



support Ukrainian refugees. Here are some of the stories, shared by

Bath & Wells

Ukrainian mother and talented artist Katia Lebid [painted an icon of St Michael](#) to thank her host family who worship at St Michael's Church in Somerton, Somerset. Katia gifted the icon to the church and, poignantly, St Michael is also the patron saint of Kyiv.

Retired Assisting Priest, Rev Canon Brian Pearson said, "Spiritually it is a gift she wanted to share. There is something so very precious about this gift."

Last summer, Year 4 and 5 pupils at [Oakhill Church Primary School](#) in Radstock wrote, recorded and performed a special '[Song 4 Ukraine, We Will Not Fall](#)' for Ukrainian families living in their village. Families in this small Somerset village of just 750 residents have welcomed 30 Ukrainian refugees into their homes.

In November, the [Countess of Wessex](#) met Ukrainian refugees and members of the charity Wivey Welcomes Refugees (WWR) at St Andrew's Church in Wiveliscombe. The Church hosted a welcome hub for refugee families who attended English language lessons and weekly coffee mornings.



Bristol

A church in Swindon has said a weekly project for Ukrainians new to the town is forming "surrogate family units". "The Table" has been running every Tuesday evening at Pattern Church since April.

Tom Morgan from the church said it's "beautiful" to see friendships form between different generations having left children and grandchildren behind in Ukraine. Over 350 Ukrainian refugees have visited to eat, chat and bond.

(Extract taken from [BBC News](#))

Listen to a [BBC interview with the Diocese of Bristol's Rev Tom Morgan](#), Curate at the church.



Canterbury

Holy Trinity & St John's Church of England Primary School in Margate was the venue for the world premiere of a brand new short film from Aardman Animations.

Inspired by the real-life stories of children that Save the Children have worked with from Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen and Syria, the film tells the story of a small orange circle who feels far from home in a world where everything is purple and triangular.

Chichester

Two Ukrainian families were welcomed into the heart of the community in Bexhill with a blessing for their new home provided by St Augustine's Housing Trust. Fr Robert, vicar of St Augustine's said, "Hopefully, this home will give them some comfort and a settled place for their children."



Coventry

In July, St Chad's Church in the centre of Bishops Tachbrook, near Warwick, partnered with a group from Warwickshire County Council Adult Learning Centre to host a free language programme for 15 newly arrived guests from Ukraine.

Priest-in-Charge, the Revd Jonathan Smith says: "The congregation has been thrilled to support and host these lessons and it goes very much in support of our overall vision to embed a community ethos into everything we do here."



Europe

The Joint USPG/Diocese in Europe appeal for Ukraine has raised over £400,000 so far. You can [hear moving stories](#) of some of those at the projects which have benefitted from supporters' generous donations.

Dr David Hamid, Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese in Europe said: "In the short videos, you will see just some of the heartrending stories of those who have been helped by your generosity to our appeal. When you view these short clips you will be reminded that these are human lives, not statistics. They are stories of those who have escaped from death, but whose husbands, fathers and brothers are still defending their homeland. You will also hear moving words of gratitude for friendship, welcome, safety and a sense, even temporary, of home."

Exeter

Victoriia Klimashevskaya, a 21-year-old Ukrainian translator who came to Exeter through the Diocese of Exeter's Ukraine Refugee Support Scheme, [shares her account of the last 12 months.](#)

"On February 24, at 5 a.m. Kyiv time, we woke up in a new Ukraine and a new world. The world that was forced upon us. A world that does not live according to the laws, but according to the "concepts" of terrorists with nuclear weapons. Many people will still tell you that they continue to live on February 24, because time has stopped for Ukrainians."

The Diocese of Exeter has placed 80 Ukrainians (a mixture of families and individuals) with host families in Devon. They are continuing to support those who they helped place, working alongside Citizens UK on their scheme.



London

In the Diocese of London, 13 clergy members have hosted 25 guests and 10 of these have now moved into independent accommodation. [In an interview, Father Matthew Cashmore of St Anselm](#), Hayes explains why he didn't hesitate to host a Ukrainian refugee and her seven-year-old son.

