**Part 1: Introduction to the Resettlement and Migration Team (RMT)**

* 1. What is the Resettlement and Migration Team (RMT)

The team was established in May 2022 as a response to the humanitarian disaster following the war in Ukraine. The team was initially set up to deliver the UK government Homes for Ukraine initiative and later expanded to include work with all migrants (refugees and asylum seekers) in the borough.

The primary role of the team is to provide a package of support to all migrants in the borough, and all those working with them within the local community and across the authority.

The work of the team however is primarily focused on those who are especially vulnerable- asylum seekers in hotels and dispersed accommodation; newly arrived refugees from countries like Afghanistan, Syria and Ukraine.

The aim of the team is to improve communication and information sharing across the authority, including internal and external partners and to support more effective delivery of services to all migrant communities. The Resettlement and Migration Team has four main functions:

1. Supporting new arrivals to resettle in the borough and to gain access to universal services as well as access to training and employment (where applicable). Supporting new arrivals with social integration, and ensuring they have access to leisure activities.
2. Undertaking direct work with migrant individuals and families to assess need before identifying what type of support is required.
3. Providing information, advice and guidance to the public and professionals who have queries about people seeking asylum and refugees in the borough.
4. Liaising with colleagues from the Departments for Health, Education, Home Office and DLUCH, as well as with Clearsprings and the voluntary sector to coordinate support for these communities.

The team receives referrals through the following routes:

* Self-referral during a hotel surgery/email/phone
* Online enquiry form for Early Help in Tower Hamlets
* Notification on Foundry (DLUHC Portal for Homes for Ukraine Scheme)
* Drop-ins at the Town Hall and the social groups in Shadwell Children Centre and Bethnal Green Library

**1.2. Referrals**

The public and external partners can contact RMT on this number: 020 7364 1371. Operates 9am-5pm Monday-Friday. The duty worker will speak with the referrer and accept the referral. Sometimes advice and information will be provided immediately and the case will be closed.

The public and external partners can contact RMT via an Online Enquiry form which is found on the Tower Hamlets website. Forms completed via the TH website will be located on Firmstep, BSOs process these referrals on a daily basis.

The public and external partners can contact RMT via email. The duty worker will process any email requests on a daily basis. The email address is : refugee.support@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Foundry is the government portal where the data for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme is stored. This data is accessed by the Data Analyst in the team and transferred to the spreadsheet for all team members to have access to.

Details of prospective hosts and Ukrainian refugees matched to them can be accessed there. The data analyst checks Foundry at least twice a week to get information about new host applications and new arrivals from Ukraine.

Migrants can drop in the Town Hall when in need of assistance. The Reception Desk will notify the Team and the Duty worker will attend.

There are weekly surgeries in the hotels where asylum seekers are accommodated. The days/times are advertised on the hotel noticeboards. Asylum seekers can drop in with any queries or requests.

**1.3. The Duty Worker**

**The duty worker is responsible for the following tasks:**

**•** Managing the Inbox

Responding to queries or forwarding the emails to colleagues in the team.

**•** Drop Ins

Responding to Reception Desk and dealing with queries and support requests.

**•** Covering for colleagues who may be off sick or on leave if a visit has been booked

• Duty phone line

• Logging the daily calls on spreadsheet where relevant to the Team’s OBAs

After a referral is received the team will undertake the following depending on the immigration status of the people needing support

**Asylum Seekers in hotels and Dispersed Accommodation (DA)**

Clearsprings have a Portal to store and track data on new arrivals and people who have moved out . There is also data on who has got an eviction notice (NTV) which means that these hotel residents (who have recently acquired their refugee status) will have to leave their accommodation with seven days notice.

