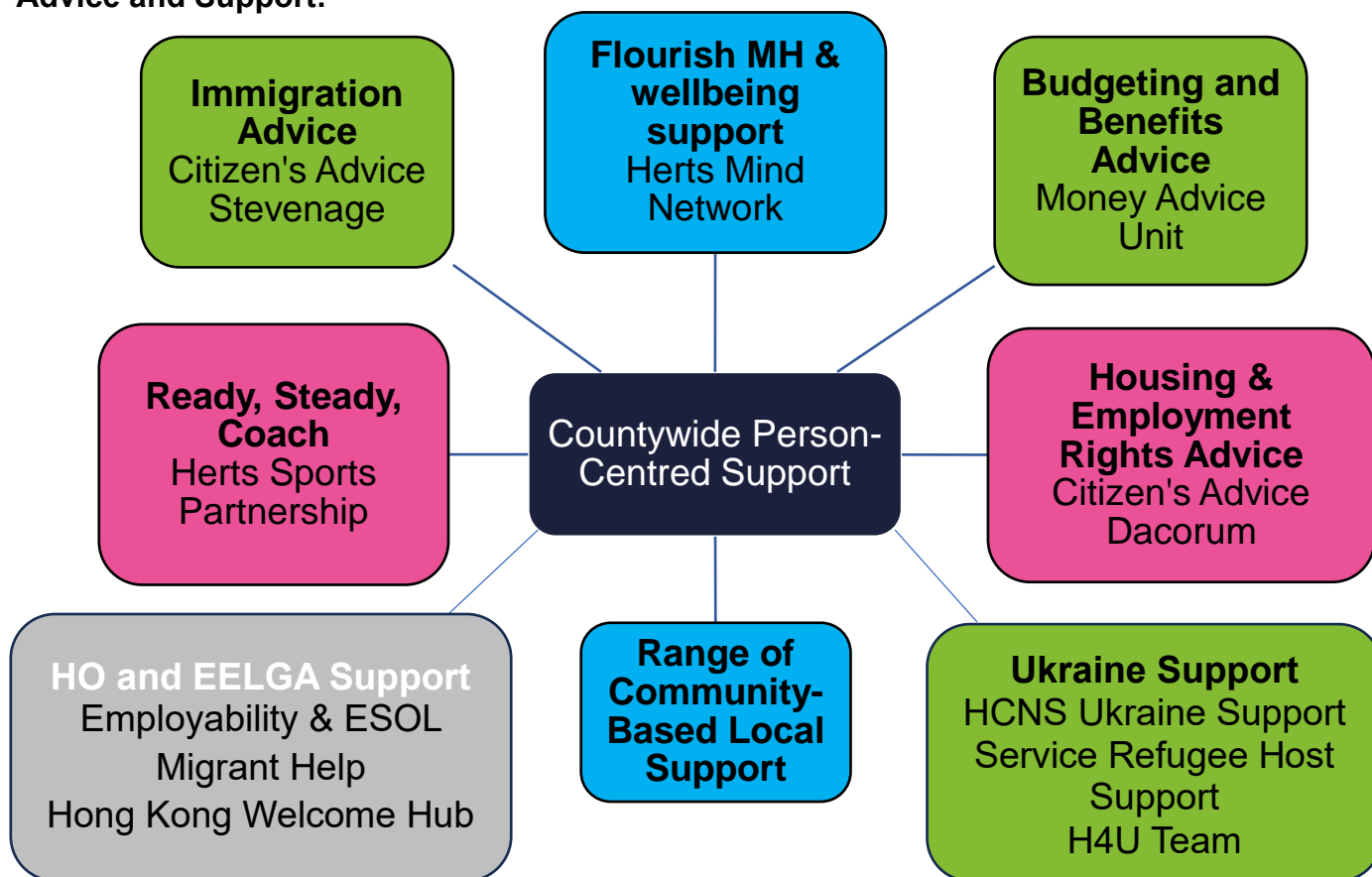
Please email Zarrine.Dye@hertfordshire.gov.uk for a small grant proposal form, to discuss a potential project, or to be added to the circulation list to receive regular updates.

Districts and Boroughs

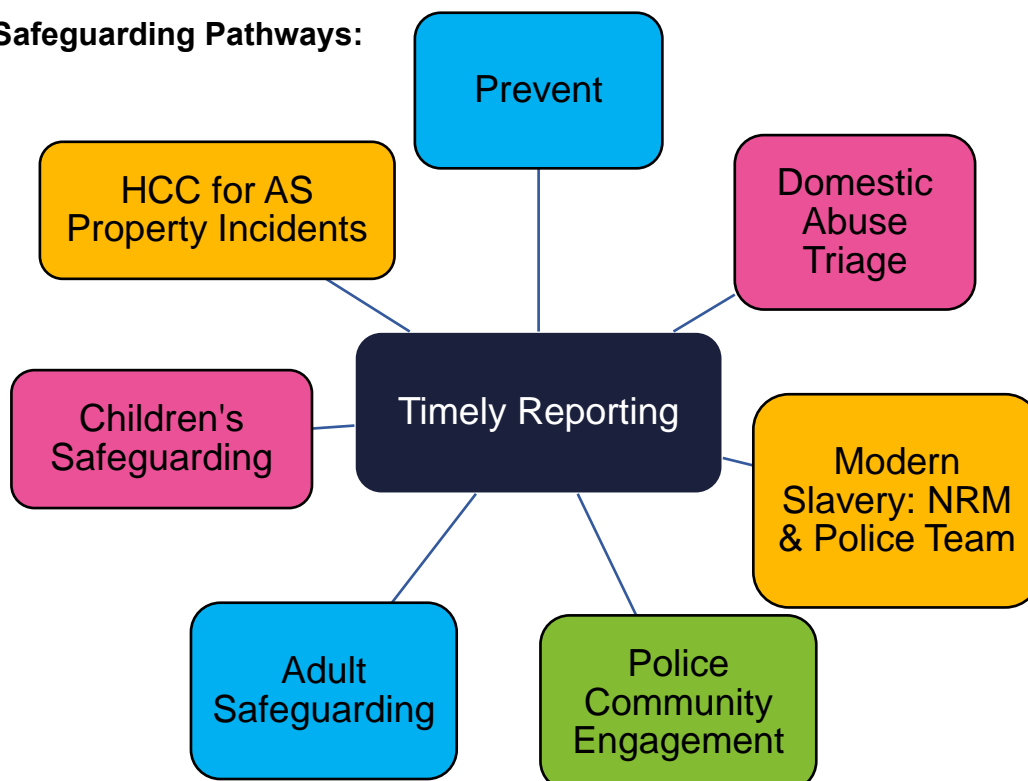
HCC works closely with all ten Districts and Boroughs. Each local Council has their own approach to coordinating and/or commissioning local support services. It may be worth checking with your local District to find out more about their approach – visit [District and borough councils | Hertfordshire County Council](#), see [Districts and Boroughs](#) section below, or contact us if you would like to be put in touch.

Overview – Hertfordshire’s Key Referral Pathways

Advice and Support:



Safety and Safeguarding Pathways:



Key Referral Routes for all Refugees & Asylum Seekers

Service & Referral Details	Support Available	
Mental Health & Wellbeing		
<p><u>Flourish</u></p> <p>Herts Mind Network 0203 727 3600. Groups info and referral form on Flourish website, email flourish@hertsmindnetwork.org</p>	<p>Mental health and wellbeing community support service. There is also a direct referral route into Hertfordshire's Mental Health Trust (HPFT) for cases that require higher level or clinical support.</p>	
Housing & Employment Rights		
<p><u>Housing and Employment Rights Advice for Refugees</u></p> <p>Citizens Advice Dacorum Asylum & Refugee Advice Service - (hertscitizensadvice.org.uk)</p>	<p>Confidential, independent information helpline providing holistic advice and support, particularly in relation to housing and employment rights.</p> <p>Please note, this is a rights advice service, it will not find accommodation for someone.</p>	
Money & Benefits Advice		
<p><u>Benefits and Budgeting for Refugees and Asylum Seekers</u></p> <p>Money Advice Unit mauadmin@hertfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01438 843456</p>	<p>Advice and information on issues related to benefits and budgeting. Individual support, (in person, digitally or by phone) in making benefits claims, such as Universal Credit, or getting further help from Rent Deposit Schemes (e.g., HCC Ukraine RDS).</p>	
Immigration & Integration Advice		
<p><u>Immigration Advice Service</u></p> <p>Citizens Advice Stevenage immigration@castevenage.org.uk</p>	<p>An immigration advice service for refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.</p>	
Physical Activities		
<p><u>Ready, Steady, Coach</u></p> <p>Herts Sports Partnership a.varran2@herts.ac.uk</p>	<p>Opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to obtain sports coaching qualifications.</p> <p>This project will also deliver physical activities in the asylum seeker hotels.</p>	

