

FIRST ROUND FUNDING REPORT

**REFUGEE
SUPPORT**
small grants



**CHURCH
URBAN
FUND** ⊕



July 2022- April 2023

Introduction

In July 2022, Benefact Trust granted Church Urban Fund £140,000 to establish a partnership running a Small Grants Programme to support the outreach work of churches and Christian organisations with refugees from Ukraine (primarily) and Afghanistan.



£126,000 of this funding provided grant opportunities of between £500 and £5,000 for applicants meeting the expressed criteria, priorities and demonstrating a Christian ethos. £14,000 of this funding has been key to the administration and promotion of the grant scheme drawing on CUF's reach into communities and experience of grant giving to small community organisations and church projects.

Between Sept-Dec 2022 CUF received 53 applications from:

- 13 Anglican Churches
- 8 Pentecostal churches
- 4 Baptist churches
- 7 Christian general charities,
- 7 Christian- Independent churches
- 4 Christian- Interdenominational
- 3 Methodist churches
- 1 Quaker Church
- 2 Catholic Churches
- 4 no faith organisations

Requesting £207,494.68 in total

APPLICANTS, GRANTEES, KEY FIGURES AND DEMOGRAPHICS

37 projects received funding in the first round, which totalled £126,000.00 in grants, proposed to reach and benefit 2621 refugees.

Applications came from areas in England across the full range of deprivation level.

The average grant size was £3417.33. 36 projects proceeded with their proposal after funds were awarded with just one unable to do so who returned the funding.

The grant projects awarded reflect the ecumenical approach from applications. The grants provided an opportunity to equip a range of Christian projects who are mobilised to address the refugee crisis by their faith and increase capacity to meet the need of this community.



**Pictured: St Vincent's Newcastle-
Refugee families accessing grant funded
ESOL classes and a space to cook.**

SPREAD OF THE 36 ROUND ONE REFUGEE GRANT PROJECTS

Round 1 Refugee Support Grants
Interactive map [here](#)

The CUF Grants Team assessed applications on an ongoing basis as they were received, making decisions at 6 panels occurring regularly between the 15th of October and 14th of November 2022. Of projects awarded in the first round 17 were exclusively aimed at Ukrainian refugees, 17 were mixed, and 3 projects focused exclusively on Afghan refugees.

The aims of these grant funded projects were inclusive but not limited to:

- Encouraging integration
- Employability
- Community cohesion
- Fostering host relationships
- Befriending
- Physical wellbeing



The spread of project locations across England encouraged the reach and accessibility of this Small Grant funding and support for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees.

The overall rejection rate was 29% and occurred due to organisations falling outside of the criteria, including failing to evidence their Christian ethos, not having existing links with Ukrainian and Afghan refugees or benefitting a significantly small number of individuals such as a single family.

93% of grant applicants received a decision within 14 days from the CUF Grants Team. The average turnaround for applications from all information received to the decision date was 6 days. This efficiency is of particular importance to the small organisations that CUF works with, enabling them to channel their resources and protect the sustainability of projects that are in progress or ready to be delivered.

SMALL GRANTS EVALUATION SURVEY RESULTS

65% of projects reported 'The Grant was crucial for delivering our activities' The additional 35% reported that 'The Grant provided extra resource to help us deliver these activities'

26/36 project survey responses received*

26 grant funded projects reported actively supporting 1240 Ukrainian refugees and 336 Afghan refugees in total during the first round funding period.

Reported impact for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees



92% of projects strongly agreed that the refugees they worked with 'connected with other refugees' during the project.

81% of projects strongly agreed that the refugees they worked with 'were more aware of support/services in the local community.'

77% of projects strongly agreed that the refugees they worked with 'have been able to access ongoing support/have been signposted to longer term support.'

69% of projects strongly agreed that the refugees they worked with 'felt more settled in the local community' by accessing the project.

89% of projects reported their activity would continue to run beyond the period of the grant.

8,937+ volunteer hours were mobilised during the first round of Refugee Small Grant projects

Organisational Impact on Christian projects involved

81% of projects strongly feel they are now better placed to respond to future challenges.

65% of projects strongly agreed they had developed new partnerships with other local organisations generally

50% of projects strongly agreed they had developed new partnerships with other local Churches or Christian organisations

CHICHESTER DIOCESAN ASSOCIATION FOR FAMILY SUPPORT WORK (FSW), WEST SUSSEX, THE SOUTH EAST

The Refugee Small Grant supported:

- Fortnightly drop-in befriending sessions.
- Support and welfare advice for housing, education, benefits and accessing legal and immigration advice.
- Support sessions led by a Family support practitioner working with a practical and friendly approach.
- A food pantry accessible to refugees
- Home starter packs distributed to new refugee families.
- The delivery of social activities, meal sharing, and fun community days.

