

Let your property and give an Afghan or Ukrainian family a home



Supported by:



landlordlettings@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

refugeeswelcomeinrichmond.org

Information for landlords

This pack is provided for private landlords who might be willing to consider offering accommodation to refugees, through the London Borough of Richmond's resettlement schemes. **Refugees Welcome in Richmond (RWinR)** is a registered charity that aims at providing help to all refugees coming to the Borough. Among other things it tries to help refugees get suitable accommodation. RWinR therefore supports the work of the Council Resettlement Team in identifying private-let properties for refugee families.

In response to the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and the conflict in Ukraine the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames is supporting Afghan and Ukrainian refugees under the Government's [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy \(ARAP\)](#) and [Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme](#) and [Homes for Ukraine Scheme](#). This is a changing landscape and often schemes change – but accommodation is needed.

These resettlement schemes rely on the good will of local councils and private landlords. In boroughs like Richmond there are already long waiting lists for social housing, so refugee families can only be resettled quickly if private sector homes are found for them. Richmond Council does not hold any social housing stock.

Refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine will be looked after by a dedicated Council team who coordinate resettlement logistics and provide intensive support tailored to each family's needs.

What we need:

- Private sector properties, particularly larger properties with 4 bedrooms or more
- Anywhere within the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames
- Self-contained (i.e. with own front door, kitchen and bathroom)
- Basically furnished (RWinR and the Council can help with furnishing)
- At least 2 years Assured Shorthold Tenancy (ideally longer to offer the family stability)
- Rent within local housing allowance rates (lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx)

Housing Allowance Rates by Area:

Whitton

Per calendar month (April 2024)

1 bedroom	£997.27
2 bedroom	£1,296.44
3 bedroom	£1,470.95
4 bedroom	£1,765.08

Richmond, Kew, Ham, Twickenham, St. Margarets, Teddington, Hampton, Hampton Court, Hampton Wick, Hampton Hill

1 bedroom	£1,196.69
2 bedroom	£1,490.88
3 bedroom	£1,795.08
4 bedroom	£2,543.01

Barnes, East Sheen, Mortlake

1 bedroom	£1,416.09
2 bedroom	£1,695.33
3 bedroom	£2,154.10
4 bedroom	£2,892.06

What the Council offers landlords:

- **Rent paid direct to landlord**
- **Standard Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) agreements**
Two to five-year AST agreements with a break clause after two years.
- **Incentive payment paid upfront**

1 bedroom:	£2,000
2 bedrooms:	£2,500
3 bedrooms:	£3,000
4 bedrooms:	£3,500

- **Six weeks rent in advance**
- **Rent and council tax paid from the date the property becomes available**
Council pays to hold the property until a suitable family moves in
- **Up to £460 towards insurance costs**
- **Help with furnishing property if required**
- **No obligations towards tenants beyond normal property maintenance**
- **Family receives support from dedicated Caseworker and Resettlement Team**

These incentives are offered to potential social landlords helping house refugees from Ukraine or Afghanistan. However, some of these incentives may be available to landlords supporting refugees from other countries. There may be other tax incentives that can apply to persons letting a room under the Rent-a-Room Scheme.

For further information contact: housing@refugeeswelcomeinrichmond.org

The process:

- If you are considering joining the scheme, the Council makes an appointment for an officer to inspect the property.
- If suitable, the officer will liaise to agree the package of payments plus the date for acceptance into the scheme, the incentive payment will be made once the family have arrived.
- Once agreed, the Council contacts the Home Office to initiate the process to identify a suitable family and conduct full security screening. Details of the proposed case are then sent to Richmond Council for suitability assessment and a date is agreed for the arrival.
- The Council will pay for the void property during the period between initiating the process and the family arriving and signing the Tenancy Agreement.
- Once the family arrives, the Resettlement Team arranges for them to sign the Tenancy Agreement and to apply for Universal Credit.
- The Resettlement Team remains available to assist the landlord with any subsequent issues relating to the tenancy.