The Holy Sepulchre London in Holborn has hosted weekly concerts by [musicians from the Ukraine Conservatoires](#). Earlier this month, the newly-formed [London Ukrainian Symphony Orchestra and Ukraine Children's Choir](#) performed at the Holy Sepulchre London to raise vital funds for Ukraine.

The need for hosts in London remains acute and the Diocese continues to offer support and resources for those in the diocese with a spare



Newcastle

Churches across the Diocese of Newcastle have responded to the Ukraine crisis with heartfelt compassion and love. Thousands of bags full of vital supplies for displaced Ukrainians have filled church pews and halls as local people supported the humanitarian aid effort.

Norwich

Last August, over 100 Ukrainian guests attended a tea party in Stratton Strawless along with their host families. The ‘Grand English and Ukrainian Makoviv Tea Party’ was held in the garden of Meg and Charles Foster. Charles is a churchwarden at St Margaret’s Church and Meg is a member of the Parochial Church Council.

Along with many churches across the Diocese of Norwich, King’s Lynn Minster responded within 48 hours of the invasion of Ukraine, by holding an open-air prayer vigil with the Mayor and other civic representatives.

“We took our sculpture called ‘Refugee’ by Naomi Blake out into the Market Place to represent those fleeing Ukraine,” explains the Rector, the Revd Canon Mark Dimond. “We were responding to a need: people wanted to come and pray, pour out their feelings, be silent or simply light a



Oxford

Hundreds of people offered support and accommodation across the [Diocese of Oxford](#), and over 80 families matched through the diocesan scheme with Citizens UK are still hosting across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, housing over 100 Ukrainian guests between them.

Anastasiia, a 27-year-old living and studying in Kyiv, [describes the situation in the Ukrainian capital](#) over the past six months.

The Bishop of Buckingham and his wife Lucy have been hosting six Ukrainian guests since 2022. [Bishop Alan shared his experience of hosting](#), from the joy of young children in the house to the incredible support shown by local networks and community groups. He says, "Our guests have now become firm friends, and there's a really excellent community support group around us."

Peterborough

Since the start of the War in Ukraine, [Tove Benefice in Towcester](#) has been doing all it can to support both the civilians suffering as a result of the conflict in Ukraine; and also those who have moved to the UK as guests of families in the area.

The local community, led by St Lawrence's Church, has raised thousands of pounds and collected many tonnes of medical and humanitarian aid, which they helped transport directly to affected cities in Ukraine



Portsmouth

The Diocese of Portsmouth is relaunching its [appeal to find hosts for Ukrainian refugees](#). The diocese has already found new homes for 51 Ukrainians in the past year. They're now looking for 50 families to host 100 more Ukrainian refugees by Easter.

Havling Island vicar Jenny Gaffin welcomed Kateryna Hluhan and her daughter Nelya, aged 7, as well as Anna Borodulina, and her five-year-old



Salisbury

[LoveUkraine](#) is a collaboration between Churches Together in Devizes, the Town Council, Wiltshire County Council, and Devizes Rotary, spearheaded by St James Church. They have organised a range of activities to support number of Ukrainian guests, including providing financial support and matching them with local hosts and offering free English language lessons in collaboration with Wiltshire Council.

One member of the Diocese of Salisbury clergy [shares their experience of hosting a Ukrainian family](#):

"My guests are brave, cheerful, hardworking and generous. I have eaten much wonderful Ukrainian food (including two birthday cakes worthy of Bake Off and some 'foraged fungi'), met some of their Ukrainian friends, had my dogs looked after, and my washing rescued from the rain! They feel like family to me."



Sheffield

Sheffield Cathedral has joined with the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain and Sheffield Abbeydale Rotary to mark the first anniversary with two events.

A photo exhibition at Sheffield Cathedral followed the journey of Ukrainians now living in Sheffield since the start of the war.

Sheffield Cathedral also held an evening to reflect on the tragic events of the past year. The event, 'In Sorrow, with Hope', included music and readings by members of Sheffield's Ukrainian community and featured a world premiere of choral music by Polish composer Paulina Wacławik, performed by the Tallis Consort



Winchester

The Diocese of Winchester met with Mary and Charlie, to hear about their experience using the [Diocesan-based hosting programme for Ukrainian refugees](#).

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/media-and-news/stories-blogs-and-features/one-year-churches-support-ukrainian-refugees>