30 Ukraine and 48 Afghanistan refugees reached and supported.



Tia* came to the UK from Ukraine via an invitation from her mother-in-law to come and stay with her. Tia's husband had to stay behind to fight. When Tia arrived from Ukraine with her 2 children her mother-in-law had become poorly and was in a nursing home. The family were told that they could stay a few days in the home but had to find their own accommodation because they had not come through the usual channels and did not have a sponsor to stay with.

'If I hadn't attended that drop in that day – I honestly don't know where I would be now. I was ready to go home, back to a war zone because I was so desperate. Lydie's support was everything I needed. This service is so needed for families just like me. I truly feel that God brought me to FSW'

- Tia (Ukrainian Refugee
(name changed))

Tia came to the drop-in in tears. She had tried to contact immigration but had had no response. She did not have a guarantor and deposit so could not find anywhere to rent and was contemplating going back to Ukraine in spite of the dangers. At the Family Support Work drop-in Tia was able to speak in person with a representative from the council and together they were able to access Tia's file and deal with her claim. Lydie, from Worthing FSP was able to help the family with housing and Tia and the children are now in their own accommodation. Through the drop-in Tia was enrolled in a grant funded ESOL class. Over the project Lydie has seen Tia regularly and has helped her register for gas, electric, water, Universal credit and registered both children with the local school. The family now feel more security and settling into their new community.

Reach out to Refugees was set up by Lydie, Worthing FSP as a means of tackling the isolation which refugee families from Worthing are experiencing.



'We are only too aware of the substantial need among refugees settling in West Sussex, many of whom are traumatised by war and shoulder considerable worry for relatives remaining in their home countries. Whilst there are a number of services available for individual refugees and asylum applicants, families are often overlooked here in Worthing. We want to change that. Numbers at the drop-in are growing and being able to support them, feed them and provide a listening ear and spend time together has been so important'

- Lydie, Worthing FSP

HOPE CHURCH, CREWE, CHESHIRE, THE NORTH WEST

The Refugee Small Grant supported:

- Hope Cafe Hubs at the church provide opportunities for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees to socialise, develop language skills, access material support and assistance such as clothes filling out forms.
- English lessons are a key part of what the grant has supported. Lessons take a systematic approach equipping refugees with the language skills to increase employment opportunities and grow in confidence in communicating with those in the wider community.

A mix of 60 Ukraine and Afghanistan refugees reached and supported.

'A big thank you to the teachers for their patience, professionalism and work. You are very kind!'

'My teacher is one of the best teachers in my life and I enjoy her classes.'

'After the initial barrier of learning a new language, they stepped outside of their friendship groups among just Ukrainians and Afghans and made friends with other communities.'

- Pauline Summerfield, Project Lead

Pauline reported the challenge that as people found jobs, it became harder to keep attending the classes regularly. With new people arriving all the time, the Hub was increasingly aware of the demand but it was hard to keep a lesson plan to accommodate the range of levels.

'Although, the teachers would have liked to have more classes to fit the range of ability, they were realistic and flexible about the challenges and could see that regardless of these difficulties, all were making progress.'

- Pauline Summerfield, Project Lead

Website - <https://hopechurchcrewe.com>



WESLEY METHODIST CHURCH, CHESTER – CHESTER, THE NORTH WEST



Pictured: Happy bike recipients

'I was very happy with my bike, it was much easier to get to school to pick up children! Thank you so much!'

'I want to thank everyone involved in the project "Bicycles for Ukrainians"! In reality, this is the only way for us to get to the store. And for a husband with sore knees, this is generally the best means of getting around the city.'



Website - www.wesleychester.co.uk

The Refugee Support Small Grant supported:

- Weekly Meeting Point sessions at Wesley Methodist Church for Ukrainian guests.
- These sessions were resourced by more than 20 Wesley volunteers, providing refreshments, support, activities and space to socialise.
- English lessons for a range of levels with a CELTA qualified teacher of English as a foreign language.
- The church has also worked closely with a local charity (Bren Bikes, charity no. 1111644), and with sister church in Garden Lane, Chester, to also provide 43 reconditioned bikes and helmets to Ukrainian adults/children.