1. When a new arrival is identified in the hotels within 5 working days the allocated worker to that hotel will make an appointment with the asylum seeker for a screening and if necessary will start the Initial assessment.
2. When a new arrival in a hotel informs us or hotel staff that they are under the age of 18 and are not accompanied by a blood relative a referral to MASH needs to be made
3. When a referral is received over the phone or inbox within 5 working days a worker will screen the case over the phone and arrange a visit if necessary. If a visit is not deemed necessary the worker will provide information and advice over the phone.

**First visit**

1. The worker will start the initial assessment after obtaining consent for personal details to be stored on the council’s database.
2. The worker will identify the presenting needs (Health (including emotional wellbeing), Education, Social functioning and integration, Financial, etc). Modern Slavery and possible trafficking should be considered and where necessary the relevant referrals should be made

3. The worker will make a plan with the individual/family to meet the identified needs

4. The worker will make the necessary referrals- e.g. school places, Health, ASC, liaising with Migrant Help, etc.

5. The worker in consultation with their manager will make a decision whether the case needs to be escalated to MASH or to B19 Team for ongoing support or a social work assessment.

**When an asylum seeker (AS) receives positive decision:**

1. There are arrangements in place with hotel management in all hotels to inform us immediately

2. Information from ClearSprings Portal is also available but it may not be correct (this data is provided to the team twice a week)

**Homelessness process to follow for refugees who have received a positive decision**

1. The refugee gets a positive decision letter:
* Homelessness application to be done – give the date in the application form as of roughly 28 days from the date of the decision letter.
* Explore whether they have serious medical needs- a letter from a hospital or an assessment- ask them to make sure they have the relevant paperwork
* If they are in therapy the therapist should give them a letter
* Tell them to contact us as soon as they have a BRP card
1. BRP arrives:
* Open a bank account- any bank\* (Monzo have a special account for refugees, BRP or any other ID is accepted but no ARC)
* Application for Universal Credit
* Referral to Catch 22 (with consent)
1. When the eviction letter comes
* Contact Crisis and Refugee Council\*\*
* Referral to Crisis\*\*- it is better for the refugees to walk in with their eviction letter. The address is: 50 – 52 Commercial Street London E1 6LT. We should follow up with an email (london@crisis.org.uk)
* If a single adult- provide information about shelters, day centres, etc ( where they can get food, shower) and the local food banks. All services are listed in a document entitled Services 2023AS in the Asylum Seekers and Refugees folder
1. On the day of eviction
* The allocated worker to the hotel ( the duty worker will take over if only the allocated worker is out) should accompany the family in the morning to the Resident Hub to reassure them and explain the process if it hasn’t been explained before.

**It is important that the refugees are being given information about what to expect in terms of Housing as soon as they get their decision, even before that. Unrealistic expectations need to be managed and the refugees need to be prepared for the reality of frequent moves, inadequate housing and the possibility of homelessness**.

1. During the interview with the assessing housing officer (a worker from the Team doesn’t have to be present but they may chose to do so when they support someone very vulnerable):

Pay attention to the following three questions:

Have you been a victim of DV?

Have you been sexually assaulted?

Have you been a victim of modern slavery?

1. If the person is not provided with accommodation, check:
* Do they have money for food?
* Make sure they have the information about food banks and shelters
1. If they are accommodated:
* Tell them to update their UC account with change of circumstances, e.g. new address. Tell them they need to be updating their address regularly.
* Tell them they are paying service charge. The amount they are liable for will be on the booking letter. They have to wait for their rent card to arrive to start paying this.
* Explain to them about housing benefit. They need to apply for this ASAP (on the Tower Hamlets website)

<https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/advice_and_benefits/benefits/housing_benefit/housing_benefit.aspx>

You can do it for them if they can’t do it themselves

* Housing Department will not provide transport for belongings. This needs to be addressed at the point of positive decision letter being received. The refugees need to think how and where they are going to store their belongings if they are moved from hotel to hotel.
* Transport to and from LBTH ( if the children are at school) may be problematic- talk with the school whether they can help with transport costs

Refugees can get support from the Housing Department via their Private Rented Scheme. After their initial assessment the refugees should look for an affordable room/property and will be helped to secure it by the council paying their first rent and deposit.