Additional Support in Place for Homes for Ukraine Guests and Hosts

Support Available	Referral Partner
Holistic support with moving on from host sponsors	
<p>Primary referral route for Ukrainian guests and H4U hosts.</p> <p>Holistic, practical support by Ukrainian speakers for hosting arrangements and to assist the move to independent accommodation, supported onward referrals for expert advice when required.</p>	<p><u>HCNS Ukraine Support Service</u></p> <p>Email hcnsukraine@herts.help</p>
HCC Homes for Ukraine	
<p>Information and advice for guests and hosts. Administration of the Hertfordshire Homes for Ukraine scheme, including hosts thank you payments. Funding and support for voluntary sector partners.</p>	<p><u>HCC's Homes for Ukraine team</u></p> <p>Ukraine support in Hertfordshire Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Email: h4ukraine@hertfordshire.gov.uk</p>
Webinar for hosts	
<p>This webinar recording from May 2024 is for any Hertfordshire H4U hosts and focusses on practical advice for new hosts, migration & trauma, building your guests autonomy and support available.</p>	<p><u>Advice and tips webinar recording</u></p> <p>Making the Most of Your Hosting Experience Homes for Ukraine 20240521 (youtube.com)</p>
Support for hosts	
<p>24/7 access to counsellors / psychologists. Face to face, online and virtual counselling. Expert advice lines covering issues such as housing, financial, health. A comprehensive wellbeing portal.</p>	<p><u>Refugee Host Support</u></p> <p>https://www.refugeehostsupport.co.uk/</p> <p>HCC will pay for membership, please email h4ukraine@hertfordshire.gov.uk for more information.</p>

Displaced International Recruits

There are a number of so-called 'Displaced International Recruits' (DIRs) in Hertfordshire. These are individuals who came into the UK on a visa relating to a job with a sponsoring employer in the care sector whose employers have subsequently had their licences revoked. As a result, the individual is now out of work and without a legitimate visa. Central Government has provided some funding to try to support these people with next steps including trying to find a new job with a suitable employer-sponsor.

In Hertfordshire a service has been commissioned specifically to support these DIRs. If you know someone who may be a DIR they should be signposted here in the first instance [Displaced International Workers - Essex, Southend, Thurrock, Hertfordshire & Suffolk Support | Provider Hub | Essex](#). From there they will need to complete an online form which will result in an onward referral to our provider in Hertfordshire. If you are unsure of next steps, please email AsylumSupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk and we will do our best to assist.

Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas) ('HKBNOs')

There are estimated to be at least 4,000 HKBNOs living in Hertfordshire with around 1,100 children in Hertfordshire schools. HKBNOs have No Recourse to Public Funds (see [NRPF](#) section of this booklet), although an application can be made for recourse where there is risk of destitution.

The East of England Hong Kong Welcome Hub has been created by the Strategic Migration Partnerships to support Hongkongers settling in the region as part of the Hong Kong Welcome Programme funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. For more information see: <https://www.facebook.com/EoEHKHub> or [HK Hub - EELGA SMP](#)

Immigration Advice for HKBNOs

The East of England Strategic Migration Partnership [Home - EELGA SMP](#) has commissioned Citizens Advice St Albans to provide immigration advice for any HKBNOs living anywhere in Hertfordshire.

To make a referral - [East of England Hong Kong Welcome Hub Immigration Advice Referral Form](#) [東英格蘭香港移民歡迎中心移民諮詢轉介表格](#)

For more information - [HK Hub - EELGA SMP](#)

Employment Advice

Access to an employment adviser for Hertfordshire HKBNOs living **East Herts only**.

Contact: jan@essexintegration.org 01206 861180 or 07783 124620

English Language advice and support

[Learning English - EELGA SMP](#)

Support for HKBNOs at risk of destitution

Advice on how to access financial support for HKBNOs at imminent risk of destitution:
hkbno@eelga.gov.uk

Wellbeing and other support for HKBNOs

Helpline for **Hong Kong BN(O) status holders** [Boloh Helpline](#) | [Barnardo's Helplines](#)

Safety and Safeguarding - Referrals and Advice

<p>Call emergency services on 999 if you or a person you are referring is in immediate danger or if a crime is being committed. If there is no immediate risk but a police response is required, call 101 as soon as possible, or if health advice is required, call 111.</p>	
<p>Children's Services Safeguarding</p>	<p>For any family involving a child, referral from professionals is via www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/childrens-social-care/child-protection/report-child-protection-concern.aspx</p> <p>The phone number is for out of hours child protection emergencies and members of the public (including children) only - 0300 123 4043.</p>
<p>Domestic Abuse Referral</p>	<p>Herts Beacon Domestic Abuse Outreach Triage 0300 002 0008.</p> <p>Open to professionals and self-referrals, Beacon will assess the risk before referring on to the most appropriate service.</p> <p>Outside of office hours call Safer Places on 03301 025811.</p>
<p>Adult Safeguarding</p>	<p>Adult safeguarding is for adults who have care and support needs, unable to self-protect and at risk.</p> <p>Call 0300 123 4042 or www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/adult-social-services/report-a-concern-about-an-adult/professionals-request-social-care/professionals-make-an-social-care-referral.aspx</p>
<p>Police Engagement Officers</p>	<p>The police are interested in building relations to increase trust and confidence, and encourage reporting of individual concerns, crime, community tensions and hate crime/ incidents. The Engagement Officers will assist partner agencies and interact with the community giving advice. They will act as a point of contact for the Constabulary and will direct you to relevant departments when needed. You can contact Dani and Emma on communityengagement@herts.police.uk.</p>
<p>Potential Modern Slavery or Exploitation</p>	<p>https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start or 08000 121 700</p> <p>What is Modern Slavery The Salvation Army - If you suspect someone is a victim of modern slavery and in need of help call 0800 808 3733 (24/7, confidential)</p> <p>Reporting a fraud - www.actionfraud.police.uk or www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/business/consumer-advice/safs.aspx</p>
<p>Prevent</p>	<p>Concerns about someone susceptible to radicalisation, extremism, supporting terrorism www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/prevent prevent@hertfordshire.gov.uk</p>
<p>Reporting Incidents and Intelligence</p>	<p>The police are interested in building intelligence about issues. If your organisation has an information sharing agreement, please report intelligence via your agreed pathway. Otherwise, you can report information online via: Report Hertfordshire Constabulary (herts.police.uk) or 101/Crimestoppers.</p> <p>If you have a concern about a situation in one of the asylum contingency hotels or properties, then AFTER reporting to the correct safeguarding route (if appropriate), then please email asylumsupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk so that the team is able to liaise with relevant partners.</p>

Government Funded Partners and Countywide Services

Organisation	Type of support	Contact details
Clearsprings Ready Homes	<p>Home Office commissioned provider of asylum accommodation in Hertfordshire.</p> <p>Clearsprings has a manager for each site and for dispersed accommodation and liaises with Home Office about move-on decisions and notices to vacate.</p> <p>Clearsprings subcontracts to various other companies at some sites.</p>	engagement@ready-homes.com
Migrant Help	<p>Home Office commissioned provider of independent advice and guidance to assist asylum seekers in the UK to move through and understand the asylum process. Support is also provided in the 56 days following a positive asylum decision. Also provide support with the transition to eVisas</p>	<p>https://www.migranthelpuk.org/contact 0808 8010 503</p> <p>eVisa Transition – support for vulnerable people evisa@migranthelpuk.org 07483 170100</p>

Supporting People with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

In general, people who are seeking asylum, or who are otherwise undocumented with no legal status will have no recourse to public funds ('NRPF'). This means they are not eligible to receive benefits, they have restricted access to healthcare and are not eligible for housing support from the District or Borough local authority. They also might not be eligible for other specialist support if services or organisations have specified criteria that relates to immigration status.

[NRPF Network](#) provides a range of useful information and resources with further information.

Checking immigration status – NRPF Connect

Hertfordshire County Council has access to NRPF Connect, a database on which it can view a person's immigration status. If you are working with someone whose immigration status is unclear and finding out their status would help, HCC may be able to clarify whether or not the person has recourse to public funds. This is subject to appropriate consent being obtained.

Contact jo.taylor2@hertfordshire.gov.uk or zarrine.dye@hertfordshire.gov.uk

HCC advice for professionals and volunteers supporting people with NRPF

The Hertfordshire County Council Strategic Partnerships Team can provide advice to help professionals and volunteers who are supporting those with NRPF. Email:

strategic.partnership@hertfordshire.gov.uk to discuss cases you are working with that have precarious immigration status, where guidance and peer support is required and for advice on whether someone would be eligible for Social Care support as well as guidance on signposting to other support options.

Local authority duties

Local authorities and public services retain their [usual statutory duties](#) towards those with NRPF status, for example in relation to education, safeguarding the welfare of children, young people leaving care and vulnerable adults.

Hertfordshire is a 2-tier local authority, but guidance often references 'Local Authority duties' as applicable to a unity authority. In Hertfordshire the ten Districts & Boroughs hold statutory responsibility for housing duties whilst Hertfordshire County Council holds statutory responsibility for education, public health plus children's and adults safeguarding duties. The Home Office retains [Human Rights duties](#).

Supporting People at Risk of Homelessness

Local District and Borough Councils (contact details [below](#)) have a statutory duty to support people at risk of homelessness. It is important to contact the relevant Council for details of their processes, which do vary. The primary contact for some will be specialist officers working to support refugees and asylum seekers, for others it will be the housing department.

