



Hampshire
County Council

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

Stuart Ashley & Sarah Marston

12 July 2022

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

- Arrivals - children are either spontaneous arrivals trafficked or smuggled into the country, or are transferred through the National Transfer Scheme.
- National Transfer Scheme became mandatory for all Local Authorities in December 2021.
- The target for Hampshire County Council is 0.07%, which equates to 199 children.
- Hampshire currently at 59.8% of this target which is 119 children.
- Average age of arrivals is 17, so they quickly become care leavers and don't count towards the 199

How we work with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

- All children considered to be trafficked until social work assessment is completed.
- Case is initially managed within Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Partnership working between Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, Willow (specialist exploitation team) and Children in Care teams, to identify and transport the young people to placement.
- Willow undertake trafficking assessments for all children.
- Children in Care Teams provide the ongoing support.

Challenges

- Placements for children are often outside of Hampshire.
- Accessing education.
- Ensuring their cultural and religious needs are met
- Accessing appropriate mental health support.
- Exploitation and trafficking risks.
- The government provides a grant that covers placement costs, but not social worker costs.

Nationality of children and young people

Nationality	Number
Afghan	51
Albanian	4
Chadian	1
Egyptian	2
Eritrean	7
Iranian	17
Iraqi	13
Moroccan	1
Nigerian	1
Pakistani	2
Saudi Arabian	1
Somali	1
South African	1
South Sudanese	3
Sudanese	21
Syrian	2
Turkish	2

Who are our UASC 'Care Leavers'



- Young people aged 18 years to 25 years of age who have been in care as a child.
- Young people need suitable accommodation, support around emotional well-being and life skills underpins success in other areas of life.

Who are our 'Care Leavers'? cont....

- Asylum seeking young people 18 years and above have full access to the care leaver Local Offer, which includes the funding of accommodation and support and personal allowance payments.
- Should a Home Office 'right to remain' not be granted, asylum seeking young people are able to submit an appeal/s of the decision and during this process they continue to have access to the full care leaver.
- If deemed 'All Rights Exhausted' then HCC Children's Services are required to complete Human Rights Assessments, whereby support from the LA is reviewed and potentially stopped.

What we do

Specific asylum-seeking support:

- Assist young people in family tracing – utilising services such as British Red Cross. However, there are several countries that they cannot access
- After completing compulsory secondary education, young people progress onto further education post -16. Many young people will continue to study English most commonly through an English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESOL) course. All asylum seekers are entitled to the further education bursary 16-19 years.

Successes

A young person who has just completed a accountancy degree at a London University and has gained employment!

A young person who following being exploited has been supported to access university and is excelling! Lots young people are very settled in independent housing and enjoying good stability.

Young people are consistently making strong attachments/networks having arrived without these.

Young people being supported in their practice of their faith is well evidence and a focus of planning for them should they wish for this.

Homes for Ukraine

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Homes for Ukraine

- Members of the public can apply for a Ukrainian family to live in their home for at least 6 months
- If accepted by the Home Office, the Ukrainian family are issued a visa with their host as their sponsor
- Local Authorities are responsible for implementing the scheme locally but these are private arrangements
- Ukrainians receive £200 welcome payment on arrival
- Hosts receive £350 per month thank you payment (per accommodation)

Homes for Ukraine

- Accommodation and Disclosure and Barring Service checks required
- Local Authority receives funding equating to £10,500 per refugee, to fund all support services. This is shared with district & borough councils.
- Additional education funding available for school-aged children