How the Council supports the families:

- Assigns a dedicated case worker to each family.
- Provides intensive support tailored to the family's needs. This is ongoing if needed, though most require less support over time.
- Provides basic furniture, white goods, food, bedding, curtains, utensils.
- Prepares the property for the family's arrival.
- Arranges transport to the property.
- Applies for all relevant welfare benefits including Universal Credit.
- Helps the family register with GP, dentist and other health/social services.
- Liaises with education department to enrol children into schools and nurseries.
- Arranges for adults to attend English language courses at college.
- Engages interpreting and translating services if required.
- Takes family members to appointments (e.g. hospital) until familiar with the local area.
- Takes families on tours of the local area to locate shops and other amenities.
- Sets up bank accounts, utility accounts (incl. payment plans), shows how to pay bills.
- Makes regular home welfare visits.
- Accompanies adults to Job Centre appointments when ready to seek employment.
- Signposts local services such as food banks
- Provides contact details for refugee support groups including Refugees Welcome in Richmond (RWinR).

For more information, search "refugees" on richmond.gov.uk

How RWinR supports the families:

Besides working with the Council to identify properties, Refugees Welcome in Richmond (RWinR) provides the vitally important additional community support for refugees to thrive in a foreign country, often thousands of miles from family and friends.

RWinR volunteers offer befriending, mentoring and advocacy services, provide links to English language support, help with finding suitable schools, registering with medical practices and dentists, source donations of clothing, furniture and household items, and arrange social events to aid integration within the community.

In addition to refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine, we have also supported other families from Egypt, Kuwait, Sierra Leone, Syria and Yemen who arrived independently.

Endorsements for Refugees Welcome in Richmond

Refugees Welcome in Richmond has been an incredible source of information and support to Ukrainian hosts and guests alike ever since I joined its WhatsApp group as a potential host in May 2022. Providing answers to numerable questions about the rules for financial support and visa and permit applications to name but a few through to disseminating information on job fares, local support groups, social events and talks. Special mention must go to Hirsh who seems to work day and night replying to everything in double quick time! I am now having a second guest in the full knowledge that there is help and support available to myself and my guest. Thanks RWinR!

Celia Marsh, host in Teddington

I would like to express my deep gratitude to you and the group of people who work with you for helping us Ukrainians in this difficult time for us. You put a lot of effort into making our life diverse in a foreign country. We are cared for by sincere, kind, friendly people who understand our unbearable pain for the abandoned home where we lived and worked not so long ago and could never believe in the horror that befell us. Words of gratitude cannot be expressed without tears. A low bow to you.

Iryna and Valentin

I very much support the invaluable contribution of Refugees Welcome in Richmond to the resettlement of refugees fleeing conflict in Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine, through finding homes, befriending, and events promoting integration.

Murina Wilson, MP for Twickenham

[Speaking in Parliament, March 2022] I am really grateful to a charity in my constituency called Refugees Welcome in Richmond, who came to see me on Friday. They are very concerned that the renewed focus on Ukrainian refugees will obscure the effort that is still going on to rehome our Afghan refugees. So many of them are still in hotels and I would really like to see a renewed focus on getting them resettled. I think the situations are different: we need immediate, potentially temporary shelter for women and children fleeing Ukraine; and our Afghan refugees—whole families—need permanent resettlement. The requirements are different. The effort to resettle one group does not need to take up the efforts already employed in resettling the other.

Sarah Olney, MP for Richmond Park

Letter from a refugee family resettled in Richmond

6 April 2017

*Mayor of Richmond, The Mayor's Office
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
York House, Richmond Road
Twickenham, TW1 3AA*

Dear Mayor,

I am from one of the Syrian refugee families in Richmond. In the name of all my family and myself, I offer our deep thanks to Her Majesty the Queen, to the British Government, to Richmond Borough Council and to the Council Leader, to our landlord, to Refugees Welcome in Richmond and to our local parish for welcoming us into your country. We feel at home here.

May we thank most particularly our landlord, the Council Resettlement Team, and Refugees Welcome in Richmond, who have helped us in every possible way to put down roots here. We also thank everyone else who has helped us – too many to mention here.

All of our needs are being met to enable us to live a full life safely here in Richmond.

You have shown us great kindness. For our part, we will do our utmost to be good, honest members of this community, contributing positively to its welfare.

*With renewed thanks,
Yours sincerely,*

Father of first Syrian family to arrive in Richmond

**For further information please contact
Richmond Council Resettlement Team:**

landlordlettings@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk / 0208 871 7333

Refugees Welcome in Richmond (RWinR):

For housing enquiries, email housing@refugeeswelcomeinrichmond.org

For general enquiries, visit our website: refugeeswelcomeinrichmond.org