If someone under 18 is at risk of homelessness, consider if a referral to Children's Services is appropriate using the Continuum of Need: [Professionals – report a concern about a child or young person | Hertfordshire County Council](#).

If an adult is at risk of homelessness, the query should be directed to the relevant District or Borough Council. They will determine whether someone has a '[priority need](#)' and is [eligible](#) for emergency housing support.

If they determine someone does not meet 'priority need' or is not eligible, they have a duty to ensure advice and information about homelessness and its prevention is available. There are a limited number of voluntary sector organisations who may be able to assist. Cover varies by area and throughout the year:

- [StreetLink - Connecting people sleeping rough to local services \(thestreetlink.org.uk\)](#)
- [Homeless Charity Hertfordshire | hyh](#)
- [helpinghertshomeless.org.uk](#)

In certain circumstances, such as extreme weather conditions, the local Council may be able to provide temporary accommodation for those who would not normally be considered priority need. This is known as the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP).

If the person or family is in Hertfordshire under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, then please also inform the [Homes for Ukraine](#) team, who may be able to provide rematching support. Government guidance for Districts and Boroughs duties can be found here: [Statutory homelessness duties: Homes for Ukraine - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

People wishing to offer refugees at risk of homelessness space in their home should contact a relevant service that supports this process to ensure that the correct checks are conducted to keep everyone safe. There are also useful resources on the [NACCOM - The No Accommodation Network](#) website.

- If you are interested in hosting someone from Ukraine in the UK on a Homes for Ukraine visa, please contact the H4Ukraine@hertfordshire.gov.uk team who can rematch people at risk of homelessness with new hosts.
- Other organisations supporting the matching between hosts and guests include <https://www.roomforrefugees.com/> and <https://refugeesathome.org/>.

District and Borough Contact Details

Local Authority	Housing team	Out of Hours housing contacts	Local organisations
Broxbourne	Call 01992 785570 8.30am - 5.30pm Monday to Friday You have been asked to leave by your landlord – Borough of Broxbourne Council	01992 785528	
Dacorum	Contact - Homeless or at risk Email homelessnessprevention@dacorum.gov.uk or call 01442 22800	Emergency homeless line 0800 018 6050	About To Become Homeless? - DENS
East Herts	Call 01279 655261 or refer via the Housing Assistance Referral Portal	01279 655261	East Herts YMCA (aged 18-28) enquiries@easthertsymca.com Tel: 01279 838068 Holy Trinity Winter Night Shelter
Hertsmere	Call 020 8207 2277 or complete the Housing Options referral form	0345 3000 021	
North Herts	Call 01462 474000 or visit Homelessness North Herts Council (north-herts.gov.uk)	0300 777 4125	Haven First: Supporting, Sheltering, Shaping Lives Telephone: 01462 435835
St Albans	Call 01727 866100 See 1 Homeless DL folded leaflet (stalbans.gov.uk) Visit https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/homeless-or-threatened-homelessness	01727 866100	Open Door Night Shelter - St Albans (opendoorstalbans.org)

District and Borough Contact Details

Local Authority	Housing team	Out of Hours housing contacts	Local organisations
	Civic Centre, St Peter's St, St Albans AL1 3JE		
Stevenage	Contact - Homelessness and Housing Advice Call 01438 242666 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday except bank holidays	01438 314963	Haven First: Supporting, Sheltering, Shaping Lives Telephone: 01438 354884
Three Rivers	Contact - Homelessness Three Rivers District Council Call 01923 776611 8.30am - 5.30pm, Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am - 5pm on Fridays (excluding Bank Holidays)	01923 776611	New Hope 01923 801382 or out of hours on their emergency line on 0300 012 0168.
Watford	Contact - Homelessness – www.watford.gov.uk Call 01923 226400	01923 226400 Ring New Hope's 24/7 Emergency Helpline on 0300 012 0168.	New Hope UK Homeless Charity in Watford, Hertfordshire Watford One YMCA Telephone: 01923 353 600 Email: watfordhousing@oneymca.org
Welwyn-Hatfield	Call 01707 357 613 housingoptions@welhat.gov.uk	In emergency situations out of office hours contact 0800 111 4484	

Services for Children and Young People

<p>The Hertfordshire Directory has an activity section for children and young people: Activities for children and families Hertfordshire Directory</p> <p>More information at: Children's social care Hertfordshire County Council</p>		
Families First	<p>Families First is available to all Hertfordshire families with children under 18 (25 if they have a learning need or disability). Families First is the term used in Hertfordshire for services that work together to support families who need extra help. These are also known as early help services.</p>	<p>Families First (hertfordshire.gov.uk)</p>
Family Centre Service	<p>Support children, young people, their parents, families, and carers in Hubs across the county and in the community. Please ensure you are registered with a GP to access all activities.</p>	<p>Family Centre Service (hertsfamilycentres.org) 0300 123 7572 Mon-Fri 8am – 6pm</p>
Hertfordshire County Council School Admissions and Transport Team	<p>Coordinates placing children aged 5-16 in schools and organising transport where relevant.</p> <p><u>Officer for refugee and asylum seeker queries can be contacted directly, these residents should not go via the usual website route.</u></p>	<p>Hertfordshire County Council School Admissions & Transport Aileen.Clee@hertfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 01992 588366</p>
Hertfordshire County Council Services for Young People	<p>Youth work projects and programmes, information, advice, guidance, work-related learning, outdoor education, and other services to young people in Hertfordshire. For those aged 11-19 (or up to 25 for people with special educational needs or care leavers). There are also drop-in services.</p>	<p>Services for Young People Tel: 0300 123 7538 Make a referral to SfYP (including professionals and self-referrals)</p>
Herts For Learning Education	<p>A guide for school staff supporting refugees and asylum seekers can be found on The Grid.</p>	<p>https://thegrid.org.uk/wellbeing/equality-and-diversity/children-from-refugee-backgrounds</p>

Health and Social Care Services

Government's migrant health guide: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/assessing-new-patients-from-overseas-migrant-health-guide		
At Risk of Mental State (ARMS)	ARMS (At Risk Mental State) Service: For residents aged 16-35 who are at risk of developing psychosis.	Contact us (hpft.nhs.uk) 0800 6444 101
Carers' Support	Someone who supports an adult who could not manage without them, they are a carer and could be entitled to additional support.	Carers Hertfordshire County Council
Dentistry	A person does not need to wait for problems to appear before seeing a dentist. Dental health: migrant health guide - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	Oral healthcare: model for asylum seekers and refugees - GOV.UK How to find an NHS dentist
Drugs & Alcohol	Change, Grow, Live Recovery Service for those experiencing problems with alcohol or drugs.	0800 652 3169 Email: Herts@cgl.org.uk
GP registration transfer cards	Cards available in other languages, to make it easier for residents to transfer between GP surgeries	NHS England » GP registration transfer cards
Health Visitors	Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust Public Health Nursing 0-5 Service - Health Visiting Health and wellbeing services for children aged 0-5 years and their families.	Health Visitors Service Mon to Fri 9-5pm call 0300 123 7572 or use the text messaging service via 07480 635 164
NHS Primary Care	Everyone should register and discuss existing physical health and mental health conditions with their local GP surgery.	https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/
HPFT Mental Health Services	Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust (HPFT) is the NHS provider responsible for Hertfordshire's Mental Health services.	Get help (hpft.nhs.uk) Section MH section below for more information

Midwifery Team	<p>Pregnancy, birthing, and postnatal care for up until baby is 28 days except exceptional cases. Women can choose to receive care at any maternity hospital (transport may not be available).</p> <p>For Delta hotel residents see also: Maternity Services Princess Alexandra Hospital</p>	<p>West Herts - Pregnancy referral 24-hour Triage: 01923 217343 N&E Herts: ancroutineappts.enh-tr@nhs.net, 24-hr: 01438 286168 Referral Form for Princess Alexandra only</p>
School Nursing Team	<p>School nurses work with children, young people, parents, carers and school staff at mainstream, state-funded schools and promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Tel: 0300 123 7572 School nurses in Hertfordshire (hertsfamilycentres.org)</p>
Sensory Services	<p>Specialist information and advice for those visually impaired, deaf/ hard of hearing or are deafblind/ have dual sensory loss (hearing loss/ sight loss) and their families/carers.</p> <p>Nationally, Sight Loss Charities' have provided a collective offer to blind and partially sighted. Call the helpline for a range of specialist advice.</p>	<p>Sensory services Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Refugees and asylum seekers sight loss helpline: 0303 123 9999 8am-8pm (weekdays), 9am-1pm (Sat)</p>
Sexual Health	<p>For help in relation to Sexually Transmitted Infections/Diseases, contraception, and other sexual health issues.</p>	<p>Book an appointment: 0300 008 5522 or on Sexual Health Hertfordshire, or walk-in clinics.</p>
Turning Point	<p>Practical support for people recovering from mental health issues and additional complex needs, including substance misuse, and learning disabilities.</p>	<p>01707 891120 Hertfordshire Complex Needs Service Turning Point (turning-point.co.uk)</p>

Referral Routes for Mental Health and Wellbeing

1 in 5 of us will have suicidal thoughts. HCC stands with Samaritans who want this to change. The more we develop our shared understanding of the signs of suicidal thoughts and feelings – and the skills to have timely and effective conversations with people at risk – the more we can make successful interventions that save lives.