\* Some banks accept ARC cards

\*\*Consent is needed to make all mentioned referrals

It is very important that all asylum seekers are warned in advance about the current difficulties with the housing market. They should have realistic expectations (e.g. single male AS will not be a priority; families will be placed in hotels as Emergency Accommodation). AS should be encouraged to consider staying with family and friends if possible before they are in a position to enter the rental market.

The Team will continue supporting all families with children who are evicted from their Home Office provided accommodation and are placed in hotel rooms in different boroughs. This is to ensure that children don’t slip through the net as no other borough will accept responsibility while they are in emergency accommodation.

Once the family is placed in temporary accommodation out of borough their case should be transferred to Early Help service in the new location.

**Dispersed Accommodation**

Referrals to the team are received by outreach (sending leaflets, going to the accommodation) and from a professional.

Upon receiving a referral the same process as with the hotel accommodation is followed.

**Case allocation to B-19 Practitioners in the RMT**

The workers who are allocated a hotel or DA will be responsible for the cases in that accommodation. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. numerous new arrivals, very fast turnover) another worker could be allocated in addition to help with the workload.

**Completing Initial Assessment**

Initial assessments may not be necessary for every new arrival to the hotel/DA. However, whenever there is/are child(ren) an assessment should be completed and uploaded on Eisi.

**Allocating Managers Role**

Managers will screen cases that have been referred to the service and will then allocate to a B-19 Practitioners. Practitioners will initially receive a Case Allocation email from an allocating manager. In order to find the family names the practitioner must search in EISi.

The email will have directions for the case, the referral route will be shared and contact and home visit expectations will be specified.

The case will be allocated in EISi by the manager and will then appear in the practitioner’s work tray. The details of the case will appear in the running record.

**Ukrainian refugees who have arrived under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme**

New arrivals, new host applications and expression of interest applications are uploaded on the spreadsheet from Foundry (DLUHC). The Foundry database issues notifications when a rematch for a guest between local authorities have been requested.

**When a new potential host has applied to the scheme:**

1. The worker should contact the sponsor to book the first visit. The worker needs to make a telephone call or email the potential sponsor within five working days to arrange a visit. All attempts/contacts made with the sponsor and/or the guest (in Ukraine) need to be recorded on the spreadsheet under Comments with a date and initials of the worker who made them.

 **Always** contact the guest if the sponsor is not responding or if there are no contact details for the sponsor (e.g. email address or a number) on the spreadsheet.

Once the sponsor is contacted a DBS check for all adults in the household (16 years of age and older) should be initiated using the email uploaded in Teams, in Visits folder. If the host is expecting children from Ukraine with their parents, the host and everyone in the household above the age of 16 need to apply for an enhanced DBS. All relevant documents are stored under Homes for Ukraine, in the DBS folder.

1. When the first visit is booked the worker needs to add the date and the time of the visit in the relevant box of the spreadsheet and the name of the visiting worker. All visits have to be recorded on the refugee support calendar as well as your own calendar.

**First visit- to assess the sponsor and the accommodation**

During the first visit the worker should complete the Refugee Assessment Form with the host and type the information they have gathered using the link in the Visits folder. The worker should email or take with them a printed copy of the Guidance for Prospective hosts (April 2022), to be found in the Visits folder.

During the first visit the sponsor needs to be advised that they need to let us know when the guests arrive. The spreadsheet should be checked regularly to make sure we don’t miss the new guests (the spreadsheet is updated twice a week).

The sponsor should also be advised they **must** notify the team immediately via sending an email to refugee.support@towerhamlets.gov.uk when their guests leave the accommodation and the sponsorship comes to an end. This is to ensure they don’t receive thank you payments to which they are not entitled to.

The relevant forms to print and take are in the Visits folder under Homes for Ukraine.

