



**Community
Action
Isle of Wight**
at the Riverside

Homes for Ukraine

Helpful tips for Hosts

Community Action Isle of Wight
Riverside | The Quay | Newport | Isle Of Wight | PO30 2QR
Registered Charity Number: 1063737 Company Registration Number: 3340032

Introduction

Thank you for opening your home as a place of sanctuary to people who have fled the war in Ukraine. It will help both you and your guests if you think through your expectations before they arrive, so you can give them clear information upon arrival. This will help both parties in the early days and coming months, and hopefully avoid misunderstandings.

Each host and guest relationship will be unique and we hope it will be an enriching experience for all involved.

Getting your guests to the Isle of Wight

Wightlink are offering a free ferry booking for you to go to the mainland to collect your guests. Community Action Isle of Wight has the offer code and will facilitate the booking. Please get in touch with us when you are planning to collect your guests by: email: ukraine@actioniw.org.uk or by phone: 01983 539374.

Welcoming guests

If not all members of your household are in when your guests arrive, remember to introduce them when they come home.

Take time to learn the correct pronunciation of all your guests' names and allow them time and the opportunity to practise your name if it is unfamiliar to them.

WiFi

Your guests will want to keep in touch with family and friends and will probably want to notify them that they have arrived as soon as they move in.

Please write down your household WIFI code clearly to give to your guests on their arrival, so they can easily get in touch.

If you don't have WiFi, please find someone to help out.

Kitchen sharing

It is common practice in Ukraine to cook meals from scratch. Your guests may spend more time in the kitchen than you do. Microwave and ready meals are not commonly eaten in Ukraine.

You might want to consider if you want to eat together or apart from your guests.

Food

Your guests will need storage – cupboards, fridge, etc – for their food.

Either you or your guests may be vegan or vegetarian, or may have allergies or food preferences.

Please establish this as early as possible and agree with your guests to ensure that you can accommodate these requirements in a satisfactory and safe way.

Covid safety

Talk to your guests about COVID-19 and your attitude to this risk. You can encourage them to follow good hygiene practices, including handwashing and using hand sanitiser when handwashing is not possible.

Please let them know that face coverings are still required when visiting hospitals, doctors' surgeries and some other places, and are recommended when in crowded and enclosed spaces. Keep them up to date with changes to government guidance

on COVID-19, including steps they can take should they become unwell with symptoms of COVID-19. More information on symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if someone becomes unwell is available on the NHS website.

Bin collection day and recycling

Let your guests know your recycling and bin collection arrangements (what goes into which bin), days and times when different bins are collected, and where you normally place your bins for collection.

Encourage your guests to recycle where possible.

Also, please consider whether you need to request a larger black bin and a food waste caddy, bearing in mind Ukrainians tend to cook from scratch. Please email waste.contract@iow.gov.uk setting out the additional capacity required and they will organise the appropriate containers for you. They aim to deliver new containers within 10 days of receiving any request.

House keys

Prepare set(s) of your house keys for your guests and let them know how to lock up at night. Make sure no-one gets locked out!

Window locks

Please show and explain to your guests how your window locks work, where the keys to them are kept (if they are not in these locks) and which of the windows can be used as fire escapes in case of emergency.

Stair gates

If you will be hosting toddlers and live in a house with stairs you will want to consider fitting stair gates to keep the child safe.

Stair gates are not commonly used in Ukraine. Please explain to your guests how they work and how you want to keep them (closed/open etc).

Pets

If you have pets, it would be wise to explain the rules that apply to your pets. For example: if guests can feed pets, if they are allowed on furniture or upstairs, if guests prefer to keep your pets out of their bedrooms.

Your guests may bring pets (note: quarantine rules will apply).

Not everyone likes pets and some people are highly allergic. It is best to sort this out ahead of time.