It is not uncommon for refugees and asylum seekers to experience mental ill-health, due to their past experiences, present living circumstances, or worry about future prospects. Not everyone, but some people may be struggling with their mental wellbeing or have experienced trauma. Some people may be experiencing suicidal thoughts. It can sometimes be difficult to know how to respond or what to do. These pages provide information about how to respond, how to grow your own knowledge, and how to refer locally.

Local sources of information:

- [Get help \(hpft.nhs.uk\)](https://www.hpft.nhs.uk)
- [Leaflet - Advice and support for your mental wellbeing | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- [Mental health and wellbeing \(professional\) | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- [Mental health and wellbeing \(public\) | Hertfordshire County Council](#)
- [Mental health advice and support | Herts and West Essex ICB](#)

If help is needed for a mental health crisis:



999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency intervention • Life threatening condition
0800 6444 101 or NHS 111 opt 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent mental health needs • Feeling unsafe, distressed or worried • Hearing voices or seeing things others can't • Feeling unable to cope • Thinking about harming yourself or others
0800 6444 101 E: hpft.spa@nhs.net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needing help and guidance but it's not an emergency • Needing advice about anxiety/worries • Mood changes • Withdrawing from people • If you just want to talk

Responding to a Concern about Someone's Mental Wellbeing

	Example Presentation	Potential Response
Excelling	Cheerful, joyful, energetic High performance Realising potential	Consider the 5 ways to wellbeing (see below) and encourage activities that promote integration, connection, and wellbeing
Maintaining	Positive / calm Performing Normal social activity Eating / sleeping normally	Consider the 5 ways to wellbeing and encourage activities that promote integration, connection, and wellbeing
Surviving	Worried / nervous Irritable Sad Trouble sleeping Distracted Withdrawn	Consider early interventions and/or referral Informal conversations and open listening, but do not engage beyond your comfort levels or training. Consider the 5 ways to wellbeing and encourage activities that promote integration, connection, and wellbeing.
Struggling	Anxious Low mood Tired Poor performance Poor sleep Poor appetite	Referral to relevant support Informal conversations and open listening, but do not engage beyond your comfort levels or training. Consider the 5 ways to wellbeing and encourage activities that promote integration, connection, and wellbeing.
Mental health problems	Very anxious Depressed Very poor sleep Absenteeism Exhausted Feeling unable to cope	Referral to relevant professional service Consider if a safeguarding referral is also necessary (see Safeguarding Referrals and Advice section) Consider logging a note, e.g. with your line manager or someone else. Open listening, but do not engage beyond comfort levels or training.
In mental health crisis or safeguarding risk	Potential serious threat to themselves / others: Extremely anxious Suicidal / self-harming Not sleeping / eating Hearing voices/ seeing things others can't	Immediate referral to relevant professional service Consider if a safeguarding referral is necessary (see Safeguarding Referrals and Advice section). Consider writing a note of any incident soon after it happens. Talk to your manager to support your own wellbeing.
Emergency situation	Immediate threat to themselves or others	Call 999 emergency support Notify relevant service leads as soon as is safe. Write up your own notes as soon as possible. Talk to your manager to support your own wellbeing.

Local Referral Pathways for Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

<p>Potential Early Interventions</p>	<p>Engage with activities in the community: e.g. sports clubs, faith groups, or consider volunteering - www.govolherts.org.uk.</p> <p>Physical activities: To help find a physical activity - www.movingmore.co.uk</p> <p>Togetherall: Online, clinically moderated, peer-to-peer support community, tools and resources www.togetherall.com</p> <p>New Leaf Recovery College: Free wellbeing courses and workshops www.newleafcollege.co.uk</p> <p>Cruse Bereavement Support: www.cruse.org.uk or 0808 808 1677</p> <p>CHUMS: Hertfordshire and West Essex suicide bereavement service: 01279 212170, www.chums.uk.com/hertfordshire-suicide-bereavement-service</p>
<p>Mental Health Referral Routes</p>	<p>GP: Everyone should be registered with a local surgery. People should discuss any existing health and mental health conditions with their GP - https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/</p> <p>Flourish: A specialist local community-based mental wellbeing support for refugees and asylum seekers aged 16+ www.hertsmindnetwork.org/services-for-adults/community-support/flourish/. Email referral form to flourish@hertsmindnetwork.org or phone 020 3727 3600.</p> <p>Mind's night-time support: call 01923 256 391 or email nightlight@hertsmindnetwork.org</p> <p>HPFT (NHS) Mental Health service: https://www.hpft-talkingtherapies.nhs.uk/ Not urgent: GP referral or Single Point of Access (SPA) hpft.spa@nhs.net or 0800 6444 101. Urgent: dial 111 and select option 2 or 0800 6444 101</p> <p>Samaritans: Call 116 123, free and available 24 hrs a day, 365 days a year www.samaritans.org</p> <p>Turning Point and ARMS Service: See Health section above</p>
<p>Support for children & young people</p>	<p>Early intervention / targeted support: see CYP section above.</p> <p>16+ and transitional age: Flourish works with these groups. See details above.</p> <p>Primary school age: Refer to school. Mental Health Lead can refer to Children's Wellbeing Practitioner Service, School Nursing, or SPA.</p> <p>Under 5s: Family Centre Service (hertsfamilycentres.org) 0300 123 7572 M-F 8–6pm</p> <p>UK Trauma Council resources - Resources for professionals Childhood Trauma, War and Conflict UK Trauma Council (youtube.com)</p> <p>Barnardo's Refugee Family Helpline: 0808 156 9877 RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk</p>

Suicide Prevention Training and Resources

Free Hertfordshire Training delivered by Samaritans

If you work in Hertfordshire, or support people who live in Hertfordshire, there is free training for frontline workers and volunteers. This will:

- equip you with practical skills to have supportive, controlled and effective conversations;
- help you to assess and respond to risk; and
- give you the information to signpost to relevant support services.

If you'd like to learn more, then please visit Eventbrite [Sign up for free Suicide Prevention Training | Eventbrite](#) or email SuicidePreventionHerts@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

Useful resources

A range of opportunities can be found at the Zero Suicide Alliance, include a 20-minute self-guided online module: [Free online training from Zero Suicide Alliance](#)

Solace, a charity based in Leeds, has produced a number of videos for new arrivals which are available in English, Albanian, Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish Sorani, Pashto or Tigrinya. The videos are aimed at supporting people experiencing stress or tension as a result of their refugee/asylum journey and will be of interest to anyone supporting these residents:

[Helpful resources for refugees and people seeking safety | Solace](#)

Suicide prevention resource hub

A range of information to help you understand and prevent suicide can be found here:

[Suicide Prevention Hub - Grassroots Suicide Prevention \(prevent-suicide.org.uk\)](#)

Reporting an incident

If you are aware of a serious incident in relation to mental health, please consider emailing SuicidePreventionHerts@hertfordshire.gov.uk, as well reporting to the police via [Report | Hertfordshire Constabulary \(herts.police.uk\)](#). If the incident took place in an asylum seeker hotel, please also copy in asylumsupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk. Please note that incidents can be reported anonymously if you are worried about releasing personal or confidential information.

The 5 Ways to Wellbeing:



Domestic Abuse Concerns

Key messages for migrant women

The rights of female refugees and asylum seekers in the UK

It does not matter what your immigration status is, or what your sex is:

- Everyone has the right to be safe in the UK.
- Anyone can call the Police.
- Everyone can ask for help to be protected against abuse.

Referrals

Professionals and volunteers should use their usual referral pathways when supporting migrant women in relation to Domestic Abuse. Herts Beacon deliver a Domestic Abuse Outreach triage service [Home - Beacon](#). Open to professionals and self-referrals, Beacon will assess the risk before referring the victim to the most appropriate service. Call 0300 002 0008 or email: Beacon.DASH@oneymca.org

Migrant Women can also get help at any hospital or from the Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline 08 088 088 088, Safer Places on 03301 025811 or the Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) Service run by Refuge on 0300 790 6772.

For more information see: [Herts Sunflower](#)

For further support, professionals and volunteers supporting migrant women in Hertfordshire can also contact the Cherished project which is based at The South Hill Centre in Hemel by emailing: jude@iamcherished.co.uk

Training

We recommend anyone working with migrant women in Hertfordshire attends J9 Domestic Abuse training and become a community champion. You can email strategic.partnerships@hertfordshire.gov.uk to find out when the next online course is running and how to sign-up. These sessions are free to anyone living or working in Hertfordshire.

Alternatively, if your organisation would prefer, you can organise your own, personalised J9 training (for a fee) and a tailored session for your organisation with pertinent examples and discussion time can be put in place.

Other support

Hertfordshire County Council operates a small grants scheme and is interested in funding groups and activities for migrant women. Contact zarrine.dye@hertfordshire.gov.uk for more details.

Nationally there are a number of specialist organisations with experience of supporting minoritised women including forced migrants.

