



Tenancy Services

Homes for Ukraine Policy

Regulation and Legislation	This policy links to the government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme (website guidance available)
Supporting documents	A Homes for Ukraine procedure is under development Letting of Homes policy
Scope	To set out the circumstances in which we will support the housing of refugees from Ukraine by enabling our customers to participate in the government's Homes for Ukraine scheme.
Reference to "Orbit" means Orbit Group which consists of Orbit Group Limited, Orbit Housing Association Limited, Orbit Homes (2020) Limited, Orbit Treasury Limited and Orbit Capital Plc.	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of Orbit's Homes for Ukraine policy is to ensure we have standards and processes in place in order to support the housing of refugees from Ukraine in line with the government's Homes for Ukraine scheme. This has been set up to help people in the UK to offer a home to those fleeing Ukraine.
- 1.2 Phase one of the scheme is now live and the government is accepting visa applications from Ukrainian applicants who have named people in the UK willing to 'sponsor' them.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Orbit recognises the impact of the war in Ukraine on its people and the need for many to leave their homes and seek safety as refugees in countries across Europe. As a large housing association that was founded on the need to provide homes to people who were homeless, we want to support people coming to the UK.
- 2.2 We will work with our general needs' customers wishing to support the scheme, by hosting refugees in spare rooms within their Orbit property.

3. General Needs Customers

- 3.1 We will permit customers in our general needs properties to use a spare room to house a refugee under the Government's Homes for Ukraine scheme, subject to the following conditions:
- The customer has not fallen into arrears on their rent account for a minimum of twelve months immediately prior to the request being made
 - An income and expenditure check will be carried out to ensure affordability
 - The customer is not under investigation for any tenancy breaches or anti-social behaviour nor has a track record of any such breaches or behaviour.
- 3.2 Orbit has a duty of care to safeguard our customer as well as the refugee.
- Customer /All Adults must have valid documentation (UK Passport / Driving Licence etc)
 - Customer / All Adults in property must not have a criminal record
 - The local authority will complete checks on the accommodation and living arrangements, along with safeguarding checks to determine suitability. If consent is not given for these checks, the customer will be refused permission.
 - The property cannot be overcrowded by the addition of a refugee.
 - Sofa beds in sitting rooms will not be permitted to ensure safety and privacy
 - Accommodation must have the following requirements
 - refugee must have their own room
 - must be kept clean and in a reasonable state
 - have adequate kitchen and bathroom space
 - have access to drinking water
 - have a working smoke detector on each floor of the property and other fire safety precautions suitable for the building e.g. fire doors or escape routes as appropriate
 - have a working carbon monoxide detector in any room containing a solid fuel burning appliance (e.g. a coal fire, wood burning stove)
 - have sufficient heating to keep the property at a comfortable temperature
 - have safe gas appliances, and have had a Gas Safety check within the last year
 - have safe and working electrics
 - be almost entirely free of damp or mould
 - have doors and windows at entry level that lock properly
 - be easy and safe to move around in, without excessively steep staircases that may cause harm.
- 3.3 Prior to accepting any refugees into their property, the customer must:
- Express to Orbit their interest including details of the refugees and provide confirmation from the local authority of acceptance to the scheme, Orbit will not accept referrals via any other route whereby the customer may be making private arrangements with a Ukrainian refugee.
 - Accept that the hosting of a refugee is the responsibility of the Tenant of the property.
 - Accept that Orbit will not be responsible or accept liability for any instances of anti-social behaviour, property damage or host-guest relationship breakdown as a result of the scheme.

- 3.4 Orbit will confirm in writing our decision. Should we give consent, we will reiterate customer responsibilities and how Orbit should be informed of any changes.

There is no appeal process if the decision is made to decline this request.

- 3.5 Orbit are extending the support offered to current customers to the refugees who are living in an Orbit property. Refugees will be able to access all support services that our customers are entitled to, including the Tenancy Sustainment coaching service. (General needs customers only). Additionally, Orbit's Better Days programme will help refugees access mental health and wellbeing support through 'Breathing Space'. Orbit's digital skills provision has an interpreter service available to ensure Orbit's full range of support can be accessed.

- 3.6 The length of time for housing a refugee is at least six months; it is the customers responsibility to inform the refugee of the end date of the agreement, this must be at least two months before the end date.

- 3.7 The customer is responsible for making local authority aware of end date of agreement, this must be at least two months before the end date

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 The Director of Customer Operations and the Head of Tenancy Management will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and for developing any future changes should government guidance change.

- 4.2 The Tenancy Management and Income team/s will be responsible for providing updates on government guidance to the above

5. Performance Controls and Business Risk

- 5.1 The Tenancy Services Team Managers will capture information around expressions of interest received from our general needs customers to rehome a refugee under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. We will record applications both denied and approved and will then monitor to see if any approved customers have been successful in rehoming a Ukrainian refugee.

- 5.2 Orbit will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years subject to legal, regulatory changes or in accordance with the agreed Policy Review programme.

6. Essential information

- 6.1 All Orbit policies and procedures are developed in line with our approach to the following, data protection statement, equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) approach, complaints policy and our regulatory and legal obligations to ensure we deliver services in a lawful manner and treat people equally and fairly. Details of these are found on the declaration document for strategy policy and procedure summary and have been an integral part of the formulation of this document. Orbit's privacy policy can be accessed on our website www.orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/publications/policies/

EA	An Equality Analysis will be completed alongside the development of the Homes for Ukraine procedure
DPIA	A DPIA will be completed alongside the development of the Homes for Ukraine procedure
Consultation	Internal: Independent Living, Tenancy Management
	External: We will consult with customers on the policy as part of the post implementation review.
Applies to	Business wide

Document control

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Extension date	Extension reason	Approved by

Revision History

Version Number	Date	Comments / Reason for revision
v1.0	Oct 22	New policy