Bathrooms

Tell your guests:

- how your water controls work (especially tell them about weird features or tricks they need to know to use them)
- where you keep extra toilet paper (and the plunger, toilet brush, etc)
- which (if any) toiletries they can use

Heating controls

Your guests may ask you to adjust the temperature in your house. You may like to show how heating controls work in your house, or do your best to accommodate their needs. If you are happy to let them change controls, please bear in mind that heating systems and controls in Ukraine are very different from those used in the UK. Do keep in mind that you are responsible for paying the heating bills.

Use of household appliances

Some of your household appliances may be different from those that your guests use in Ukraine. It may be helpful to show your guests how to use your appliances.

Also, be sure to warn them of any weird features or tricks to keep in mind when using your appliances - so they don't have any issues during their stay.

If the sockets in the guest room are hidden behind furniture or not in very obvious locations, be sure to let your guests know so they don't have to go searching when plugging in their phone charger (or any other devices they might use).

Any areas out of bounds

There may be areas that you prefer to keep off-limits, such as offices or your bedrooms. Please let them know what those areas are – maybe put a friendly little notice on the door(s).

Personal space and storage

Provide storage, hangers, etc for your guests' clothes and belongings - living out of a suitcase for any length of time is not ideal.

Your guests may be struggling with stress relating to their escape from the war zone so, please, allow them an opportunity to retreat and rest in their room as and when they need it.

Showing them around the neighbourhood

Please consider advising your guests about:

- Nearest food shops (Ukrainian food can be similar to Polish – so try to find the nearest Polish food shop)
- Local chemist
- Introduce them to the local GP surgery and public transport – bus or train stops, timetables

Emergency Contact Information

One of the best ways to put your guests' minds at rest is to provide them with emergency contact information. Write down your own contact telephone, or that of another person to contact in emergency (for example, their nominated case worker) as well as phone numbers for local doctors, hospitals and dentists. If your property is pet-friendly, include the number for the local vet.

Contact numbers for the police and the fire department are also important.

Provide information on the location and use of any fire protection equipment in your home (extinguishers, fire blankets, etc).

Clearly state the best way to evacuate the property in case of an emergency.

Safeguarding

If you are concerned about a **vulnerable adult's** safety or welfare please contact the IW Council safeguarding adults team via **01983 814980**. If an adult is in immediate danger or at serious risk of harm, you are advised to call emergency services via **999**.

If you are concerned about a **child's safety or welfare** please contact Hants Direct on Tel: **0300 300 0117**. If a child is in immediate danger or at serious risk of harm, you are advised to continue to call the emergency services via **999**.

Security devices

Please inform your guests of security cameras and other devices on the property, even if they are turned off.

Explain your routines

Explain any regular routines that you need to maintain. For example: shower times before work, using the kitchen to get breakfast for your children before they go to school. Basically, you'll need to negotiate use of bathroom(s), kitchen, etc.

Smoking

If your guests smoke and you prefer them to do this outside, show them where they may smoke, also where to discard extinguished cigarette butts (you may choose to provide a metal can)

Alcohol

Keep in mind that you are in control of what goes on in your home. You can set home rules about not drinking alcohol in your home if you wish to do so.

Visitors

Explain your house rules about visitors. For example, that you would expect prior agreement to bring outside visitors into your home, day or night, or any other conditions you are comfortable with.

Noise

Please explain to your guests your house rules regarding noise (volume, quiet times, etc).

Shoes

Every home is different about taking one's shoes off, so please tell your guests whether or not you have a shoes-off house rule. In Ukraine, people usually remove their shoes straight on entering the house. Show them where they can store their shoes.

House Insurance

Insurance Companies are largely supportive of Homes for Ukraine scheme with many stating on their websites that you do not need to contact them. However, it is worth checking on the website of your insurance company to make sure this is the case and, if not, contacting them. If they're not sympathetic, you may have to pay more – or change your insurer!

Need help or advice?

Contact Community Action Isle of Wight

Email: ukraine@actioniw.org.uk

Tel: 01983 539374

Our dedicated web page offers a lot of useful information:

<https://www.communityactionisleofwight.org.uk/ukraine-information-page/>