[Home - Southall Black Sisters](#)

[Karma Nirvana](#)

[Women for Refugee Women](#)

[Sexual and gender-based violence | British Red Cross](#)

Employability Opportunities

Employability support is available from the East of England Strategic Migration Partnership. All details and contact information can be found here: [Home - EELGA SMP](#) including leaflets in a variety of languages [Flyers - EELGA SMP](#). To summarise the offer:

Programme	Eligibility	How to refer
<p>Community interpreting</p>	<p>Put your language skills to use and discover how to become a community interpreter in your area. You'll give a voice to other people in your local area and help them access vital public services. You'll make a difference to other people's lives and help them when they need it the most.</p> <p>In addition, you'll open up the opportunity for paid work.</p>	<p>Become a community interpreter WEA</p>
<p>EON programme</p> <p>EON - EELGA SMP</p> <p>Comprehensive employability support from specialist advisers</p> <p>This will run until at least March 2026</p>	<p>Now only available to residents living in East Herts with the following immigration statuses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders; • former Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children now 18+ with permission to work; • Ukrainian schemes (Homes4Ukraine, Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Extension Scheme); • those here under the UK Resettlement Scheme (including Community Sponsorship Scheme, Mandate Resettlement Scheme); • Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Schemes visa holders; and • Other Resettled refugees e.g. Afghan visa scheme holders. 	<p>Referral forms - EELGA SMP</p> <p><i>*EON workers will also meet with asylum seekers who do not yet have a decision on their application to discuss future plans.</i></p>

English for Speakers of Other Languages ('ESOL')

There are a number of possible routes for accessing ESOL support or classes for refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire.

- The Refugee Council has produced a useful directory of ESOL offers across Hertfordshire: [HERTS ESOL PROVISION](#).
- Please look at the list of organisations in the [Local Referral Pathways](#) section of this booklet which include several offering a range of English language support from informal conversation groups to certified ESOL classes.
- Residents may also be eligible for free ESOL classes from [Step2Skills Hertfordshire](#). Phone 01992 556194 or email step2skills@hertfordshire.gov.uk to enquire about eligibility for any of their ESOL classes. In general asylum seekers who have been in the UK for at least six months and anyone with refugee status is eligible to attend Step2Skills classes.
- Community Action Dacorum run a number of ESOL courses in different places across the county (in-person) and virtual [Home - Community Action Dacorum](#)
- Support from the East of England Strategic Migration Partnership [East of England Employability Projects](#).

Finding Local Support Services

The following list details services and activities delivered by the Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector that are known to be currently supporting refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire.

The list starts with options that are countywide followed by local support available in each District and Borough (alphabetically).

If you are aware of updates or additions, please email: Zarrine.Dye@hertfordshire.gov.uk, Jenny.Brace@hertfordshire.gov.uk, Jo.taylor2@hertfordshire.gov.uk or Ryan.Heard3@hertfordshire.gov.uk

For a wider range of Hertfordshire community support options for adults, children and families including some excellent non-commissioned services, activities and groups please visit www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/directory. The Directory is fully up-to-date, and searches can be done by category, area, or keyword to find relevant information.

HCC requests that any organisation that is listed below ensures it is also registered on the [Hertfordshire Directory](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/directory) as it is the primary signposting resource in the county. It is a simple process to [add an organisation and service\(s\)](#), and a referral button has recently been added so that the public or professionals can quickly send a referral from the main profile page. The short form is then sent directly to your organisation by email and is easy to view, accept or decline.

Directory of Voluntary Sector Organisations Working with RAS in Hertfordshire

Organisation	Type of support	Contact details
ORGANISATIONS WORKING ACROSS THE COUNTY		
Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain	Help to set up groups to continue to embrace their heritage and culture and keep it alive, as well as looking after their wellbeing and signposting if other services as and when necessary.	<p><i>Waltham Cross Branch:</i> https://www.augb.co.uk/Waltham Cross AUGB Branch (Hertfordshire branch), Cathy Z Walthamcross@augb.co.uk</p> <p><i>Hemel Hempstead Branch:</i> (33) Hemel Hempstead AUGB Branch, Anna L, hemel.hempstead@augb.co.uk</p>
Barnardo's	<p>Refugee Family Helpline: emotional and practical support as well as advice and signposting to children, young people and their families. https://helpline.barnardos.org.uk/refugee-family-helpline</p> <p>BOLOH helpline: for emotional health and wellbeing support (with interpretation) for adult asylum seekers. https://helpline.barnardos.org.uk/boloh-helpline/asylum-seekers</p> <p>Ukraine Support Helpline: for guests and hosts Homes for Ukraine guidance for hosts. Barnardo's Ukrainian Support Helpline Barnardo's (barnardos.org.uk)</p>	<p>0808 156 9877 RefugeeFamilyHelpline@barnardos.org.uk</p> <p>0800 151 2605 Boloh.helpline@barnardos.org.uk</p> <p>0800 148 8586 ukrainiansupport@barnardos.org.uk Advice for Host Families.pdf (barnardos.org.uk)</p>
British Red Cross Refugee Support	Casework support for people seeking asylum to enable access to key services such as accommodation, statutory financial support, legal advice, etc.	<p>rsenquiriesluton@redcross.org.uk Tel: 01582 58908</p>

Organisation	Type of support	Contact details
ORGANISATIONS WORKING ACROSS THE COUNTY		
Chrysalis Centre	Support for those at risk of engaging in coercive and controlling behaviour or committing domestic abuse. <i>Clients must consent to a referral.</i>	Chrysalis Centre enquiries@chrysaliscentre.net
Citizens Advice In every District and Borough throughout the county	In addition to the specialist funded services for refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire, anyone can also use the services of the 10 Citizens Advice offices (one in each District/Borough of Hertfordshire) which offers free, confidential, and impartial advice. Particular expertise around housing and benefits issues.	For the find your local service tool: https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/ Advice Line 0800 144 8848
GoVolHerts	One-stop-hub for all volunteering queries, opportunities, and best practice advice across Hertfordshire.	Home GoVolHerts Volunteering in Hertfordshire. GoVolHerts - #TeamHerts Volunteering 01462 689409 info@govolherts.org.uk
Hospital & Community Navigation Service (HCNS)	A partnership of voluntary organisations working closely together to provide an integrated social prescribing service throughout Hertfordshire. Social prescribing connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet their health and wellbeing needs.	Home Hcns 0300 123 4044

Organisation	Type of support	Contact details
ORGANISATIONS WORKING ACROSS THE COUNTY		
Herts Sport and Physical Activity Partnership ('HSP')	HSP runs regular HAPpy Camps during school holidays. Many refugee and asylum seeker children will be eligible to attend these camps free of charge. HAPpy Camps provide a range of fun experiences, including physical activity, enrichment, a healthy meal and snacks for eligible children - those aged 4-16 (reception to year 11).	Alex Varran, Project Officer at Herts Sport & Physical Activity Partnership a.varran2@herts.ac.uk HAPpy Camps (sportinherts.org.uk)
Herts Welcomes Refugees	Level/type of support depends on location. Range of support including clothing, drop-in sessions, supporting attendance at school induction meetings and obtaining school uniform, form filling, ESOL, and language support, SIM cards, referrals to other services (e.g. mental health and baby boxes for expectant/new mothers), volunteer befriending, transport, activities during school holidays, activities for young adults, supermarket vouchers, cooking sessions.	HERTS WELCOMES REFUGEES - Home Email: enquiries@hertswelcomes.org.uk
Metro	Metro delivers STI /HIV awareness training. They run regular sexual health and wellbeing sessions for organisations such as refugee hotels and colleges where free condoms and STI test kits are distributed, and referrals to sexual health clinics made. They can also set up establishments to distribute their own STI testing kits for chlamydia and gonorrhoea and condoms for free.	Embrace difference METRO Charity Get It - condoms & sexual health testing sexualhealthhertfordshire@metrocharity.org.uk – Sign up to receive free condoms twice a month or order a dual chlamydia/ gonorrhoea test.

