



practical support to Afghan refugees starting new lives in the UK.

In the Diocese of Chichester, covering Chichester, Horsham, Brighton, Lewes and Hastings, parishes are partnering with local authorities to help the refugees, through donations, support with learning English, and the offer of vacant vicarages to house families.

The diocese has given the go ahead for three vacant unfurnished vicarages to be made available.

The Diocese of Norwich has made a house available to provide a home for an Afghan refugee family for two years.

The Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, said: “My prayer is that this house has become a home for a family to settle and thrive in. I hope they’ve found the welcome that so many “strangers” down the centuries have received in the wonderful city of Norwich. It’s another way of living out the Gospel of Christ in loving our neighbour.”

Lesley Lynn, Chair of Chichester Diocese finance committee, said. “The churches are offering a lot of support, people are offering to help in all sorts of ways – such as help teaching English.

“They have really taken this to heart. Back in August we saw the absolutely heart rending pictures and stories from Afghanistan. I am bursting with thankfulness that we have been able to do something.”

More than £120,000 has been raised so far by the Bishop of Norwich’s refugee fund to support Afghan refugees in the region.

The funds have helped to pay for TV licences to help with language learning. Bicycles, safety equipment and road safety training have also been provided.

Separately, Norwich Diocese Mothers’ Union is working in partnership with Norfolk County Council to provide full bedding sets for Afghan refugee families, continuing work first started five years earlier to support Syrian refugees.

Jenny Holcombe, of the Norwich Diocese Mothers’ Union, said: “Helping these families is a very important motherly act, as Julian of Norwich said, ‘God is our mother’, he provides for us.

“We set them up, we love them and we give them the best we can and then we go away and we leave them to find their feet and for the County Council social work team to support them to establish themselves in Norfolk.”

(Picture: picnic for refugees from Syria and Afghanistan, held in the Bishop of Norwich's garden last year)