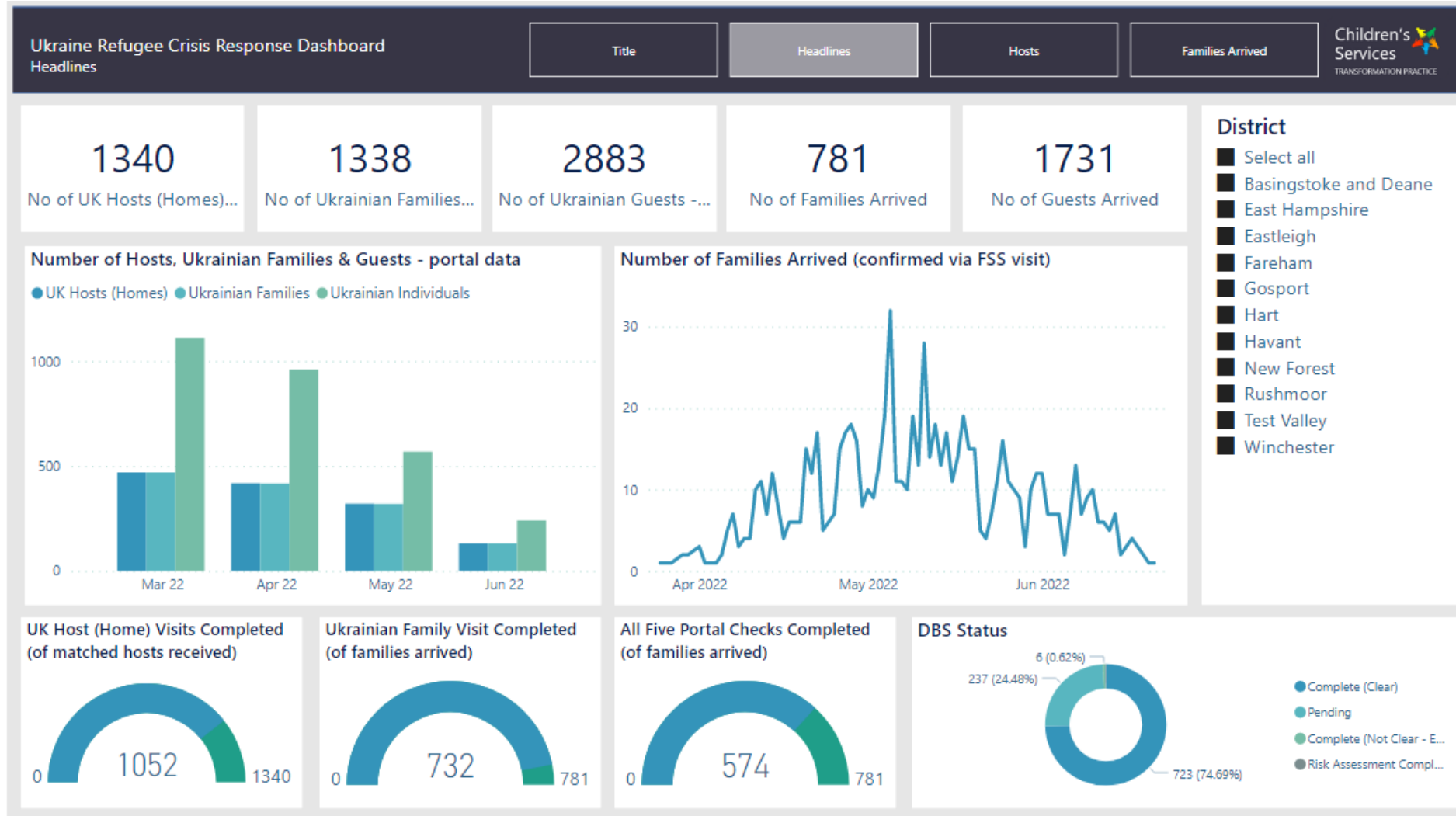
Journey so far

- Government announced the scheme on 14 March.
- CFMT decision to position the scheme within Family Support.
- First list of names arrived on the portal 25 March – 8 working days to plan.
- Silver response coordinated by the County Council.
- Initially – one home visit to complete accommodation checks and initiate DBS checks.
- In reality – accommodation checks, safe and well visits, collect information to trigger host payments, deliver cash cards, signposting.

Journey so far continued....

- Process have been created and rolled out – accommodation checks, providing welcome payments, providing host payments, initiating DBS checks, collating information to report back to central government to release funding.
- Some lessons learnt from Afghan response which informed planning.
- 3-month bus pass provided to all guests.
- Community support group hubs run by district & borough councils, supported by library services, and by Family Support Service on request.

Headline numbers



Partnership working

Project management support provided by HCC.

- Project workstream – oversight of all project areas.
- Finance workstream - £200 welcome payments, guest thank you payments.
- Community & support workstream.

Workstream members include Children's Services, district & borough councils (housing), Citizen's Advice Bureau, School Admissions, voluntary organisations, finance, comms, library services, Fire & Rescue service.

Family Support Service

- Complete accommodation checks.
- Initiate DBS checks on all household members aged 16+.
- Complete safe-and-well visits when guests arrive.
- Provide welcome payments on cash cards.
- Signposting to school admissions, Universal Credit, etc.
- Liaise with Fire & Rescue to complete a home safety check.
- Detailed recording of information to allow for host thank-you payments to be arranged.

Rematching

- “Rematching should only be used where it is unviable or unsafe for the sponsorship relationship to continue”
- Housing needs assessment completed by district & borough councils.
- If criteria is met and rematching is appropriate, districts and boroughs co-ordinate a rematch.
- List of Expressions of Interest available to districts & boroughs.
- Refer back to HCC to complete all checks and arrange thank you payments.
- New process which is being tested and rolled out.

Challenges

- Limited time to create and implement complex processes.
- “Laying tracks as we go”, whilst using lessons learnt from Afghan response.
- Some pressures on existing services.
- High levels of public and political interest.
- Public expectations have been high.
- Use of social media to create matches and form support groups has led to some misinformation being shared widely.

Successes

- HCC has responded swiftly to a humanitarian crisis, and has rolled out comprehensive multi agency processes within the context of a fast-moving situation. Performance measures show that staff are consistent in completing visits and DBS checks in a timely manner, and ensuring that the five portal checks are completed in a timely manner, allowing hosts to receive thank you payments.
- In the first quarter of the scheme, Hampshire has received 1,275 guests (the third highest number for any Local Authority in the UK) and has made 254 host thank you payments (more than any other Local Authority in the UK).

Next steps.....

Unaccompanied children/ differently accompanied children – government announcement that some Ukrainian children will be allowed to enter the UK and live with host families.