Organisation	Type of support	Contact details
ORGANISATIONS WORKING ACROSS THE COUNTY		
Refugee Council	Holistic support for resettled refugees across Hertfordshire (UKRS, ARAP, ACRS, VPRS, VCRS schemes). Run drop-in groups for their clients in several Hertfordshire Districts & Boroughs.	Tel: 07776590682 Email: herts@refugeecouncil.org.uk or Tomasz Glinski, Resettlement Area Manager, tomasz.glinski@refugeecouncil.org.uk https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/
SkillSum	Commissioned to provide specific support for displaced international recruits in Hertfordshire.	https://skillsum.co.uk 0208 2050067
Turn2Us	Turn2us is a national charity offering information and practical help to people facing financial insecurity. Grants may be available for refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire. Anyone can use their website to enquire about the possibility of getting a grant.	Turn2us Grants Search: Before you start

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
Mind in Mid Herts	Mental Health social support: support groups in 4 centres for people to find others with shared interests (6-8 week waiting time). Psychological Therapies: comprehensive counselling services (waiting list is 4-6 months for those non-urgent) available in Stevenage and St Albans. Free and no waiting time: Psychoeducation courses and workshop (building courage, feeling well, sleep etc.) and vocational support for people wanting to look at getting back into work following recovery or part of their mental health recovery.	North Herts; Stevenage; Welwyn Hatfield; St Albans and Hertford	Tel: 03303 208100; Email: admin@mindinmidherts.org.uk www.mindinmidherts.org.uk Referral or self-referral from website. There is a waiting list for social support groups but the workshops and courses and vocational support that are all fully funded (free) have no waiting time.
Care4Calais	Supporting asylum seekers in Broxbourne, and in dispersal accommodation.	Broxbourne	https://care4calais.org/contact-us/
Integration Support Services	Currently supporting residents in Broxbourne with a number of activities aiming to encourage community integration. Tues & Thurs mornings onsite.	Broxbourne	Integration Support - Integration Support
Alexandra Road Congregational Church	Fridays 1-3pm providing space for Herts Welcomes Refugees - second hand phones, clothes, toiletries, etc. and some English teaching as well. Help with forms. Wednesdays 2pm - 3pm, a class which is to help with English using Christian materials. First Saturday of the month, 10am - 12pm - drop-in session with coffee, cake and crafts for children.	Dacorum	https://arcchemel.org.uk/contact-us/get-in-touch/

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
Community Action Dacorum	Support health/wellbeing and integration through the delivery of community based ESOL courses and other activities that build confidence and skills and foster community cohesion. Working in a number of our asylum properties as well as with other newly arrived groups.	Dacorum	Community Action Dacorum – 01442 253935 www.communityactiondacorum.org.uk helen@communityactiondacorum.org.uk or lindan@communityactiondacorum.org.uk
Community Action Dacorum Volunteer Centre	The Volunteer Centre offers help to asylum seekers living in Hempstead House in finding volunteer work in Hemel Hempstead Town Centre.	Dacorum	01442 247209 volunteering@communityactiondacorum.org.uk
Dacorum BC Women's Group	Drop-In and activity group for refugee and asylum-seeker women living in Dacorum. Mondays 12-2pm (excluding school holidays and bank holidays). Location: Adeyfield Community Centre	Dacorum	Humanitarian.Response.Mailbox@dacorum.gov.uk

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
<p style="text-align: center;">Markyate Baptist Church</p>	<p>Hosts a weekly café in partnership with Care4Calais on a Wednesday and offers other support for asylum seekers living in the nearby asylum seeker property (not open to other groups at this time) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English and cultural UK teaching weekly, - Tuesday afternoons at The Holiday Inn • Social events, hospitality and outings, normally on a Friday • Liaison with local colleges to enrol asylum seekers in courses, speaking with Migrant help and getting to Home Office interviews • Monthly clothing distributions, subject to funding and availability of volunteers. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Dacorum</p>	<p>www.markyatebaptist.org</p> <p>Jeremy@markyatebaptist.org</p>

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
<p>South Hill Centre</p>	<p>Tuesdays and Fridays 10am-3.30pm (also online). Employability and Wellbeing hub, offer basic refreshments, practical and emotional support and generally a helping hand. Tuesday afternoon SHC International initiative, offers support to any non-UK national and engages with other organisations e.g. Herts Welcomes Refugees, Herts MIND Network, Migrant Help. Some basic ESOL classes are offered to Asylum Seekers who do not meet the criteria for mainstream courses. There is another provider who can provide mainstream ESOL classes once individuals have status or have been in the Country for more than 6 months. Provide space for some traditional events for the Ukrainian population in the local area.</p>	<p>Dacorum</p>	<p>Tel: 01442 234728 Email: enquiries@southhillcentre.co.uk</p>
<p>Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Stevenage North</p>	<p>Can support with donations needed e.g. clothes toys etc.</p>	<p>North Herts</p>	<p>Email asylumsupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk and we will put you in touch with this organisation</p>
<p>Asylum Friends</p>	<p>Legal and Home Office support guidance</p>	<p>North Herts</p>	<p>Contact – Asylum Friends</p>

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
Churches together in Hitchin	Co-ordinating collections for school uniforms and shoes, collecting other clothing and equipment, providing food and cooking facilities for families in Hitchin, providing transport for children to school where required.	North Herts	Hitchin Pantry (cthitchin.org.uk) hitchin@yourlocalpantry.co.uk
North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum	We are currently providing the following services: -English Language courses - IT courses - Health & Wellbeing activities - Advocacy Services	North Herts	NHMEF - North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum Telephone: 01462 440224 Email: admin.nhmef@outlook.com
Our Lady Immaculate and St Andrew Catholic Church	Provide free weekly membership to Hitchin Pantry for the residents and also provide a safe place for them to cook in their commercial kitchen at the Catholic Church in Hitchin	North Herts	Email asylumsupport@hertfordshire.gov.uk and we will put you in touch with this organisation
Triangle Community Garden	Community garden project based in Hitchin delivering therapeutic gardening to individuals of different groups.	North Herts	www.trianglegarden.org Email: alice@trianglegarden.org
Employment of Overseas Nationals (EON)	Now only available to residents living in East Herts with the following immigration statuses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders; • former Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children now 18+ with permission to work; • Ukrainian schemes (Homes4Ukraine, Ukraine Family Scheme, Ukraine Extension Scheme); 	East Herts	Referral forms - EELGA SMP <i>*EON workers will also meet with asylum seekers who do not yet have a decision on their application to discuss future plans.</i>

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> those here under the UK Resettlement Scheme (including Community Sponsorship Scheme, Mandate Resettlement Scheme); Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Schemes visa holders; and Other Resettled refugees e.g. Afghan visa scheme holders. 		
HAWA Multicultural Services CIC	Saheli Day Centre and HAWA Gym fitness. A very wide range of practical and emotional support for refugees and asylum seekers running several days each week. See full details on their website.	St Albans	www.hawaherts.co.uk Telephone: 07480 93 42 82 Email: hawa@hawaherts.co.uk
St Albans Cathedral asylum seeker support group	English conversation groups weekly, a discussion group on Sundays, social events and hospitality and outings, liaison with local colleges to enrol asylum seekers in courses, help with opening bank accounts and getting to Home Office interviews. The Cathedral has run clothes give aways, art workshops and enables asylum seekers to be included in many community celebrations and activities.	St Albans	Email: mail@stalbanscathedral.org Tel: 01727 890210
St Albans Community Pantry	Free lunch once a week along with signposting and support, no referral needed.	St Albans	stalbanscommunitypantry@gmail.com 08081753917 https://stalbanscommunitypantry.org/wh-at-we-do

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
St Albans Food Bank (Christ Church New Greens)	Food and broader wellbeing support. Also attends a group of asylum seeker supporters from the St Albans District who facilitate partnership worker and share information.	St Albans	Locations St Albans and District Foodbank
St Albans for Refugees (StAR)	Supply clothing and shoes, school uniforms, sport opportunities, IT equipment and toys/activities for the children.	St Albans	StAlbansforRefugees 01727 576001
St Albans United Reformed Church (Greenwood)	Conversation group at Greenwood URC, Wednesday mornings 10-12	St Albans	St Albans URC Tel: 01727 421697
St Bartholomew's RC church	Conversation class - every Thursday 10-12 in the church hall. Lead by Teresa Clarke and local volunteers Also help to provide clothes, bikes and cycle training, arrange ESOL classes at the local FE college, help to get AS voluntary jobs with Communities First, arrange football training and kit, host lunches/picnics with other faith communities in the area. Attempt to help with filling in forms and getting a lawyer.	St Albans	01727 850066 stalbanssouth@rcdow.org.uk
Communities 1st	Commissioned by St Albans City & DC to support asylum seekers in the District. Chairs regular meetings of a group of a group of refugee/asylum seeker supporters from the St	St Albans Hertsmere	Main Contact: 01727 649900 us@communities1st.org.uk

Organisation	Type of support	District or Borough	Contact details
	<p>Albans District who facilitate partnership working and share information.</p> <p>Engagement, signposting and facilitation of health and wellbeing activities for asylum seekers.</p>		
Watford & Three Rivers Refugee Partnership	Immigration guidance and wider support for migrants living in Watford and Three Rivers.	Watford and Three Rivers	https://www.wtrrp.org.uk/casework@wtrrp.org.uk
Watford Welcomes People from Ukraine	Guide to Watford and general support for Ukrainians in Watford.	Watford and Three Rivers	Watford welcomes people from Ukraine – www.watford.gov.uk
Saint Mary Magdalene CofE	Support for asylum seekers in Welwyn Garden City.	Welwyn Hatfield	07397 785032 emma@st-mary-magdalene.org.uk
Ukrainian Saturday School of Herts CIC	Weekly lessons every Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm	Welwyn Hatfield	ukr.community.hertfordshire@gmail.com

SECTION TWO: INFORMATION

Key Links to More Detailed Information

General information

- [Welcome: a guide for new refugees - GOV.UK](#)
- [Factsheets - Resource library - ASAP](#)
- [Right to Remain Toolkit – Right to Remain](#)
- [Refugee Transition Guide – Law Centre Northern Ireland](#)
- [Asylum Welcome Toolkit - London City Hall](#)
- [Rights and entitlements | NRPF \(nrpfnetwork.org.uk\)](#)

