

## Sharing your home with refugees – Guidance note

This document is primarily for clergy occupying Board or Parsonage housing who are considering offering lodging for refugees in their own home, specifically in response to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. However, the guidance provided below can apply equally to most others willing to share their home.\*

The Diocese is supportive of clergy seeking to help in this way. The following guidelines are deliberately a “light touch” to ensure that this is not a burdensome process.

Please refer to the [Diocese of Oxford's website](#) for further guidance on safeguarding, support networks e.g. Citizens UK etc.

### Pitfalls to avoid

- Do not offer refugee lodgers the whole of your property
- You cannot charge rent, but can keep the £350 per month payments from the government
- Do not enter into a legal agreement [licence, lodging agreement or tenancy]. If you do:
  - You may inadvertently find that you cannot then get possession of your rooms/property easily
  - It might impact on the Council Tax payable on the property
  - You might inadvertently create a “Home of Multiple Occupation – AKA HMOs” meaning that a Licence is needed from the Local Authority and a series of extra fire safety and other works would be needed to the property. The Diocese cannot support the creation of HMO’s and in addition cannot undertake works to vicarages to facilitate the temporary housing of refugees.

### How to proceed

- **Registering your offer to help** – via the [Diocesan website](#) (we are working in partnership with Citizens UK), and we will be in touch to support you through the process. If you are making your own arrangements, you can register directly via the [Government website](#).
- **You are inviting refugees into your homes as “Guests”** in other words it is an informal arrangement.
- **How long for?** Be clear with your family and – most importantly – the potential guest about how long you expect the arrangement to last. Note the Government are expecting families to be offered a minimum of 6 months.
- **Check your insurance cover** – most diocesan clergy housing is insured with Ecclesiastical Insurance Group – EIG. We understand that they have no objection to clergy offering support to refugees in this way. You may want to check with them if there are any particular requirements that need to be in place.
- **Do not move out of the house [as in relocate elsewhere!]** whilst the Ukrainian family remain in occupation.

**NOTE - \*** If you live in rented accommodation provided by a landlord other than the Diocese you will need their permission to house Ukrainian [or any other] refugees.