If a DBS form is not sent, the worker needs to send it immediately after the first visit.

After the first visit Foundry needs to be updated with the three pre-arrival checks (if available) and update the spreadsheet with few details about the first visit.

**Second (settling in) visit - to meet the guest**

When Ukrainian guests arrive in Tower Hamlets a visit (so called ‘settling-in visit’) has to be arranged with the sponsor or the guest (the sponsor doesn’t need to be present). Once arranged, the details of the visit and the workers’ initials need to be put on the spreadsheet and the refugee support calendar.

The worker undertaking the visit needs to take a printed Settling-in Visit form, the document called Guest Arrived and Services for Ukrainians document (all documents are stored in the Visits folder).

The purpose of this visit is to ensure Ukrainian guests receive information about their rights and entitlement to services and are advised on the first steps to start the resettlement process.

After the visit the worker sends via email ( two separate emails to be sent to the guest and the sponsor) all documents that were shared in print during the visit (apart from the settling in visit) and also the Thank You payment form needs to be attached.

Sponsor email to include :

If DBS is completed- the link for the ongoing payments, the link for the sponsors WhatsApp Group and the Thank You payment application form that needs to be returned before payment is processed. The host won’t be paid before they complete this form.

Email to the guest:

* Electronic copies of Guest Arrived and Service for Ukrainians Document.
* The link for the one-off payment for the guest
* Details for the drop-in surgery in Shadwell Children Centre and the social group in Bethnal Green Library

Examples can be found in the Visits folder

1. After the second visit the worker needs to update the spreadsheet and Foundry and follow up with any referrals (e.g. ESOL, WorkPath, school applications, etc)

Once the Thank you Payment form is received it needs to be uploaded in the Payments folder (Thank you payments sub-folder)

School Applications are done via Teams chat called Refugees and School admissions.

Any safeguarding concerns at any point during the process of first and second visit should be discussed immediately with your manager or the social worker in the team.

1. Additional information

The spreadsheet is colour-coded:

Red- new application or no contact has been made

Yellow- first visit is booked

Green- rematched/out of the scheme

Purple- checks are incomplete

Blue- all checks are completed

Salmon- sponsor unsuitable or pulled out

The spreadsheets for the payments for the guests and the sponsors are saved under Payments folder- name Payments inventory. Ghazia is the only one updating this, for the rest of the team it is for reference only.

**Refugees from Afghanistan resettled under different schemes**

There are five families in Tower Hamlets. They are all in rented accommodation which the council is paying for three years. The expectation is however that the Afghani refugees will be able to start paying their rent and become self-sufficient much sooner than this.

They are entitled to claim all benefits and can get support with accessing training and looking for jobs.

The resettlement support provided by the Team:

* Support with accessing ESOL and other training
* Support with accessing benefits and employment (through Work Path)
* Information and advice on how to navigate the private rental market

**No Recourse to Public Funds Migrants (NRPF)**

The Team may be approached by migrants (via the self-referral route) who don’t have recourse to public funds but are not seeking asylum (e.g. who have overstayed their visa, on a spouse or a student visa, work permit, etc). The Team often receives referrals of NRPF mothers with young children from external agencies.

These migrants have very limited access to services due to their immigration status.

However, the children of NRPF mothers are entitled to all services that British children can access, e.g. nursery and school places, health, play groups, etc.

After a referral is received the worker should:

* Contact the migrant over the phone to screen the case. During the phone call the worker should establish:
1. Do they have children?
2. What is their immigration status?
3. What is it that they need help with?
* The worker should consider visiting if there are children in the family. If, after the visit, the worker has concerns about the children, they should speak to their manager or the social worker in the team immediately.

Depending on the presenting needs the worker should consider referrals to charities, school, etc.

The worker should provide information to the referred migrants about their limited rights due to the NRPF limitations attached to their visas.

Please note that these migrants are not entitled to help with Housing.

However, if they have children, they may access support under S17 of the Children Act 1989