Health

- [NHS entitlements: migrant health guide - GOV.UK](#)
- [Translated Health Information for Patients - Doctors of the World](#)
- [Help for Survivors: Medico-Legal Reports - Freedom from Torture](#)
- [Refugee and Migrant Health Toolkit - World Health Organization](#)
- [Sexual Assault and Sexual Abuse Information - Migrant Help](#)
- [Check if you can get free prescriptions - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- [Social Workers Without Borders](#)
- [Asylum seeker and refugee mental health | Royal College of Psychiatrists \(rcpsych.ac.uk\)](#)
- [Guidance for Commissioners about translation services in primary care](#)
- [Multilingual Maternity Resources - 47 different languages from Afrikaans to Yoruba](#)

Legal

- [Adviser Finder \(oisc.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Asylum Support Appeals Project - ASAP](#)
- [Immigration and asylum advice | NRPF \(nrpfnetwork.org.uk\)](#)
- [Find a Legal Aid Adviser or Family Mediator](#)

Violence Against Women and Girls

- [Home - Southall Black Sisters and Karma Nirvana](#)
- [FLOWS - Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors | RCJ advice](#)

Accommodation, Finances and Work

- [Housing for refugees - Shelter England](#)
- [How to rent - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Prove your right to rent in England: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Can I afford to rent? | MoneyHelper](#)
- [Check the costs of starting to rent from a private landlord - Citizens Advice](#)
- [How To Improve Your Credit Score, Tips & Advice | Experian](#)
- [Banking Guide for Refugees - Refugee Council](#)
- [Permission to work and volunteering for asylum seekers - GOV.UK](#)
- [Claiming Universal Credit and other benefits if you are a refugee - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Supporting refugees into employment - Refugee Council](#)

Refugee & Asylum Seeker Rights

How a person has entered the UK and their legal status will affect what formal entitlements and support they can access (Rights and entitlements). It can therefore be important to understand what visa or route the person has entered the UK with and their legal status.

Someone with the legal right to remain in the UK has already been granted asylum and has full recourse to public funds (with exceptions).

The following are the current visa routes into the UK for forcibly displaced people:

- [Homes for Ukraine](#)
- [Ukrainian Friends and Family](#)
- [Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme](#)
- [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy \(ARAP\)](#) (formally holds refugee status)
- [Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme \(ACRS\)](#) (formally holds refugee status)
- [British Hong Kong National Overseas Visa scheme](#) (please note, HK BN(O)s are NRPF as their visa eligibility criteria ensured that they should be self-funding)
- [The UK Resettlement Scheme \(UKRS\)](#) (formally holds refugee status)
- Any other refugee who has been granted leave to remain by the Home Office in the form of asylum, humanitarian protection, and any other alternative forms of leave and resettlement (e.g. successful asylum application).

An asylum seeker is someone who has applied for asylum and is awaiting a decision. There are many asylum seekers now living in Hertfordshire, either in Home Office supported accommodation under Section 95 or 98, or elsewhere with the HO meeting accommodation, food and hygiene human rights. Asylum seekers have NRPF status, although they do have additional rights to healthcare (see below).

An undocumented migrant is someone who has neither been granted asylum, nor is awaiting an asylum decision and does not have a legal right to remain in the UK and they are NRPF. Whilst many undocumented migrants may feel reluctant to approach services, many will benefit from support, particularly to keep them safe. The reason why someone might be an undocumented migrant may be out of their control. Reasons for being undocumented include:

- Refused asylum seekers
- Survivor of trafficking
- Came to UK as a child with undocumented parents
- Spousal visa has broken down (e.g. fleeing domestic abuse)
- No work visa in place
- Expired visa (e.g. employer did not renew domestic worker visa)
- Lack of legal immigration advice and difficulty accessing the asylum claims system

Rights to Healthcare

For full details check: [NHS entitlements: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide)

Those with full recourse to public funds have the same access to healthcare as any other resident.

Those with active application or appeal are fully entitled to free NHS care. As with someone with full recourse, this includes primary, secondary and emergency care; free prescriptions, dental care and eye tests.

Those who have been rejected from the system, or are otherwise in the UK illegally are NRPF and are only entitled to free secondary health care when:

- They receive Section 4(2) support from the Home Office, Section 21 support from a local authority or support under Part 1 of the Care Act 2014.
- A course of treatment was already underway before their application was refused.
- Treatment is needed immediately or urgently.
- Maternity care will always be provided (even when charges apply).
- They need accident or emergency services, diagnosis for infectious diseases (even if negative result) or treatment of infectious diseases.
- They are victims of certain types of violence (including sexual violence).

Healthcare Triage Recommendations

Recommendations from the [Royal College of Psychiatrists](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk) for triaging:

- Initial health screenings should incorporate physical, mental and social concerns, and should be performed as soon as possible.
- Understand early the need for referral into specialist mental health services – especially where people have ‘multiple, disabling, persistent or severe symptoms’.
- Screenings should also be a space where disclosures around trafficking, modern slavery, sexual exploitation, FGM and torture can be made and acted upon.
- Knowledge of, and engagement with local safeguarding pathways is crucial.
- Utilise local support services in NHS, social care and third sector organisations.
- Important to identify self-harm and suicide risk in a non-judgemental manner.

Infectious Diseases

Refugees and asylum seekers are highly vulnerable to communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis (TB), measles, malaria, viral hepatitis, and parasitic infections, as a result of the prevalence of such diseases in certain countries of origin and exposure to adverse conditions during migration. **However, it is important that individuals continue to receive support from professionals and volunteers without judgement of having an infectious disease.**

If you hear that there may be an outbreak or are concerned about someone you think might have a potentially infectious disease, advice is available. If you have concerns, please:

1. **Report** your concerns to:
 - a. A relevant health professional. Some of these diseases must be notified to the UK Health Security Agency by a GP or healthcare professional.
 - b. The hotel management if the person lives in a Clearsprings hotel. Accommodation providers have their own reporting protocols and should notify their local UKHSA Health Protection Team of any infectious outbreaks on 0300 303 8537.

2. **Advise** the person you are concerned about potentially having an infectious disease to contact their GP or call 111.

Outside of the UK different communicable diseases are endemic, which means the disease circulates regularly within the community. There have been a number of infectious disease notifications associated with asylum seeker accommodation in recent years including: Diphtheria, Shigella, Group A Streptococcus, MRSA, Varicella zoster virus, Covid, Flu, Scabies and Tuberculosis (TB).

Many of these diseases (such as scabies or Covid) may be common amongst hotel residents and so standard infection control precautions should be adopted such as hand hygiene, and only working with someone if they are well.

Vaccinations and screening for infectious disease remain the best protection. Every resident should be screened for infectious disease and offered vaccinations to bring them in line with the UK schedule at their GP registration in line with the migrant health guide

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migrant-health-guide>

It is important that frontline workers are up to date with their own vaccinations. If someone has been diagnosed with an infectious condition, they will be advised on how long they need to keep away from others.

eVisas

Since Spring 2024, the Home Office has begun the phasing out of physical immigration documents. These are being replaced by a digital proof of immigration status known as eVisas.

If someone has a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) or indefinite leave to enter/remain in the UK using a passport with an ink stamp or vignette sticker, they will need to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa [Get access to your eVisa - GOV.UK](#). They are advised to do this before their current physical document expires.

The expiry of a physical immigration document does not impact someone's actual legal status, but this may not be widely understood by individuals or service providers and could cause difficulties for residents who have not transitioned to an eVisa.

Once an eVisa is in place then government agencies such as the DWP, HMRC, DVLA will be able to retrieve information about an individual's status online. Equally an individual will be able to evidence their immigration status to a prospective employer or landlord, a bank or other institution online.

As of 31 Oct 2024, BRPs are no longer being issued. As of 31 Dec 2024, nearly all BRPs expired.

Creating a UKVI account is free and will not usually require the sending of any documents to the Home Office.

Support available with the transition to eVisas

People who are having problems with their online application can email: ApplyOnlineE-Support@homeoffice.gov.uk or call the [UK Visas and Immigration resolution centre](#) 0300 790 6268 or +44 (0)203 875 4669. This is designed mainly for technical and IT issues.

National Organisations

[Migrant Help](#) has the national Home Office contract to support individuals with the transition process. Telephone: 07483 170 100 Email: evisa@migranthelpuk.org

[EVisa - World Jewish Relief](#) is also funded to support people from all backgrounds with the transition to eVisa. Telephone: 0800 319 6092 Email: evisa@worldjewishrelief.org

Local Organisations

In addition, the organisations (and their contact details) that have been awarded grant funding by the Home Office to provide support with the transition to eVisas in Hertfordshire.

- **Communities 1st** - [Help Accessing eVisas | Communities 1st](#) Email: help@communities1st.org.uk Phone: 01727 649930.
- **Noah Enterprise** [NOAH Enterprise](#) - Phone: 01582 728 416 or 07946 553 495 Email: Maria.amadi@noahenterprise.org
- **PBIC Limited** [PBIC Limited](#) - Phone: 01234 328 100 Email: info@pbic.org.uk

*The Ukrainian speaking team at **HCNS** can also support Ukrainian guests in Hertfordshire with this process. Contact the team via email on: hcnsukraine@herts.help*

For your further information, a complete list of Home Office funded organisations working on this across the UK can be found here [List of organisations - GOV.UK](#).