Pictured: English classes with Ukrainian refugees in the upper room of Wesley Methodist



'It is so extremely pleasant that there are people who are ready to greet you every Saturday with a homemade cake and a hot cup of tea. I feel like I come to see my dearest people, my family. Me and my kids are happy those moments.'

- Meeting Point session feedback

HIGHLIGHTED FEEDBACK

CONNECT EXMINSTER, EXETER

A written message from Lesia a Ukrainian refugee accessing Connect Exminster

Translated here- Thank you very much for helping Ukrainians from Teignbridge Council. The trip to Heatree Activity Centre in August was especially memorable: before the Independence Day of Ukraine. In this centre I managed to distance myself from thoughts about the war.

I am indefinitely grateful for the English Lesson, for the teachers' understanding and for their patience. It was a big surprise for me to receive a basket of food before Christmas. I am infinitely grateful for the great help of all the volunteers, the consul and all the Englishmen who are helping Ukrainians from the bottom of their hearts and to the best of their ability.

A message from I & O Ukrainian refugees at the Bridge Community Church

I remember how we just arrived and went to the church. It wasn't just lessons. It was a place where we've got such a big support and understanding! Now for us Bridge community church it's a warm place, where we are welcome, where we feel that we aren't alone! I noticed like our people lesson by lesson are being more confident, they don't scare anymore to ask, to speak and even to make mistakes. Now they can explain what they are looking for in the shop, or to have a simple conversation with Neighbours. Their success to find a job were increased because they just understand what's going on around. Almost half of our group found their jobs and I'm sure it's because their improved level of English.

I remember the first film night we felt such a big uniting because we were all together, and watched a movie in our language so far away from home! That evening I was laughing at first time from the beginning of the war! It was such a big deal for us! We offered our help to wash plates or to tidy up the room, but we got a strong answer "You are here for enjoying the film" we were amazed! Last Friday I worked all day and only one thing I was worrying about "will be we in time on the film night in our church"! I think it's definitely a good sign! I appreciate all members of the church, all our teachers for providing such a big opportunity for us! Million of thanks!♥

January 17

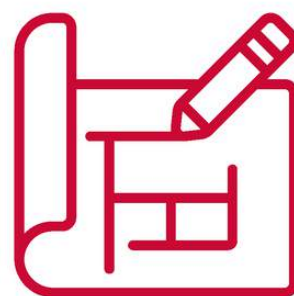
Дуже дякую за допомогу українцям від ради Teignbridge. Особливо запам'яталась поїздка Heatree Activity Centre в серпні: перед днем Незалежності України. В цьому центрі мені вдалось віддалитись від думок про війну.

Безмежно вдячна за уроки англійської, за розуміння викладачів і їх терпіння. Великою несподіванкою для мене було отримання кошика їжі перед Різдвом. Я безмежно вдячна за величезну допомогу усім волонтерам, консулу і усім англійцям, які від щирого серця і з усієї своєї можливості допомагають українцям.

19:09

HIGHLIGHTED FEEDBACK

BRIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH, SUFFOLK, THE EAST OF ENGLAND



REFUGEE SMALL GRANTS ROUND ONE CONCLUSION



The first round of Refugee Small Grants, funded by the Benefact Trust and awarded by Church Urban Fund, have served to meet the practical needs of Ukrainian and Afghan Refugees displaced by war and instability. Christian churches and organisations provided a framework for this grant model, allowing the funding to effectively increase the capacity of existing work, fill in gaps in existing provision and mobilise new project ideas. Project staff and volunteers observed need locally and developed projects which are accessible, consistent and seek to foster a sense of belonging for Ukrainian and Afghan refugees.

Churches and project spaces involved are reported as becoming key hubs for Ukrainian and Afghan refugee communities, strengthened by this Grant Programme to expand what they can offer. The opportunity to forget the war and instability for a moment, to feel part of a new community, to develop language skills and increase in confidence are all reported as key outcomes of the projects funded by this grant.

The needs of both Ukrainian and Afghan refugees will change as they settle and adjust to life in the UK as well as dealing with longer-term impacts and complexities of the trauma they have experienced. Projects involved in the first round of Refugee Support Small grants report an acute understanding of the needs of their local refugee populations. This is enabled by the time taken to listen to and build trust with these communities and ensures they are well placed to continue aspects of this established work and effectively signpost to other specialist organisations.

Thank you to the Benefact Trust for extending this Small Grants Programme for a second round the impact of which will be reported on in July 2023. Please see a round one Deep Dive report and round two status report alongside this document with an update from the Church Urban Fund Grants Team including the awards to date