Lancashire County Council has published guidance information in a number of languages: [eVisas - Lancashire County Council](#)

eVisa errors

Any errors on a new eVisa should be reported here: [Report an error with your eVisa - GOV.UK](#).

Further information

Key Guide on supporting someone to transition to an eVisa from Right to Remain: [How to support someone with the transition to eVisas – Right to Remain](#)

[What is an eVisa? \(youtube.com\)](#)

[How to create a UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) account and get access to your eVisa \(youtube.com\)](#)

Barriers to Accessing Services

Refugees and Asylum Seekers often face a number of barriers to accessing support services. Providers will need to consider how they can support these residents to overcome these barriers and access required support. Some particular barriers to consider are listed below:

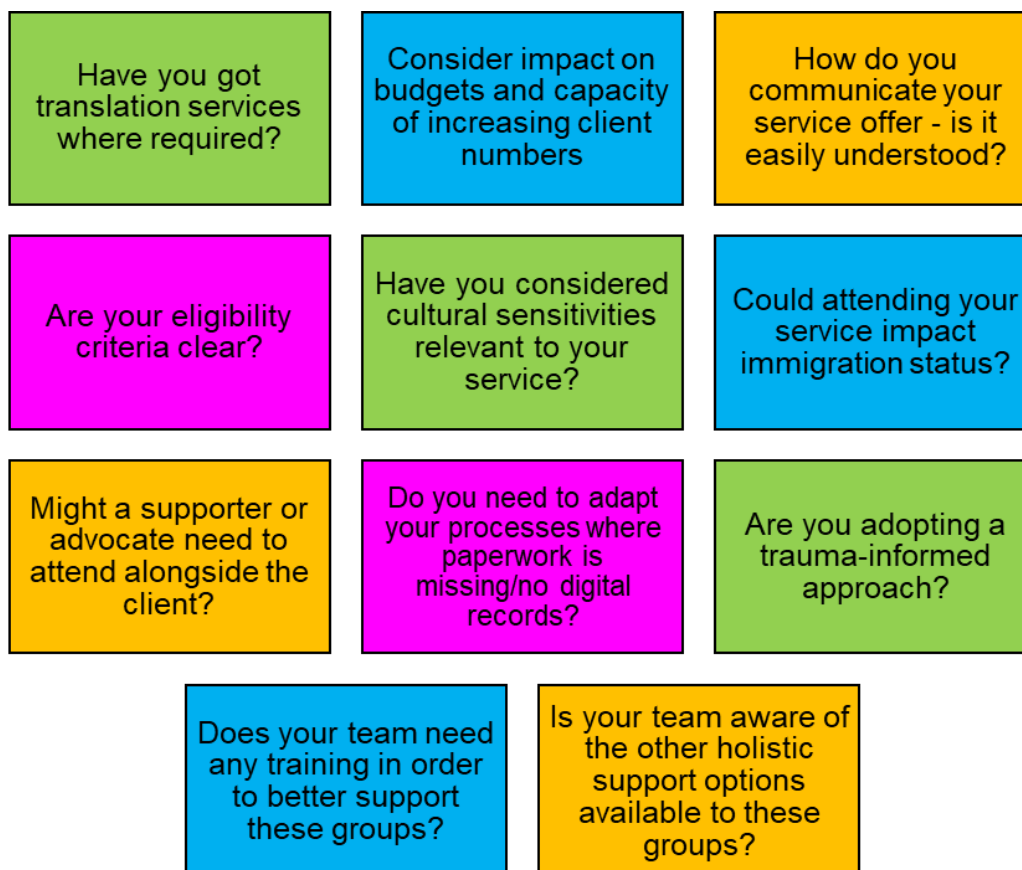
- Fear and distrust of institutions or authorities. It is hard to generalise about how this might manifest, but it can particularly be a concern when people discuss health or financial matters. People are often more open with the voluntary sector than with medical professionals, staff from local authorities or translators in some instances.
- Cultural competence required to respond to sensitivities, e.g. differences in perception of physical and mental health issues, cultural appropriateness of care.
- Lack of knowledge about their rights, the system or how to navigate it.
- Lack ability to self-advocate, e.g. loss of agency and autonomy through experiences of displacement.
- Communication barriers – lack of English, not understanding what is being asked if there is interpretation, literacy barriers.
- Previous documentation (including ID, health records etc) is often unavailable.
- Frequently changing accommodation disrupts provision and continuity of care.
- Digital poverty – in accessing care and booking appointments; online consultations can also bar clear communication and are often difficult to include interpreters in.
- Trauma-associated challenges – disclosure causing re-traumatisation, flashbacks and dissociation; challenges with memory and communication.
- This is quite a complex area, so professionals lack knowledge about the challenges, levels of wider support/recovery factors and the complexities of the differences between different groups.
- Individuals have reported discrimination from professionals.

Information for Universal Services

There are increased numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in Hertfordshire, but there are many potential [barriers](#) to accessing services for people. Local public and VCFSE services might consider the need to adapt to respond to new support needs and to ensure that people are able to access the services appropriately.

More information for Hertfordshire professionals and volunteers who might work with refugees or asylum seekers is available from this webinar recording. The webinar covers: Challenges faced by those seeking asylum, the support currently available, the barriers to accessing support and what we and others have learnt from working with this cohort: [Supporting Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Hertfordshire: a Webinar - March 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#)

Questions that local public and VCFSE services might consider include:



Key messages for People Leaving Contingency Accommodation

The journey towards living independently after someone receives their asylum decision from the Home Office can be challenging. It is very important that people have realistic expectations and that they have a good understanding of what they need to do to help themselves to move forward positively. These are some of the key messages that people should understand and think about:

Once you receive a decision on your application, you will have less than two months to leave Home Office provided accommodation, and you will be required to leave on the date given.

Do not wait to hear from the Home Office to prepare for moving on – start planning now.

You will need to move to your own accommodation immediately on leaving the Home Office provided accommodation. You are very unlikely to be provided with accommodation by the Council unless it is decided that you meet 'priority need' criteria (e.g., children, or people with a serious medical condition). Your [local housing authority](#) will determine if you meet 'priority need' criteria.

Check that all the details for your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) or eVisa are correct and report problems immediately following this process [Report an error with your eVisa - GOV.UK](#). If you do not have a BRP or eVisa or if your negative decision is under appeal, you cannot be immediately evicted. Contact [Migrant Help](#) for assistance as once you leave, you won't be allowed to come back.

Keep in regular contact with your solicitor if you have one. Do not ignore any correspondence.

Plan and prepare to make your own arrangements. You are unlikely to be given a council house – there is a housing shortage in the UK and there are years-long waiting lists for council houses.

Hertfordshire is an expensive county to live in – consider what might be affordable for you. Meanwhile, find out what's going on in your area and visit groups at the local community centre. You will be better prepared if you speak to people in the area.

Be aware that criminals are targeting people leaving the hotels by initially appearing to offer help. Make sure that you do not sign any legal documents without having had someone professionally translate for you. Check identification and be sure that an organisation that is legitimate before committing to anything. Do not leave with someone you are not sure about.



Preparing Asylum Seekers to Move Out of Contingency Properties

PLAN AND PREPARE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE	
Actively look for housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for independent accommodation and consider all options – e.g., private rental, sharing with others, living with friends, renting a room. • Get housing information and advice from the local District or Borough.
Prepare for employment, even if you currently are not allowed to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a resume/CV. Start looking at jobs, get interview practice. • Research, use and visit community resources in the area, e.g. libraries and faith groups, local support organisations. • Look for volunteering opportunities – these will help your English, build your CV, and may lead to work. • Contact Refugee Employability Programme Reed in Partnership or Employability for Overseas Nationals as soon as you are eligible.
Improve your English skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for online and free resources, e.g. search for ESOL at Step2Skills • Libraries have free access to computers, the internet, books, newspapers. • Contact Refugee Employability Programme – www.reedinpartnership.co.uk • For people who have been in the UK for more than 6 months a class in the contingency property or local college may be available.
Organise your finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need a bank account - open one asap as Aspen cards expire after decision. Banks need ID and evidence of a fixed address. The address can be the hotel/property, but many banks also want a BRP/eVisa. Don't give up if a bank rejects you, others are more understanding and accommodating. • Work out how much you are likely to earn from employment or benefits – Benefits calculators - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). • Apply for Universal Credit (and possibly other welfare benefits) Claiming Universal Credit and other benefits if you are a refugee - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). The Money Advice Unit service can help.
Make sure you have access to healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that you are registered with a local GP. When you leave the accommodation, register with a new GP surgery in your new area. Keep your NHS number so that your health record goes transfers with you. • Download the NHS app. This may give you access to health records, help with booking and managing appointments, ordering repeat prescriptions. Most people have phones but ask for support to use if not able to do so independently. As their English improves, they will need less assistance. • Make sure you have notes on your health condition available. If you move to another area, it will be helpful to have some notes to give to the next healthcare professionals that you see. • If you take medication, make sure that you have enough in the run up to your move out date.

Process Flow for Asylum Seekers leaving Contingency Properties

